

GOVERNMENT  
OF  
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

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PUBLIC HEARING

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
   
:
   
TITLE 11, ZONING REGULATIONS : Case No.
   
- COMPREHENSIVE TEXT : 08-06A
   
REVISIONS :
   
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Tuesday  
February 11, 2014

Wilson High School Auditorium  
3950 Chesapeake Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.

The Public Hearing of Case No. 08-06A by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Auditorium at Wilson High School, 3950 Chesapeake St. N.W., Washington, D.C., Anthony J. Hood, Chairman, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:  
 ANTHONY J. HOOD, Chairman  
 MARCIE COHEN, Vice Chair  
 MICHAEL G. TURNBULL, FAIA, Commissioner (AOC)  
 PETER MAY, Commissioner (NPS)  
 ROBERT MILLER, Commissioner

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OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

SARA BARDIN, Director  
SHARON S. SCHELLIN, Secretary

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

JOEL LAWSON

The transcript constitutes the minutes from the Public Hearing held on February 11, 2014.

## T-A-B-L-E O-F C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

Opening Remarks	4
Preliminary Matters	9
Ms. MacKnight	13
Ms. Thompson	17
Ms. Zdeb	23
Ms. Houghton	28
Ms. Beveridge	33
Mr. Hier	38
Mr. Gates	41
Mr. Myhre	47
Mr. Waddell	50
Mr. Wells	55
MS. Spiegel	57
Ms. Guzman	62
Mr. Ries	72
Ms. Carter	76
Mr. Sheehan	88
Ms. Farrell	91
Mr. Dobb	96
Mr. Martin	97
Ms. Jones	105
Ms. Barnes Mosaid	118
Ms. Cook	121
Mr. Frankel	130
Mr. Rubio	138
Ms. Franklin	143
Ms. Roach	151
Mr. Malesky	156
Mr. Landis	159
Mr. Bonhomme	164
Ms. Rajaram	167
Ms. Blynn	176
Mr. Drury	179
Ms. Hall	180
Ms. Renshaw	182
MS. Quinn	194
Mr. Carter	198
Mr. Clancy	204

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

6:03 p.m.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good evening,  
ladies and gentlemen.

This is a public hearing for the  
Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia  
for Tuesday, February 11, 2014. By name is  
Anthony Hood.

Joining me this evening are Vice  
Chair Cohen, Commissioner Miller, Commissioner  
May, and Commissioner Turnbull. We=re also  
joined by the Office of Zoning staff: our  
director, Ms. Sara Bardin, Ms. Sharon Schellin,  
and Ms. Zee Hill, who=s going to be, I believe  
collecting testimony. I don=t see her at this  
point. And the Office of Zoning, I mean, the  
Office of Planning staff, Mr. Lawson.

This proceeding is being recorded  
by a court reporter. Accordingly, we must ask  
you to refrain from any disruptive noises or  
actions in the hearing room, including the  
display of any signs or objects.

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The subject of this evening's hearing is Zoning Commission Case Number 08-06A. This is a request by the Office of Planning for comprehensive revisions and amendments to the zoning regulations, which is Title 11 DCMR.

Notice of today's hearing was published in the *D.C. Register* on December 20, 2013, and the copies of that announcement are available on the table next to the court reporter in the back of the room. If the court reporter would just do us a favor and raise your hand. There you go.

This hearing will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of 11 DCMR 3021 as follows: preliminary matters, testimony from the public. The following time constraints are going to be maintained in this hearing: organizations, five minutes; individuals, three minutes. The Commission intends to adhere to the time limits as strictly as possible in order to hear the case in a

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reasonable period of time. The Commission reserves the right to change the time limits for presentations if necessary, and notes that no time shall be ceded.

As noted in the notice of public hearing, testimony will be limited to individuals, organizations, or associations that have not previously testified before the Commission on this case.

Witnesses may only testify in the ward in which they reside. Persons who have previously testified but still want to provide the Commission with additional comments may do so by submitting comments in writing.

The only exception to testifying again will be for ANC Commissioners since they represent many district residents. We do ask that if any ANC Commissioner has previously testified and is going to provide additional testimony this evening that they confine their comments to new subject matter they have not yet presented, or feedback from information they

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have received from their constituents.

All persons appearing before the Commission are to fill out two witness cards. These cards are located on the table next to the court reporter, again, he raised his hand previously. He's done it again. Thank you. Upon coming to speak to the Commission, please go give both cards to the court reporter. When presenting information to the Commission, please turn on and speak into the microphone, first stating your name and home address. When you are finished speaking, please turn your microphone off so that your microphone is no longer picking up sound or background noise.

The decision of the Commission in this case must be based exclusively on the public record. To avoid any appearance to the contrary, the Commission requests that persons present not engage members of the Commission in conversation during any recess or at any time. In addition, there should be no direct contact whatsoever with any Commissioner concerning

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this matter, be it written, or electronic, or by telephone. Excuse me. Any materials received directly by a Commissioner will be discarded without being read and any and all, all calls will be ignored. The staff will be available throughout the hearing to discuss procedural questions.

I would also ask that you not repeat testimony that has already been given. Rather than repeating the same comments, I would suggest that you state that you agree with testimony that has already been given and add any additional comments that we have not heard yet. Again, we want to maximize our time here at Wilson tonight.

Please turn off all beepers and cell phones at this time so as not to disrupt these proceedings.

At this time, the Commission will consider any preliminary matters. Does the staff have any preliminary matters?

MS. SCHELLIN: No, sir.



CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I do have a few preliminary matters. What we're going to do, the same way we did in Dunbar on Saturday, we're going to use the front row. When I call your name, if you could come first and come to the front row, and then we're going to probably go from my right to your left, or from your left to my right. Either way. And then one person will come up at a time to the podium and present testimony. Let's be mindful of the clock; we want to make sure that we get everyone's testimony in tonight. I think -- I'm not sure, we have to be out here by a certain time or we want to be respectful of the school's time. And we want to get as much information as possible.

I do have a note that I need to read. I have two notes actually. As the latest results, dealing with the weather, in case of the D.C. government closed on Thursday, February 13th, 2014 for inclement weather, the Wards 1 and 2 ZRR community-based public

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hearing scheduled for that night will be rescheduled for February 26th, 2014 at 6 p.m., at the D.C. Housing Finance Agency at 815 Florida Avenue, Northwest. Please note: it will only be postponed to the 26th if the D.C. government is closed on the 13th. Let me read that again. Please note: it will only be postponed to the 26th if the D.C. government disclosed on the 13th. And we're doing everything we can do to make sure that that announcement gets out, especially to the residence of Wards 1 and 2.

First, the Office of Planning will be holding open houses in at least two wards east of the river, and at least two wards west of the river. Further details will be available on OP=s website in the very near future at [planning.dc.gov](http://planning.dc.gov), and the Office of Zoning will also post a news item on its website at [dcoz.dc.gov](http://dcoz.dc.gov). I would encourage you to check the website for further information. And again, you can also call the Office of Zoning staff at

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202-727-6311, if you don=t have accessibility to either one of the websites. Again that number is 202-727-6311. My next announcement is as a result of these further hearings, the Zoning Commission has decided to leave the record opens in this case until Thursday, April the 17th, instead of March the 3rd. That allows an additional six weeks to submit written comments. Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Schellin, do we have anything else?

MS. SCHELLIN: No, sir.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: As a side note, did anyone else have a problem getting in this evening? Getting into the building? Okay. Good. I feel special. I=m the only one. Okay. Okay. Anyway. All right.

Let=s go to our list. And again, I=m going to apologize if I mispronounce your name. I would ask that you just come to the front row and you can correct me when you come up to speak. Susan MacKnight, Diane Gordon,

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Orlando Villas, Doreen Eva Thompson, Jessica Zdeb, please come forward, if it sounds correct, just come forward and correct me.

MS. ZDEB: That was close.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: OKAY. That was close. Okay.

David T. Hierson -- again, and if you want to, you can you come up and as you come forward, you can give us your testimony - Sarah Houghton, I mean, I=m sorry, Sherry Houghton, Margaret Beveridge, Tom Hier, Bill Myhre, Jeff Wells, Harry Gates, Tim Abrams -- oh, Peter, I forgot, okay -- Peter Waddell, forgive me. Okay. Did I say Tim Abrams? Carol Newmyer Spiegel, Fred Dobb, Ann Cook, Larry Martin, Carolyn Cook, Bernard Ries, Miles Smith, Kelly Blynn or Blind, Stephanie Guzman, Mark Sheikh, Debra Corbett, Connie Carter -- I think I have two more -- Robert Sheehan, Susan Farrell. Okay. All right. That=s good. Let=s go ahead and start from my right, your left. And you may begin. You can come forward to the

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podium and please be mindful of the clock, and you may begin. If you can introduce yourself and give us your address.

MS. MacKNIGHT: Susan MacKnight.  
Friendship Heights.

My comments and my target, the shortsightedness of the proposal to cut the District= already low minimum parking requirements for residential projects near transit.

I live four blocks from the Friendship Heights Metro Station and even closer to Wisconsin Avenue=s multiple bus routes. I have a car just as I did when I was younger and lived, literally, steps from the Cleveland Park Metro station.

Why own a car when there are good mass transit options nearby? One word: convenience. Getting to places in the area not accessible by train or bus, bringing home heavy or bulky items, and going to evening meetings that might run late.

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The Office of Planning ignores these realities of city living in pushing a plan that would slash the minimum on-site parking requirement to barely one space for every six units in new apartment and condo buildings close to public transportation. To justify this drastic shift, OP cites the fact that more than one-third of District households are car free. It conveniently skips over the flip side of the statistic that nearly two-thirds of households do own a vehicle.

Citywide, the vehicle ownership rate has remained constant, at roughly 0.9 vehicles per household, despite the demographic changes that have accompanied the population gains of recent years. In Friendship Heights, the figure is higher. Approximately 1.4 vehicles per household.

Spillover parking already is a problem for the low density residential neighborhood adjacent to Friendship Heights= stores, restaurants, offices, and subway station.

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What is going to happen when developers put up apartment or condo buildings with little or no on-site parking in the upper Wisconsin Avenue corridor? Many of these properties no doubt will be upscale buildings marketed to people who are used to having one or more vehicles.

They are no more likely than I am to give up their cars for some combination of subways, buses, taxis and car share services. Even if these new residents are willing to pay to park, there are few public garages or other off-site parking facilities in Friendship Heights. The spillover parking problems will be magnified impacting the livability of the neighborhood.

The draft requirements for on-site parking in projects and transit centric zones clearly is untenable. I urge the Zoning Commission to direct OP to rework its proposal to reflect the actual parking demands generated by apartment and condo developments. At the very least, the result of this process should

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be retention of the current minimum of one off street parking space for every two to four units in new residential buildings. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

While this is not our chamber, we would ask that you hold your applause or any reactions to any comments, so we may all agree or disagree, but we want to try to do this in a timely fashion. So if we can hold applause.

And here=s the other thing, if you can hold your seat down here in the front row, because -- and once we get through with everyone, believe it or not -- let me ask you -- that=s right -- okay. We=re going to go one by one. I was going to do everybody but -- anyway, so what we=ll do is likely to Saturday, colleagues. When they come up, we=ll ask questions.

So when you finish your testimony, don=t run away from the podium, we might have

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a question we want to ask you. Okay.

Any questions of the first young lady? Any questions? Okay. Thank you.

Next.

MS. THOMPSON: Good evening, Chairman Hood and all the Commissioners. Thanks for holding this hearing in the community.

I=d also like to thank the Office of Zoning and Ms. Bardin for being very helpful in responding to some questions that we have.

I=m Doreen Thompson, president of the Carter Barron East Neighborhood Association. Were one of the --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Hold on. I want to stop. I hate to interrupt you but we want to make sure everybody hears what you=re saying.

Will that mic come up? Okay. Thank you.

We want make sure we hear you. Okay. Thank you.

MS. THOMPSON: Yes. I=m Doreen

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Thompson, president of the Carter Barron East Neighborhood Association.

We=re one of the oldest neighborhood associations in 16th Street Heights. We=re 46 years old this year. Our borders run from 16th Street on the West; 13th Street on the East; Longfellow on the North; Indicator on the South.

We also have the distinction of having probably approximately, I would say, 50 institutions in this all one residential community. Major institutions at that. We=re bordered by Rock Creek Park and the amphitheater, the tennis center, the northern bus garage, numerous large churches, and four schools.

The question anyone would ask is how can a residential community be so infused with institutions? How could this have occurred with a comprehensive plan that seems to tout the fact that this is a residential community? First of all, it starts with why is it

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attractive? Why has it been attractive to institutions? Well, it's because we're also -- the intrastate, we're in between three major arteries: 16th Street, 14th Street, 13th Street, I should also add Georgia Avenue, also on the East end Rock Creek Park as well on the left.

You would think that this would have -- this would be part of the concern of the Zoning Commission, which is tasked, I would imagine, with upholding this comprehensive plan, upholding the residential character of our community.

We found that this is not the case. In fact, we are the ones who had to initiate expansion of the 16th Street Heights zoning overlay to cover this area.

Well I'm here today to tell you that as a result of this, I have become -- I wouldn't call it an expert -- but I'm way too familiar with the zoning applications because the 16th Street Heights overlay has not protected this

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community. It continues to be institutionalized.

One of the things I guess I -- I=d like to -- first of all, I should add that you do have my testimony which was pretty extensive -- but what I=d like to do today is just to kind of highlight, if you don=t mind, a couple things, about four points, that I don=t think were picked up in the testimony. And if need be, I can get you a copy of what I=ve, I have here today.

First of all, there really is a need to make the zoning regulations user-friendly. Hearings shouldn=t be scheduled until all the relevant information that the applicant is supposed to supply is in. The way it=s currently written, you=ve got 14 days, the applicant has 14 days to supplement their testimony.

What happens with the institutions is it, it is at that point that they submit traffic studies and transportation data from

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their experts, which disadvantages us as a community. Also at that point, it also disadvantages us relative to OP and DDOT, because in essence, we have had to make a decision whether in a case and that=s the only point when we get to see this data: 14 days before the hearing.

OP and DDOT=s advisory ports should also be available to us. They may very well be this process does not work for us as a community. We find that we are only finding out what they=re recommending when we=re in the hearing.

There ought to be, at this point also, written standards as to what constitutes minor or major variances. And at some point, if this Commission is granting all the variances that it has granted in the past, this is an opportunity, 50 years later, to say what is minor, what is major. This is also an opportunity to incorporate major zoning decisions that have occurred over the 50 year

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period.

I mean, for example, one of the ones that is extremely bothersome to me is when on-site required parking can -- when off-site parking can be a substitute for on-site required parking. This shouldn't occur in a case. It shouldn't be something where the order says or OP says it's okay. OP is in agreement. This ought to be in a rule making. There ought to, and there ought to be standards.

I'm sorry, there's so much more that I need to say but it's in my testimony.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Do we have any questions?

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Yes. Do we have a copy of your testimony or can we get one, please?

MS. THOMPSON: Oh, this?

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Yes.

MS. THOMPSON: Yes. Will do.  
Thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other

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questions? Thank you very much.

Next.

MS. ZDEB: My name is Jessica Zdeb. And I live in Ward 4 on the 1300 block of Shepherd Street.

I'm here tonight to speak in support of the updated to D.C.'s Zoning Code especially reforms to parking requirements and residential development. I believe that these reforms can help make D.C. a more environmentally sustainable and affordable city which are two the aspects of D.C. that I value highly.

Like over a third of D.C. residents, I don't own a car. The myriad of transportation options available to: 50 buses within half a block, 70 buses and bike share a five-minute walk, Metrorail in 10, Car2Go, Zipcar, Uber, and others, mean that I can easily make this choice. The carbon footprint of my transportation is tiny and helps in a small way reach D.C.'s goal of making ours the

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healthiest, greenest, and most livable city in the U.S. by 2032.

Lowering parking requirements in these areas rich in transportation options can ease the way for more development that lets more people go car free.

I make the choice not to have a car but for many of my fellow residents, it's not a choice. A car is simply unaffordable. With the high cost of housing here, adding the burden of auto payments is simply too much. Lowering the requirements for parking can help lower the cost of housing by making developments pencil out more easily. More units on the same amount of land means lower prices for each one.

I want this city to stay diverse, and providing more housing opportunities for all income levels will help with that.

Even though I don't own a car, I do own a parking space. My husband and I are not the only owners in our eight unit building in that situation. Our neighbor also has a space

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but no car. We rent them both to Zipcar. Three other unit owners do not have cars. And yet, we know the neighborhood was in an uproar about our building=s development because of parking. Five spaces were never going to be enough for the eight units, even though that is clearly -- that is more than -- one more than is required under current zoning. And yet, they are actually more than enough. There are more and more residents like us in D.C.

I recently heard a developer=s presentation at my local ANC meeting about how he needed a parking variance for a building nearly within sight of a Metrorail station and next to a number of bus stops. His company proposed to have residents use an underutilized garage at a nearby building that they also own. It=s eminently sensible. Under current -- or under new zoning regulations, this kind of parking share agreement will not require the owner=s variance process. I=m happy to hear about smart developers like this who will forgo

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car parking and will even add in-unit like parking.

The current zoning code will not lead to development that supports a diverse and green city that is the kind that I want to see. I hope you will bring this long process of the zoning update to a close by supporting these changes which will help make D.C. the modern world class city that it=s meant to be.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.  
Commissioner Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you,  
Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your testimony.

I just have a couple of questions. You said that some in the neighborhood were concerned about the decision concerning the parking in your development, in your building when it was developed. When was it developed?

MS. ZDEB: I moved in in May of this past year.

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COMMISSIONER MILLER: And it was shortly --

MS. ZDEB: It was completed shortly before that.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: And my other question, if you don=t mind sharing, what is the going rate for renting the Zipcars, a space to Zipcar?

MS. ZDEB: My understanding is that it varies across the city, and we get \$150 a month.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Do we have any other questions? Okay. Thank you.

Next.

MS. HOUGHTON: Good evening. My name is Sherry Houghton. I have lived a block and a half from here for far too long to add up. But on and off.

And I never had a parking problem --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I hate to cut you off. Let me ask this. Can everybody here

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what=s being said? I think what we might have to do --

MS. HOUGHTON: I=m too tall to lean over.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. Okay. That=s what I was thinking. Hold the microphone. I don=t what the technician=s going to say.

MS. HOUGHTON: Three and a half --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: That=s okay. One thing about up here, you get seven different instructions, so I=m just letting you work it out. And you=ll make sure we hear you.

MS. HOUGHTON: Okay. Anyway -- sorry. Better?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

MS. HOUGHTON: Okay. I have lived on and off --

PARTICIPANT: Start over. Sorry.

MS. HOUGHTON: My name is --

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PARTICIPANT: Did you turn it off?

MS. HOUGHTON: I don=t think so.

My name is Sherry Houghton. I have lived on and off a block and a half from this room since I was 10 years old. And I never had a parking problem -- I have a single-family residence -- until this building was built, when, overnight, my street turned into a parking lot.

It was fascinating, but all of the construction workers were filling the street from 7 a.m. until they finished work for a period of two years. And my neighbors and I had to actually petition to get our streets zoned, or whatever they call it, permitted, because I literally could not go out and go to a doctor=s appointment, or to grocery shopping, and come back, and park within three blocks of my house. Which needless to say, was kind of irritating.

I=m here because I=m concerned about zoning changes, specifically in terms of parking, and having them be one size fits all

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for the whole city.

It=s one thing for me to live in a house with easy parking. I feel sorry for the people who live close to Wisconsin Avenue, as Wisconsin Avenue becomes much more of a corridor.

I know we have several buildings that are slated to be built within the next few years.

We have our wonderful Babe=s, which I think was a dreadful error, personally, because I don=t see, conceivably, unless it=s something other than a dormitory that it can be lived in by students who don=t need parking. I mean, one parking space for 60 units implies that they never have a cleaning service; their parents never visit them; they don=t have guests; the cable guy never comes. I mean, it=s not going to work. Hopefully, it will work because it=s already finished.

But we do have new things coming along the line, and I would hate to see that kind

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of an error made. In the Northwest *Current*, I noticed just today that on 16th Street, the old Italian embassy project, they are going to have 110 to 135 residential units, and the developers plan to add below grade parking for 60 to 90 vehicles. And they are on a bus route. That makes good sense to me. That=s the way people like to live. And then there=s the new Eastbanc one down on Georgetown, admittedly, somewhat high scale, seven condos, each unit comes with two reserved parking spaces, and guest parking will be available. That=s the way people live these days, particularly in an area like this, in Tenleytown, which has families and low density housing.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let=s see if we have any questions. Any questions?

Can I ask you a question and you don=t have to answer, but I would like -- I need you to help me. If you go to the doctor and your doctor is not in this area, how you get there?

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Do you catch the Metro or --

MS. HOUGHTON: No.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: -- Car2Go?

MS. HOUGHTON: I drive.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: You drive.

MS. HOUGHTON: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right.

Thank you very much.

MS. HOUGHTON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Next.

MS. BEVERIDGE: My name is Margaret Beveridge. I live on the 4200 block of River Road, Northwest.

PARTICIPANT: We can=t hear you.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Sorry. My name is -- can you hear me now?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. Thank you.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Okay. My name is Margaret Beveridge, and I live on River Road.

In 1972, I opened an office on Wisconsin Avenue, a few blocks, a few places down from Babe=s. And ironically, I rented

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parking underneath Babe=s for 10 years.

In 1984, a bought a house on River Road, one block down on Brandywine, and then just four houses into River Road.

Now, Babe=s, I find it ironic, that I rented parking and that parking is now being obliterated, and the building of Babe=s is going to be four to six times larger than Babe=s was in 1970, and 1980, and >90s. That is just ludicrous.

Given the fact that we are a residential area, there should not be the conflict that there is between the business community, which I believe the Zoning Committee has exacerbated, and the residential community where I live.

River Road is nine blocks long, one block of that is commercial, the others is all residential on both sides of the street. We are a dumping ground for all the businesses on Wisconsin Avenue. The sports people use it; the animal hospital use it; even Best Buy and

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the container store use it over the weekends.

My children and my grandchildren cannot come and visit me to park. It is ludicrous. Absolutely ludicrous.

We are being forced out. And the idea that I don't own a car; I'm 80 years old for God sakes. There's no way I'm not going to own a car. But I can be forced out of the District, me and the rest of us who live in this area. And we don't deserve it. We really have contributed; we cannot park on our own street; and the Zoning Committee are just literally forcing the elderly and the rest of us out. And it is a very unhappy situation when I've lived here all my adult life. And I don't appreciate it, and I hope you can do better.

Babe's is a total disaster and it should never -- the decisions that you've made have been totally ludicrous and ridiculous, and I hope you don't make any more similar decisions.

Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
Commissioners, any comments? Okay.

Can I ask you a question before you leave? One of the things, at least the way I picture all of this, is that we're going to be faced with -- there's a group out, smart growth, or green group, or whatever the group is that wants to do things a little differently. And then we have group, such as yourself, who still drives, who needs the convenience of a parking spaces, and who kind of wants to deal with the way of life that you invested in years ago. And while I know you're trying -- we're trying to progress and move into more modernistic things, help me -- how do I balance that? If you could just answer it quickly. Quickly, just help me balance it.

MS. BEVERIDGE: I understand your problem. I have a granddaughter and her husband who live down on 29th Street. They do not own a car. They're absolutely the younger generation that you're talking about. And it

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is absolutely fine. If they want to go out, they rent a car, they use -- what=s that little one?

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

MS. BEVERIDGE: And they Zipcar. Thank you. And they=re absolutely the people.

That=s the point I=m making. The District and you have the ability to do it, can accommodate all of us, but you=re not. You=re just forcing us out and going far too way, far too far over the other side.

The other thing is American University, is just their tentacles are just right through our District willy-nilly. For example, there are five -- I have had 10 -- no, for 10 years, I have had five -- no, six AU students living next to me. The idea that they don=t have cars is ludicrous. They have three cars, all of which are parked in the alley, legitimately, in their own space. And they use them for parties, for heaven sakes. Incidentally, I happen to like these -- I=m

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quite happy to have them next to me. They're very nice neighbors. But the fact that these -- they had a party on Saturday night and River Road is absolutely packed with student cars. They don't use them to go to class; they catch the bus up at Tenleytown; but they keep their cars for personal use.

So the idea that, you know, the old Babe's will have all of these students who are going to walk and take buses is -- you know, which, I'm the old one here but I think I'm more attuned to what's going on than you are.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right. Thank you. Okay. Any other questions? All right.

Next.

MR. HIER: Good evening, Chairman Hood and Commissioners.

My name is Tom Hier. I'm the chair of Ward 3 Vision, a grassroots, smart growth organization, but I'm testifying this evening as an individual citizen not on behalf of the

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organization.

I live on Ingomar Street, 3908 Ingomar. I'm a second-generation Washingtonian, a product of Woodrow Wilson High School and the D.C. school system, and a tremendous fan of our city.

My testimony this evening is to support revisions to the 1950s era zoning regulations related to parking. Specifically, to urge the Commission to support the removal of parking minimums downtowns and ease requirements for parking minimums in transit corridors across the city.

My support stems from an interest in making housing more affordable and accessible to as wide a base of citizens as possible. I am obviously not young, but I know many younger folks who would like to put down roots in the city by purchasing a condo or a small home. They already car free or car light lives, rely heavily on public transportation, and want good and easy access to transit.

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Requiring parking minimums unnecessarily burdens new housing developments and makes it more difficult to create new developments in transit zones, the very place where developments should occur to take advantage of the city's significant investment in public transportation.

The cost of parking, which can add as much as \$50,000 a space, burdens home ownership unnecessarily, making it increasingly likely that the very folks who bring new life to the city will, out of necessity rather than desire, leave for cheaper alternatives in close in areas of Maryland or Virginia.

Washington has changed much in the past 50 years since the last zoning regulations were created. Once vibrant neighborhoods that declines during the era of the car and the flight to the suburbs are becoming vital once again. A good part of this vibrancy comes from new residents who bring fresh ideas about ways

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of living, and interest in new and different kinds of services, and an energy to rejuvenate our street life. We should continue to support the ability of a more diverse citizenry to be able to live in our magnificent city.

For this reason, I strongly support the reduction and/or removal of parking minimums.

Thank you for your time tonight and for all the effort you've invested over the years in this process.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions? Okay. Thank you very much.

Next.

MR. GATES: Good evening, members of the Zoning Commission.

My name is Harry Gates. Thank you for coming out to the community tonight.

I am in complete agreement with John Parsons, who advocated for a major edit, not a total rewrite, of the zoning regulations.

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Even the title of this exercise, "The zoning regulations review," is a misnomer. It is not a review. The Zoning Commission should send this train wreck back to OP and tell them to thoroughly review and edit the current code.

Tonight I want to focus on neighborhood character and the lack of protections offered in both the current code and the proposed zoning regulations. I also want to mention guidance offered in the comprehensive plan and the apparent conflict with the ZRR.

The comp plan urges that zoning be responsive to individual neighborhood character and scale. In spite of land-use policy, which addresses the conservation of single-family neighborhoods, our low-density neighborhoods are changing.

Under existing zoning, I've watched developers build mid-block three-story houses when the surrounding building stock is two stories. These homes, which maximize a lot

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coverage, are perfectly legal but they don't respect neighborhood scale and density.

I am not opposed to new homes or change, but I am opposed to new development that obviously does not respect its surroundings. While not as drastic as the pop-ups in Ward 1, these out of character structures often stand stories above their neighbors.

I hope the Zoning Commission will give serious consideration to the following questions before taking any further action on the ZRR. Is zoning meant to change neighborhood character? Why are new regulations being proposed that do not add any protections to ensure the protection of neighborhood character? Will communities have to wait until the ZRR has been approved before applying for a customized zone that was promised in the early rewrite process? Is this the only way to ensure protections? And how onerous will this process be once the ZRR has been approved?

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These questions have not been addressed by OP. As a matter fact, OP hasn=t been out to visit our community, and you should know, Palisades did not request the proposed ZRR changes. Believe me, over the past five years, I=ve heard a lot of concern raised about the new code.

You should also know I didn=t purchase a home in the District to have the Zoning Commission approve new zoning regulations that will alter neighborhood character or affect my privacy. The ZRR does not reflect the guidance of the comp plan and affords little in the way of protection.

The past five years have not been wasted. We have had time to review the ZRR and we know it isn=t what we want.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Let=s see if we have any questions. Any questions?

Mr. Gates, I noticed that you -- excuse me -- mentioned a former college of ours

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who I've learned over the years, he was very knowledgeable. You say, AI am in complete agreement with John Parsons, who advocated for a major edit.@ And I remember when he did that. And let me ask you this. I'm trying to figure out, at what point do we go from a rewrite -- no, a revision to a rewrite? And I know you've been, you and your wife have been involved through this process. Do you know when we switched it or did it grow legs of its own? This is one of the questions at some point I'm going to ask the Office of Planning: how did we get here? I'm just curious if you could help me with that.

MR. GATES: It just seems, Commissioner, like it got out of hand. You know, we were to do an edit, and all the sudden we're rewriting this whole code. And this has confused people. Most people in the city don't know what's going on.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MR. GATES: They would like to

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know, and they feel they're being threatened and their property values and the neighborhoods. We have to inform them.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. And you think we've, we have not done our due diligence to a point to make sure that we get the word out? Is that --

MR. GATES: Well, so many people don't know this is going on. We're finding this every day.

We had one Saturday in Ward 1, and people were in there and they said, 'We saw this on Channel 4 last night. We didn't know a thing about this going on.' If this is happening like this, it's happening all over. And these people were very alarmed about their neighborhood and how they live.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Any other questions, Commissioners? Okay.

Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

MR. GATES: Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Next.

MR. MYHRE: Okay. Chairman Hood and Commissioners, good evening.

My name is Bill Myhre. I can accurately say that I'm a lifelong Washingtonian even though I was born and raised in the other Washington. I've lived here from nearly 40 years, and the last 17 in Ward 3.

I'm pleased to see how much the city has changed in positive ways during my time here. That we are now making changes to a zoning code that is more than 50 years old is very heartening to me.

I am particularly interested in expressing my support for the proposed changes that will eliminate or reduce parking minimums. In my own neighborhood, I have followed the debate surrounding parking requirements for new projects, and have been struck by how much time and energy is spent debating parking needs for projects that sit practically on top of Metro stations, in what we now call transit

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zones.

Transit zones are the very places where we should focus dense development to create more opportunities for affordable housing and to provide options for people who are interested in a car free or car like living.

Although like many guys my age, I still have something of a love affair for the automobile, I know that many of our younger friends do not. And imposing parking minimums on projects in transit zones needlessly raises those project costs, which get passed through, making already expensive housing even more unaffordable for average citizens.

It is in the long-term best interest of all who live in D.C. to provide housing that is more affordable and attainable to wide swath of individuals, not just those at the upper of the income scale.

As I look down the road and see more and more young people moving to the city, I do worry about making sure that they can have a

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stake in the city. They have the interest, the energy, and the wherewithal to live a life that relies more heavily on transit than on the car.

For the sake of our environment and to ensure the richness of the urban experience that comes with a more diverse population, we owe them every opportunity to do so.

I reiterate my support to reduce or eliminate the parking minimums as part of the new zoning code.

I appreciate your time and the opportunity to make this presentation.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Any questions, colleagues? I'm not seeing any. Thank you.

Next.

MR. WADDELL: I'm Peter Waddell. And I represent our family and 20 of our close neighbors living in single-family row houses on 28th and 29th Street, West of Connecticut, in the Woodley Park Historic District.

Like most of our neighbors, we came

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seeking a safe, diverse, quiet, family-friendly neighborhood with space to garden. It has been all that and more.

The executive committee of the Woodley Park Community Association, of which I and some of my neighbors are members, made representations at your November 6th hearing about zoning asking that accessory apartments be allowed by matter of right in existing accessory buildings and garages on lots as small as 2000 square feet; that the zoning for row houses be uniform across all of Woodley Park; and for increased density in our neighborhood.

The Association submission suggests that they are speaking for the community. In these matters, they do not. We were not consulted or listened to. Although we support accessory apartments as of right in the main house, those of us living backing on alleys on the west side of Connecticut our overwhelmingly opposed to having people living

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in garages in the alley.

Our garages are squat brick structures, jammed together, hard on the alley, and are quite unsuited to habitation and have never been used for that. They are not carriage houses.

We are concerned about the loss of parking, loss of privacy, my neighbor=s shed is 15 feet from our house, and looks directly into our bedroom, and the problem of what to do with the trash bins.

After the initial letter from the Association executive to the Office of Planning in 2012, wanting garage drawings as of right in our neighborhood became public, we week expressed our opposition to them and to the Office of Planning. The Office of Planning heard our concerns and promised, in writing, that people would not be allowed as of right to turn alley garages into rental units in our neighborhood. We trust the Zoning Commission will honor that commitment. The

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Woodley Park Association's submission to you was the first we had heard of the Association wanting zoning changed to increase density. At the moment, the west side of Connecticut is R3; the eastside is R4. This change would allow people in our neighborhood to convert single-family houses into rooming houses or flats as of right. Rooming houses in our neighborhood have been bitterly fought in the past and would be again. We have not found any support for this idea; we were not consulted; and are unclear where it came from or why it would be put forward.

It may appeal to investors who own houses in our neighborhoods and to the man with the illegal rooming house, but it's not what we want.

The Woodley Park Community Association testimony ends with a plea for greater density in Woodley Park. We are already doing more than our fair share for density. Large apartment buildings line

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Connecticut, Calvert, and 29th Street, and they are many smaller condo and rental buildings in Woodley Park. We have two of the biggest hotels in Washington, and 300 new apartments opening shortly at the end of our block.

Despite that, our neighborhood is an oasis, popular with families, one where children can play in the alley or front yards unsupervised. One where people can garden. We love our neighborhood.

D.C. wants to attract and retain families, and continue to improve schools. Neighborhoods like ours are essential for that.

I hope the Zoning Commission will support us and help us to continue to preserve the unique character of Woodley Park.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.  
Commissioner, thank you. Any questions?  
Okay. Not seeing any.

Thank you very much.

MR. WADDELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me just ask,

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this last page, do all these addresses and names concur with your testimony?

MR. WADDELL: Yes. These are the people --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MR. WADDELL: -- these are the neighbors -- sorry -- these are the 20 neighbors that -- and I've also attached Ms. Steingasser's letter, promising that we wouldn't have people living in garages.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right.

MR. WADDELL: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

Next.

Now I assume that some of the people that are coming up -- somebody told you I've already called your name; am I correct? Okay. I'm just making sure because I know the other people are looking to see people come in, and I'm sure that the assumption is I've already called your name. Because the front row is for folks who I called your name, and if you weren't

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here, I'm going to go back to that, and call your name again. So not a big deal but I'm assuming somebody told you I called your name. Okay.

MR. WELLS: Okay. My name is Jeff Wells. I won't be very long.

I'm just here to say that I strongly support the fact that we are now looking at the zoning code after more than 50 years. And I'm particularly interested in expressing my support for the proposed changes that will eliminate or reduce the parking minimums.

I believe transit zones are really places where we need to focus more dense development to create more opportunities for not only affordable housing but for more interesting neighborhood options, for dining for entertainment, and the like.

I actually live at 38th and Wyndham Place and I'd like to point out that at the end of my block on Wisconsin Avenue I have a 711 and a Tenley Minimart. And I think if the zoning laws were changed, I would have more

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interesting options at the end of the street to, you know, more interesting entertainment, restaurant, and other sorts of options at the end of my street than I do now.

Finally, I=d like to say that with respect to the parking minimums, I don=t think anyone=s saying eliminate parking. I think what we=re saying is allow the local developer to adjust the parking to the laws of supply and demand rather than have some sort of absolute minimum parking standard.

Finally, I=d like to say that I have one car, my partner and I have one car, I commute to work daily; it is rare that I use my car at all during the week; I rely on bus and Metro; and I think that that is certainly possible for others to do likewise; and I=d like to see that with the revision in the zoning laws. I think that it would be possible for more people to do that and enjoy the benefits of more dense development along Wisconsin Avenue that would be transit oriented.

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Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

Commissioners, any questions? All right.

Thank you.

Next.

Good evening.

MS. SPIEGEL: My name is Carol Newmyer Spiegel.

And I'm here to make an argument for a special exception for big box stores in DC. I wanted to speak tonight not because I am an expert on regulations, policy, or procedures but because of my personal history as a fifth-generation Washingtonian who feels very invested in D.C. and the direction that outside influences would have it go.

My family in D.C. dates back to the 1840s where my great-great-grandfather had a dry goods store at the corner of 10th and Pennsylvania Avenue and sold Civil War uniforms. My great-grandfather had the Marvel Saloon in the old Justice Building, and my

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grandfather was a prominent D.C. attorney who was called in by Judge Sirica on the Watergate case. My father was an established civil suit attorney and his brother started Armand=s pizza.

My husband, children, and I went to D.C. public schools and I actually graduated here at Wilson in 1973. Washington is in my blood and I feel the need to speak up for it. Some people think of D.C. as only a transient political town, but D.C. is very much a hometown.

For the city whose job it is to be the guardian of our nation=s history, it is inconceivable that more protection and respect not be given to preserving what we have from those whose only motivation is money, greed, influence, and power.

The Redfin Research Center just said that upper Northwest D.C. is the fourth most desirable neighborhood in the country. My point being, if it ain=t broke; don=t fix it.

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I have been a sculptor with the Zenith Gallery here in D.C. for the past 36 years and know a little bit about aesthetics. Once you start chipping away at what makes us most desirable, you can never go back and restore the unique charm, character, beauty, and skyline that makes D.C. so special.

I think of D.C. as a beautifully intricate and unique fine woolen tapestry lovingly passed on to us from generations of Washingtonians. I don't want to replace it with a machine made polyester cookie-cutter mass-produced quilt made in China.

It is one thing for big box store to go into a dying neighborhood to help revive it. It is another thing altogether to come into a thriving community with vast disregard to what is working well there.

Our unique small businesses would be put in tremendous jeopardy just because the big box stores, poised like vultures, are waiting to capitalize on and conquer their last

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frontier of urban development. We didn't let the English conquer us.

Washington needs to be protected from the homogenization and Walmart-ization of our unique special neighborhoods. Our officials should always keep D.C.'s best interest in mind and also remember the horrible economic impact that could occur if our small businesses are driven out. We could lose major tax revenue because big box stores pay their taxes to their headquarter states. We would reduce our consumer choices, increase traffic congestion, and create numerous planning problems.

Washington, D.C. is different. And it should be treated as such, and respected for the history it protects and represents.

I suggest that big box stores be defined and required to obtain a special exception, which would include community input and an economic impact study.

Thank you.

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(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any questions, colleagues?

Again, I'm going to ask that we not applaud. When we get ready to leave, if you see her on the way out, tell her that she did a good job, but I would ask be respectful and not applaud. Thank you. I've asked that two times now. Okay.

Next.

MS. GUZMAN: Good evening, Chairman Hood and members of the Zoning Commission. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the zoning regulations review.

My name is Stephanie Guzman, and I'm a 12th grader at School Without Walls. I have been a Ward 4 resident for 15 years on the 1400 block of Primrose Road.

I'm particularly interested today in developing and maintaining affordable housing in historic communities.

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As the new comprehensive plan states there is a need for, quote, ASubstantial revisions and reorganization even new zones.@ Today I want to emphasize the need for one new kind of zone in particular: the conservation districts.

Currently, D.C. has 56 historic district but no conservation districts. I=ve been researching this issue and found that historic neighborhoods have a greater variety of housing options, and tend to be mixed income more often than non-historic neighborhoods. In conservation districts historic homes and buildings could still be preserved but without the stringent requirements of historic districts that often lead to higher costs.

Wards 3 and 4 do not have the same concentration of residential historic buildings as do other areas of the city, making them excellent candidates for conservation districts. In a report published in 2003, Donovan Rypkema, a principal of the D.C. based

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firm, PlaceEconomics, calls for the creation of conservation districts as a tool to further historic preservation. He notes that conservation districts should be initiated at the neighborhood level by residents in established, primarily, residential areas that display a distinctive neighborhood character among other criteria. Some areas in Wards 3 and 4 meet the criteria but there=s no legislation in place under which neighborhood residents can initiate a conservation district.

I wanted to testify on this point because mixed income neighborhoods, which most often occur in historic communities, and can be preserved with conservation districts, are integral to sustainable city growth. Rypkema notes, quote, AMost neighborhoods in American cities are essentially still segregated by income, race, occupation, and education. The exception in study after study is in local historic districts.@

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Historic neighborhoods attract and accommodate a diverse population. This is due to many factors such as the quality of buildings, neighborhood activists who make efforts to protect their community, a wider variety of housing options, greater initial affordability, protection, and protection from demolition and major changes due to preservation legislation.

Economists from William College and Brown University conducted a study that found, quote, ACultural diversity and tolerance are not byproducts but key drivers of economic progress.@

I recommend that the Zoning Commission place a high priority on historic preservation because it enables socio-economic variety. According to federal guidelines, a historic district is a significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically, aesthetically, or both.

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The important distinguishing trait of a conservation district is that it can be small and specialized, encompassing only as many buildings as the neighborhood desires. Buildings in both types of districts benefit from a federal tax credit and local laws facilitating preservation.

I propose to the Zoning Commission that the ability to designate areas as conservation districts, after being requested by its resident, be written into the ZRR. Conservation districts are one proposition to consider in order to maintain affordable housing and grapple with the challenges of living in a dynamic city.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you, thank you very much. Let's see if we have any questions for you. We appreciate your testimony. Okay. Commissioner -- okay.

Commissioner May. Everybody wants to ask you a question.

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MS. GUZMAN: All right.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Oh, there we go.

So I would have to say, the fact that you're here testifying is a bit unusual. We don't often hear from high school students on zoning matters unless, occasionally, on the things like the School Without Walls case, for example. So I'm interested, what inspired you to come? Did you just hit upon conservation districts and decided the Zoning Commission needed to know --

MS. GUZMAN: Well, no --

COMMISSIONER MAY: -- or were you driven by something else?

MS. GUZMAN: Oh, sure. No, actually, it's part of, as a School Without Walls senior, we have to do a senior project, and my topic was on gentrification but looking at it from more of a historical preservation angle, particularly with what I'm trying to do with my project is find ways to improve

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affordable housing in D.C. So what I found in my research is that there=s a real housing crisis, and housing is just too expensive, and there are too many residents who may be pushed out.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Well thank you very much for your testimony and good luck with your senior project. I know, from my son=s experience, how difficult that is. So good luck getting through it.

MS. GUZMAN: Thank you.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you. I just wanted to understand the connection that you=re making with affordable housing, in that, often times the restrictions in historic districts are hard and costly for people who are at the lower financial scale to keep up with. So I=d like to hear you explain that a little bit further.

MS. GUZMAN: Oh, sure. So historic districts that I found --

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Put the mic up --

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MS. GUZMAN: Oh, sorry. -- so in historic districts, right now as they are in D.C., if you're in a historic district you need to get permits for any kind of exterior renovation on your home. And it manages down to what sorts of windows you can have. And the key difference between conservation districts is that conservation districts function to basically preserve against unnecessary demolition and major changes in the neighborhood that are out of character.

One of my, actually a couple of my fellow testifiers here today mentioned how they thought it was a big issue that lots of buildings are going up or torn down that are out of character with the neighborhood. And the conservation district protects against that mainly, without telling you what kind of windows you need.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other

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questions?

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I also wanted to thank you for your testimony. And you said you done research. Were there particular cities where you thought the conservation district concept was working best or that you based your testimony on?

MS. GUZMAN: Yes. Actually, D.C.'s situation is pretty comparable to Nashville and San Antonio. And both of those places have had residents advocate for the conservation district, and it was implemented successfully.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: San Antonio, and Knoxville was the other one?

MS. GUZMAN: Nashville.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Nashville.

MS. GUZMAN: Sorry.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate you coming out.

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MS. GUZMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Commissioner  
Turnbull.

COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Yes, Mr.  
Chairman.

I was just curious. So you're  
going on to college?

MS. GUZMAN: Yes, I am.

COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: What do  
you plan to major in?

MS. GUZMAN: Urban planning or  
urban studies.

COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: You know,  
I sort of guessed that but I had to hear it for  
myself.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: You said urban  
planning?

MS. GUZMAN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think the city  
may be looking for a planning director.

COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: That=s  
right.

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CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Okay.  
Good.

COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Thank you  
for coming down.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: And we really  
appreciate your testimony. I really like what  
you phrased and this will stick with me through  
this process, that D.C. zoning regulations are  
kept part of our community=s well-being it must  
be reviewed with the change in nature of our  
neighborhoods in mind. I really appreciate  
that. We all do. Thank you very much.

MS. GUZMAN: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Great job.

MS. GUZMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Next.

MR. RIES: Good evening to the  
Commission. Thank you for having me. I=m  
welcoming you to Ward 3.

My name is Bernard Ries. I live on  
Legation Street in Ward 3. And I=ve lived here  
for 53 years, in the District.

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Unlike many of the stalwart young folks who have previously appeared before you, neither I nor my wife is capable of carrying a week or two=s worth of groceries on the handlebars of a bike. Life without ready access to a car would, in fact, be a very diminished life for us.

Having cheerfully paid District taxes for more than five decades, we take this opportunity to say on behalf of older folks, the handicapped, families with children, that it would be grossly unfair to adopt rules that might make it impossible to park near our homes.

At the very least, we endorse the sensible advice of counsel members Evans and Cheh to shelve OP=s proposal until DDOT acts on the subject.

We further oppose the creation of second homes in rear yards. To allow property owner Jones to erect a towering two-story, 20 foot high, 900 square-foot building in his backyard, perhaps just a scant distance from

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neighbor Smith=s small lot, is little less than a taking of the property rights of Smith. Further, permitting Jones to house as many as five people in that looming building makes the proposal even more dismaying.

For those purposes that OP has named as warranting such intrusive housing, it is more than sufficient to continue the practice of allowing internal ADUs in existing homes.

Finally, your close inspection of the massive document pending before you is crucial. Take this horrible example. An OP amendment would allow, as a home occupation, the tutoring of five musical students, quote, Aat any one time@. So a teacher of drums, or trumpets, or saxophones could instruct five pupils simultaneously for hour after ear blasting hour. This absurdity suggests that the Commission must carefully analyze all 1000 pages with a keen eye out for such instances of poor judgment.

Thank you for your thoughtful

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consideration and good luck to the Commission.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Any questions, colleagues?

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Vice Chair.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Mr. Ries, if it was easier for people to age in place and also have an accessible in front of their house parking space, you get a special permit as you can get a special permit for parking, you know, handicapped, would that make you more comfortable?

MR. RIES: It would make me more comfortable, but I'm thinking also --

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Can you talk into the mic?

MR. RIES: I'm sorry.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: I'm sorry.

MR. RIES: -- it would make me more comfortable, but I'm thinking also of the people I see at the local school, the young mothers who come to pick up their children every

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day, take them home, hundreds of them, how are they going to move those children around? How about the disabled people? There are a lot of people who need their cars.

We could -- my wife and I could make it without a car, but it would be much more difficult.

And this is obviously come down to being a very generational conflict that=s going on here with very little attention being paid to those people who are going to lag behind.

I think that has been recognized by some of the Commissioners in meetings that have been held in the past. I hope that continues to be recognized.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions? Okay. Thank you.

Next.

MS. CARTER: My name is Connie Carter. I thank you for hearing me tonight. I live at 3027 University Terrace Northwest,

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which lies within the Chain Bridge Road University Terrace Tree and Slope Preservation Overlay, which I will refer to as the CBRUT Overlay.

I am here representing the Chain Bridge Road University Terrace Preservation Committee, an IRS approved 501C3 organization that was formed to protect and preserve the natural topography, mature trees, stream beds, and natural vegetation in our neighborhood as well as protect the park like setting of the area. So essentially, I want to echo the concern about zoning with regard to the unique nature of neighborhoods.

Our Committee sought and won the establishment of the CBRUT Overlay, which among other things, regulates alterations or disturbances of terrain, the destruction of trees, and coverage with impervious surfaces, and provides for widely spaced residences.

The Preservation Committee spent two years and many thousands of donated dollars to

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usher the Overlay into existence. The Overlay was approved by the Zoning Commission and codified into law in 1999.

Oh, there we go.

The Committee is extremely concerned that the Office of Planning, OP, through its rewrite of the zoning regulations may inadvertently be attempting to change administratively the Zoning Commission codified in 1999. Furthermore, we are very concerned by the fact that OP has never seen fit to inform us let alone consult with us regarding the changes that it has proposed.

Perhaps Chairman Hood, who sat on the Zoning Commission at the time, will recall the CBRUT Overlay was triggered by our Preservation Committee and not by Office of Planning or Office of Zoning.

The Preservation Committee worked hard through a very careful process and hired a zoning attorney and land-use expert to craft an overlay that is unique to our neighborhood

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and protects the unique features of our neighborhood. But OP=s changes would simply make the Overlay match the cookie-cutter table format proposed for all residential housings zones in subtitle D.

For example, current development standards for the CBR Overlay states that, AWhere there is conflict between the Overlay and the underlying zoning, the more restrictive provisions of this title shall govern.@ OP has replace this language now with, ADevelopment in the R5 CBUTRB1BA zone shall be in accordance with the combined requirements of the following development standard tables and development regulations at this chapter.@

What is very clear in the current text has become less clear and perhaps even less restrictive in the proposed ZRR text. When the subject of overlays was discussed by the zoning regulation review task force, OP was quick to say there would be no changes to existing overlay. They told us, AIf you like your

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current overlay, you can keep your current overlay.@ Sounds familiar.

That statement has proved not be true. The format has been substantially changed and it is now necessary to flip back and forth between subtitles in order to derive any meaning from the language, and the protective provisions that have been changed, substantially changed. We are concerned that a ZRR as approved as currently written it would be -- within the other subtitles that could potentially change the provisions of the overlay, which -- deliberately or otherwise.

Some of the more significant changes in the proposed text include: the actual square and lot numbers that identify properties within the overlay have been separated from the overlay chapter and moved into a separate ZRR subtitle. However, there=s no reference to that subtitle and chapter in the overlay.

The current punitive language

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1568B3 restricts anyone from applying for a building permit for a lot on which trees are removed, cut down, or fatally damaged if prohibited for a period of seven years.

I'm sorry this is so boring, but it really is about protection of character.

The proposed ZRR state, text states, ANo building permit shall be issued for a period of five years from such removal -- Board of Zoning Adjustment grants and special exception.

The CBUT Preservation Committee testified regarding these changes in March 2013 at the Office of Planning Performance Oversight Hearing before Chairman Mendelson. The attached letter, which is on my testimony, is entered into the record of that hearing. Since March, the Office of Planning has had ample time to contact the Committee to discuss the proposed ZRR changes or return the text to its existing state.

Anyway, for the record, the Chain Bridge Road University Terrace Preservation

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Committee is strongly opposed to any changes or format in Sections 1565 that would change our Overlay District.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner May.

COMMISSIONER MAY: So you've done some analysis of the proposed text versus the original overlay text.

And generally speaking, the intention of the Office of Planning, as I understand it, is to translate that, more or less, verbatim. I see some changes that you have pointed out here. But I'm wondering, have you actually done it sort of line by line? And if you have, can you submit that to us?

MS. CARTER: We can do that; we have not.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

MS. CARTER: I think the overarching concern is that there's no teeth to -- or this will remove any teeth that we had with

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an overlay. And that further --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Well I thought you were saying that, like the punitive measure, went from seven years to five years, which is not removing the teeth, it=s maybe dulling them a bit. Is that -- I mean, is there more to it than that?

MS. CARTER: I am the representative here to present it. I=m not the attorney and I=m not --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. Okay.

MS. CARTER: So I don=t know.

COMMISSIONER MAY: All right.

MS. CARTER: But if there is a way to communicate better, we would like that.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So I guess the point I would just make is that the way the Office of Planning has been trying to present this to us is that, generally speaking, what=s in current overlays will be translated into the new zones as they have been defined. And if there are discrepancies between what was

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in the overlay and the underlying zone versus the new zone, as it is established, it would be helpful to know that. Because I don't, you know, as far as I know, that's not the intention. Maybe there are a few tweaks here and there that we need to look at carefully, but it's not an intention to gut any of the overlays. It's a translation effort.

And I think that the, you know, I'm not sure that we can -- how far we'll get in arguing that it shouldn't be reformatted because you're sort of saying, well, we ought to just throw everything out that's been drafted. And I know some people would like to do that, but it would be more constructive at this moment to get that sort of line by line.

MS. CARTER: I'm good with that part. And I'll go back.

But you know, just in terms of there are a lot of people that have discussed tonight that zoning changes will change the character of neighborhoods. And we want to echo that as

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well. That this is uniquely two streets with unique trees, and a unique character. And even this young lady=s comment about conservation areas, there are lots of little bungalows in areas that allow for mature trees to grow, that have now been torn down, ripped down, and trees have been taken down because zoning=s allow it. And it -- you know so --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. CARTER: -- you get --

COMMISSIONER MAY: So I think the point there is, though, that there are changes that you would like to see made to the zoning regulations that would prevent the sort of things that are allowed by the current regulations?

MS. CARTER: Correct.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right? So I mean, understanding that as opposed to saying don=t change anything, because don=t change anything is going to allow all of these things to continue.

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I think the suggestion made by Ms. Guzman was very helpful because it points out a tool that might be used to try to protect neighborhoods in ways that, right now, only historic neighborhoods get the protection.

MS. CARTER: Well --

COMMISSIONER MAY: So I mean, it=s

--

MS. CARTER: -- I now realize that in presenting this, you know, this is --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. CARTER: -- you know, legalese, which I was uncomfortable since these aren=t my words.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. CARTER: But nevertheless, I do serve on the Committee and I know that we are --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. CARTER: -- you know, terribly afraid and frustrated by both the nature of the buildings that go up as a result of zoning, and

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with the preservation of the terrain and of density.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. CARTER: You know, you remember Morton Bender=s property and all of that. So --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. Well, I believe we are concerned about those things too. And the best way to, I guess, to take advantage of the study they have done is to present, you know, the most useful information possible. So if you can do more along those lines, that would be great.

MS. CARTER: Will do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Hold tight. Any other questions or comments?

I will tell you that I do remember this, and I can tell you, not only did the community work hard so did the Zoning Commission to try to see fit, to make sure that there is overlay. And my issue is, not trying to make it less restrictive, not taking

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anything away from any overlay that a community has worked with, and then again, trying to find the unintended consequences. We don't want to make it less restrictive. You know, I think neighborhoods work hard on overlays. And that's an issue that we're going to be working through with Office of Planning.

And I will associate my self with the comments of Commissioner May. Okay.

Next.

MR. SHEEHAN: My name is Rob Sheehan. I live at 3001 Veazey Terrace, Northwest, Apartment 504.

I moved into Adams Morgan 24 years ago. At that time I owned a car. Six months after moving into the city, my apartment mate took my car out, wrecked it, and sent my car insurances, insurance rates sky high. So I decided not to pay my insurance company and to get rid of my car. It was the best decision I've ever made.

Since August 17th, 1990, I've lived

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without an automobile. And since July 1, 1993, I've lived in Ward 3. The only time I've really miss my car is when I want to visit my family in the suburbs. But there has always been the VRE, the Metro, and car sharing to help fill these gaps.

This isn't to say that even getting to the suburbs has always involved a car. I've seen the BSO at the Strathmore several times just by taking Metro.

I've never testified before but I'm here because I think this is really important. I want to say that I strongly support reducing or eliminating parking minimums. I don't think they work to make the city a better place. And then the fact, in fact, end up, end up pushing additional costs onto people who don't own cars but who still want to live in an urban atmosphere.

My life has been enhanced by being able to live in a place where I did not have to make car payments, gas payments, insurance

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payments, and repair payments. And I hope that more people in my city can do that in the future.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Let's see if we have any questions. Okay. Not seeing any. Thank you very much.

MR. SHEEHAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Next.

And I think on this panel we have one more?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Two more? Okay. It looks like two more. Okay. We have two more. Then we'll call -- then we'll change the batteries in the mic and we'll call the next panel.

You may begin.

MS. FARRELL: Thank you. Good evening. My name is Susan Farrell, 4284 Massachusetts Avenue.

Some of you may remember me. We

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spent many many hours together on the AU Campus plan. And as one who participated in all of that preparation, I am sure we all share the same goal: to simplify the process. So I just have a few comments to make about the campus plan process.

Based on the recent experience, there are several proposed changes, which I believe can be improved upon. And I=d like to make three points.

Number one, the rules for further processing should be changed to prohibit the combination of further processing with the first stage campus plan submittal. The experience of our year-long process demonstrated the difficult task of trying to evaluate an overall plan concept at the same time as looking at the specifics. On multiple occasions during the discussions regarding the massive AU East Campus proposal, Commissioners stated, AWell, we=ll just deal with that during further processing.@ Only to be reminded that

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this was the further processing. So combining the -- and I don't find that surprising -- combining the concept of a grand design with the detail of building façades and gradings, under the argument that it had to be done quickly, seems to set up a deadline behavior situation in which decisions with long-lasting applications are made quickly. So I would propose that the further processing should be separate from the campus plan submittal and filed after the Zoning Commission has issued its order. That's number one.

Number two, I would oppose the section which allows the zoning administration to unilaterally amend an approved campus planned. There was much discussion, again during our many months together, that said historically the campus plans had been simply amended along the way. So if you didn't really like exactly what you got, you just change it. And we would suggest that any amendment should be reviewed, at least by the affected ANC, so

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the residents had some opportunity to give an opinion and to know that it was happening.

The third learning, I would suggest from our time together, is that the proposed plan does not go far enough to address the university ownership of commercial property in residential areas. Universities should not be given the option of including the use of commercial property in the campus plan. Rather, since the acquisition of commercial property appears to be an integral part of universities= expansion strategies, transparencies would suggest that use of commercial space be overtly included in the campus plan.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Colleagues, any questions? Thank you.

Next.

MR. DOBB: Thank you for your service and an appreciation to all of us. This is an amazing model of civic engagement. It

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shows that we are all invested, and wherever we stand on the particulars.

I'm Fred Dobb, number 16 on there. On the 4400 block of Yuma Street. I am here as a proud parent of two DCPS kids: nine and five, who hopefully, will be in this auditorium someday.

And full disclosure, as a car owner, who is also a bike commuter whenever possible, including tonight. And I also speak as a member of the clergy.

And I want to speak to that broader notion, and this is really in broad support of the zoning rewrite, the understanding that we are looking out, as all religions do, certainly in my own, the Jewish faith, speaks about the long-range implications that we need to think big picture, and long-term, and about the larger community. There is a notion of civic good that occasionally must necessarily trump the individual good of particular people who were already in a particular place. That may

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even include me.

I'm here for a principal, not on behalf of any developer, there's no financial interest, I don't represent any nonprofit around her, looking to expand, although I think we're enriched by having universities, we're enriched by having wonderful businesses that we can walk to. But I'm here out of a sense of civic accommodation.

A belief that more people, and more diverse people, and more folks of fewer means should be able to live in our city. And yes, in our neighborhood.

When I first moved to this area, understandable, people who had been here for a long time, probably before the Metro was built, were putting up signs, A No more than four, @ for a development that was right above the Metro. And I was a bit embarrassed on behalf of my new neighborhood that this opportunity for transit-oriented development and thinking long-term was lost. All of the additional

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units that got built somewhere else are now those cars speeding in front of my children with Virginia and Maryland license plates who have to move beyond transit zones when we fail to accommodate the realities of a reasonable in-fill envelopment.

The loss of the N8 bus on my street was sad. I used to love the civic duty of shoveling, not only the sidewalk, but the standing area in front of it. Had there been more in-fill development, perhaps the N8 would still be here and we would be in a positive cycle of the kind of richness that density can bring.

1958, had a very different sense of what=s appropriate. The 1950s was the time of Robert Moses, for civic planning. I come from the Mosaic tradition, a covenantal tradition that we=re all in it together. As Deuteronomy 29 says, AFrom the wood chopper to the water drawer, those of you here and those of you not yet here, this covenant is for you.@ This covenant, this opportunity should extend to

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living, quiet, private, most desirable neighborhood to ever more people and our city will be richer for it.

Thank you for your efforts.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to thank you for your very eloquent testimony.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Anyone else? Okay. Thank you very much.

Next.

MR. MARTIN: It was indeed eloquent. That's a hard act to follow. I'm going to have to read. Sorry about that.

Chairman Hood, and Commissioners, my name is Larry Martin. I lived in the District since '86 and worked for the federal government.

When I moved here, I made little money and I lived in the attic of a group house

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in Ward 1. I mostly rode my bike where I needed to go, but Metro was also convenient.

Today I live in Ward 4, Metro is not convenient. And although I'm a member of Capitol bike share, I drive more miles in D.C. than I ride. In fact, I have little choice but start each day in a car; I drop my wife off at work; I drop the kid off at school; I leave the car in the garage where my wife works. And then if the weather's nice, I grab a bike and pedal to work. If it's not, I take Metro. Evenings, I ride a bike up to Malcolm X Park, and then it's a bus home. I am Mr. Multi-modal.

But I'm also running counter to what I see the trends in D.C. to be. We're increasing population; density is permitting more and more neighborhood shopping; eateries; there's less need for a car.

I moved into a neighborhood that is largely car dependent. I live in Crestwood. I wish it were otherwise but that would not change the fact that there are still quite a few

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neighborhoods in D.C. that are more like suburbs than they are mixed use and walkable, with all your amenities in walking distance. And I'll return to this in a minute.

So I do believe that the 50s-based zoning code has been in need of updating for quite a while now. I'd like to send my respects to outgoing planning director, Harriet Tregoning for giving D.C. what I think was a very long opportunity to think through what we need.

In contrast to what I've heard here tonight, you know, I became involved with this about five years ago, and frankly, burned-out on the number of meetings and reviews that were held around this. I was also chair of the Transportation Planning Board Citizen Advisory Committee in 2007 and I couldn't do everything anyway.

I'm coming back to this now. And I think that the zoning rewrite advanced a lot of different important ideas. And what we have

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before us now is a very moderate compromise on many of the issues that were most contentious. In my opinion, it was a good process with a good outcome.

The kind of growth now occurring needs a code in touch with current trends and is forward-looking. The key dimensions of this are addressed in the update and to include reduced parking minimums, more accessory apartments, and corner stores. To the extent that the update simplifies organization of the code, that=s a good thing too.

So we all know that the price of housing in D.C. is getting steeper every year. If D.C. does not, if D.C. does not continue to take active steps to provide affordable housing, we=re going to out price a lot of people, not only lower wage but also folks just beginning their careers.

Accessory apartments, I think, help provide for this. And I=m in favor of that.

I seriously doubt if my

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neighborhood, Crestwood, is ever going to be walkable, except for the dog. And like many neighborhoods in D.C., it=s just not designed that way. When I go out for an evening, I know where to go where I can park, because I need to park because I need to drive.

But I think there are a lot of places where we don=t need to have that. There are transit accessible places, and I think as a result of that parking minimums in areas well served by transit is a good move.

I=d also like to voice my support of the corner store. I had a lot of clever little lines associated with that but they=re going to have to wait. You can read my testimony.

Thank you very much for this opportunity tonight.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions?

PARTICIPANT: No.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you very much. Okay.

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I think we need to take a break to put another battery in the mic.

And let me just, while that=s being done, how many people still need to testify tonight? Could you raise your hand? Okay.

What I think I=m going to do is ask if you could clear the front row for us, just the front row, in the middle section of the front row. This might be dangerous. I=m going to ask everyone who needs to testify to come, as soon as the gentleman gets finished putting the batteries in, to just come fill the row. I don=t want to call names. If you just come fill the row. I know that sometime may be dangerous, but, and then once the front row is filled in the center, we=ll fill, we=ll do another seating. Okay. In that order. Because I didn=t see a lot of hands raised. Okay.

I know I want to hear from the gentleman who also experienced the problem coming in with me, from Howard University, so

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save a seat for him. I would like to hear from our students also.

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I want everyone who wants to testify, while we have space, to come to the front and just sit in the middle and on the first row. If you=re not able to make it this time, if you=re not able to get down here this time, on the front in the middle, we=ll do another seating. Okay. Okay.

We have about three more seats left. There=s some in the front if someone else -- three more folks.

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Anybody who wants to testify. Anybody.

I still have two more seats in the front. Okay. And we will probably -- now how many people do we have left? The young lady here, I know. Okay. Ms. Renshaw and others. Okay. We=ll get you all on the second seating. Okay. There=s still some seats left. You

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might have to squeeze -- okay. Okay. So we'll save one there for her. Okay. Great.

We'll start with Commissioner Jones, to my right and to your left. Would you like to start?

MS. JONES: Hello. All right. Thank you for allowing my testimony this evening about these important matters.

Impervious surfaces. I had an SMD meeting last night with reps from D.C. Water. There has been a charge on our water bills for the past five years that measures the impervious surface of our property and fees are tacked onto the bill because of it. Excuse me. In D.C.'s effort to clean up the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, water runoff from storms and drains are polluting them. And this is a serious problem that needs to be addressed.

However, without any warning, or more importantly, community vetting, D.C. Water charges customers twice for the lack of impervious surface on our properties in order

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to fix the storm water runoff problem. The fee will be on our bills for 15 more years and is expected to go up every October 1st, until the fee sunsets or the billion-dollar bill is paid back to the federal government for the storm water runoff tunnels mandated by the federal government to help fix the problem.

You may ask what this has to do with the new zoning regs. Well, the new zoning regs cement those fees on our bills, possibly forever. The new zoning regulations require new or renovated homes and businesses to include impervious services, to be measured for the green area ratio, as a matter of right, and quality standards for new housing monitored by DCRA.

However, when people buy existing homes or those of us who have owned our homes for more than five years are being penalized for impervious surfaces that are not defined by the existing zoning regulations, or the new regs.

The new zoning regulations don=t

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address reasonable remedies for the existing homeowner to reduce the burden for the lack of impervious surface or fees on their water bill. Existing homeowners should not bear the burden -- new zoning regulations that were not in effect when the homes were built unless they intend to renovate.

Compounding the issue is the lack of any agency, committee, or commission regulating and monitoring D.C. Water, like there is for every other utility. D.C. Water is not regulated by OPC, the public service commission, WSSC, or formerly court counsel.

So I am asking that the Zoning Commission consider wording in the new regulations that would not penalize homeowners of existing structure=s lack of impervious surfaces until major renovations for permits are requested or some other reasonable method of incorporating impervious surfaces for residents in the green area ratio.

My second brief matter is the new

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zoning regulations have -- I'm an ANC Commissioner. And the new zoning regulations lowers the standard of residential and voter input from many of the new regulations. Many more issues are a matter of right and still intrude on community character and should be special exceptions, not a matter of right.

So I'm asking the Zoning Commission to consider all the issues that are germane to maintaining residential character continuity, such as parking, ADUs, corner stores, and affordable housing ought to be special exceptions rather than a matter of right.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Jones. Could you just, even though I knew we know you, but could you identify yourself for the record.

MS. JONES: Oh, I'm sorry. All right. My name is Judi Jones. I'm an ANC Commissioner and Ward 4, 4B07.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

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MS. JONES: And that=s Lamond and Takoma.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner May.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Sorry. I=m confused about the connection between zoning regulations, and the GAR, and your water bill. How is the changes that have already been passed in GAR affecting your water bill?

MS. JONES: On our water bills is --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Impervious surface charges, I=m aware of that.

MS. JONES: -- impervious surface and it goes toward the rainwater runoff.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: It was not -- that was not properly vetted through the community. That fee.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: And in the zoning regs, it says that there ought to be a certain ratio

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of green area --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: -- for businesses mostly, but certainly for new residential buildings.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: Or new residential homes.

And the community of existing homeowners have not had the opportunity to say, well, we have, you know, 70 percent of my property is being charged a fee, and what is the remedy for that? How do I, how do I lower the impervious surface charge on my bill? Or how do I get in compliance with any zoning regs? There are none. They are not addressed.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So there=s not a requirement to get a retrofit in an existing home to meet the GAR. It just kicks in when there=s a certain, you know, for new houses, or for wholesale renovations, or something like that. And it=s actually quite

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minimal and anything, it's always residential use. It doesn't apply in some zones at all.

MS. JONES: It doesn't apply?

COMMISSIONER MAY: In some zones at all, as I recall.

MS. JONES: It applies to businesses, they say --

COMMISSIONER MAY: I understand it applies to businesses.

But, so the connection between the zoning regs though and the impervious surface charge, I mean, there really actually isn't one. I mean, if there's, if there's a remedy that you can find to get out of the charge, that's really -- it's not going to be connected to zoning.

MS. JONES: If they, if existing homeowners -- there is a connection.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: It is that, somehow, we're being charged a fee because we're out of compliance with something.

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COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. But --

MS. JONES: And most of it --

COMMISSIONER MAY: -- that=s their regulation, it=s not ours. They=re not looking at zoning and saying, based on zoning, you don=t comply with GAR, and therefore, we=re charging the impervious surface charge. They=re just charging it to everybody.

MS. JONES: They are charging it to everyone. But it is a charge that the community has not vetted.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: If there is a new development or a new building, whether it=s business or residential, they have the opportunity to say to them, well, a certain amount of this should be impervious surface. This was not allowed with the community.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: And that was the problem.

And I think it can be addressed in

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the new zoning regs but I don=t know where, if it is, I don=t know where it is.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. I --

MS. JONES: But they are asking for a remedy because this charge just showed up on their bill --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: -- and without community vetting.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So honestly, I don=t think it=s not actually connected to the regulations that we have passed or are contemplating. That doesn=t mean that there isn=t something that should be done about it and something that should be taken up, but there are other -- your issue is with the D.C. Water, not with the zoning regulations.

MS. JONES: Oh, no, it can be with -- they have new regulations about green area --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. But

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that=s not --

MS. JONES: If I can finish.

COMMISSIONER MAY: -- tied to your water bill, though.

MS. JONES: If they has new regulations for new housing and new businesses about green area ratio, and they are giving the opportunity to comply with the new zoning regs, what do existing homeowners have if, you know, 70 or 80 or even 90 percent of their homes or their property is impervious and they are being charged for that?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So --

MS. JONES: And so I=m asking that the new zoning regs, there ought to be some language in the new zoning regs that say to existing homeowners, AThere is some remedy or suggestions for reducing@ -- because it feels like, it feels like were out of compliance.

COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

MS. JONES: And so --

COMMISSIONER MAY: I can only say

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that I don't think that if you go to D.C. Water and say, 'You know what? I fully comply with GAR, can you give me a discount to impervious surface charge,' you're not going to get it. I don't think that that's the way it's going to work.

MS. JONES: Well, there ought to be suggestions in the new zoning regulations that say, 'Okay, if we have a driveway that's all cement, well, you may want to put pavers in there to reduce the charge,' or you know, what if you have a pitched roof instead of a flat roof and you can't put --

COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

MS. JONES: -- you know, a lawn on your roof?

COMMISSIONER MAY: Sure. So actually, this is not really zoning related, but right now, D.C. Water has released a plan for implementing massive green infrastructure in, largely in northwest, to alleviate the need for more of the tunnels. What you're paying

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for in that impervious surface charge are the big tunnels. Right? So eliminating the Piney Branch Tunnel and eliminating a portion of the Potomac Tunnel is the objective of this new green infrastructure plans.

I suggest you visit their website or talk to them and get information about it because they have a public comment period that=s running through March 15th or so. And they really want to hear from you about that. And there may be incentives in there for homeowners to introduce green infrastructure type stuff. Green roofs, or rain gardens, or things like that, that would actually help you reduce your bill and help them solve the storm water problem.

MS. JONES: Okay.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Commissioner Jones, you already know that was a Council action, right?

MS. JONES: No, I don=t.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. It was a

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Council action by the City Council. Actually, we in the ward -- and we are in Ward 3 tonight -- Councilmember Cheh, I believe it was a action of her, you might want to look at that bill. But one thing that I -- we will -- one of the questions I wrote in my notes is to see if there=s any correlation with what we did in GR, which I doubt, because that actually happened long before we even passed GAR. That=s a Council action. Okay.

MS. JONES: All right.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: But we=ll --

MS. JONES: But let me --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: -- we will look at it.

MS. JONES: -- but let me say that whatever you all do, please let it be a special exception. Don=t lose the voice of the community instead of a matter of right.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: We heard that loud and clear.

MS. JONES: Very good.

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CHAIRMAN HOOD: Believe me. Not just tonight either. Okay. All right.

We=re going to go to the young lady who came down, who=s on the and. If we can give her the mic.

Hold on. Did anybody else have any other comments? Okay.

Thank you, Commissioner.

MS. BARNES MOSAID: Okay. Hello. My name is San Luisa Barnes Mosaïd. And I am a resident of the District of Columbia. I=ve been here all my life. I=m a fourth-generation Washingtonian.

I and my entire family have been very civically oriented, starting with the Junior Civic Association as a little girl coming up.

I, also in my studies, was taught that D.C. was originally was 10 miles square, 10 miles square. Part of that 10 miles went to Virginia. So we=re less than 10 miles square. And we have many people who are coming in to D.C.

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who want to be part of the group living in what=s left of that 10 mile square land area.

The thing that I am concerned about is the lack of input from the people who live, who pay taxes, and who=ve grown up, and who have helped make that 10 mile remaining part what it is today. When I look at this audience here, I do not see the diversity that I would expect to see: racially, educationally, economically.

And I know we=re talking right now about Ward 3 so that -- Ward 3 and Ward 4 -- I happen to live in Ward 4. This is part of -- but I don=t see Ward 4 reflected.

I just happened to run into two ladies over here in the Tenleytown library who invited me to this meeting. Okay. I think that something needs to be done about these hearings so that people know what=s going on.

I=m sure if you had to get a certain amount of people into this auditorium so that each of us could get \$1 million going out, the auditorium would be filled.

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We need to look at the way we communicate people getting information about things that make a dynamic impact on their future.

And I would like to add something to the gentleman talked about aging in place, and talked about carrying groceries, and talking about walking difficulty, and walking, and losing parking space. Those things are very very important. It doesn=t matter to you until it matters to you. Okay.

Thank you.

Does anyone have any questions?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. We were going to come to you for questions. But I don=t want to lose that because you may hear it again. It doesn=t matter to you until -- what was it?

MS. BARNES MOSAID: Until it matters to you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. That=s a good point.

Colleagues, any questions?

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PARTICIPANT: No.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. BARNES MOSAID: You're welcome. And thank you --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: And thank you to whoever --

MS. BARNES MOSAID: -- for listening to me.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: -- to whoever told you about this meeting tonight. That=s what it=s about. We=re trying to get the word out. We=re trying hard for while. Okay.

Next.

And you are Ms. Barnes, right?

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

MS. COOK: Hi. Good evening, Commissioners.

My name is Carolyn Cook, I=m an ANC Commissioner in -- hold it. I=m an ANC Commissioner in Ward 4. My commission is 3G01 but I am a Ward 4 resident.

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I'm here to testify on a couple, briefly, on a couple of matters. One is that I would appreciate it if the Zoning Commission would, this time, look at big box stores and provide some means of protection to the community. Ward 4 had two Walmarts put in, in spite of great opposition by the two affected ANCs.

I testified on behalf of of Ward 4. My district, as well as my neighboring commissioners, who were opposed to Walmart for a living wage.

Currently, the district zoning code does not -- you offer it as a matter of right development for a retail space larger than 75,000 square feet. But our neighboring jurisdictions -- and I have a list of them in my testimony, which I won't bother with -- have provided certain provisions to make sure that the characteristics of neighborhoods are not negatively impacted by big box stores.

According to a April 5th, 2012 memo by a

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legislative attorney to the Montgomery County Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee, he states, ABig box stores are distinguished from other uses because they produce more vehicle trips, more truck trips, more trips from further distances than other uses. Their large floor plan can create uninviting places for pedestrians because they generally form barriers to extending the urban character of some communities.@

Multiple big box stores -- this is my opinion -- that purchase foreign products made in sweatshops proliferate the exploitation of factory workers worldwide. Paying someone pennies a day for up to 18 hours work should not be condoned by any American company, let alone welcomed into major cities by zoning commissions, mayors, and council members as a matter of right. There are jobs to create, to fulfill a campaign promise, and then there are good paying, good quality jobs that contribute to the quality of life in our

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neighborhoods. I don't see Walmart as the second.

Big box stores notoriously woo away business from locally owned stores and competing supermarkets with the repetitive promise of lower prices. Residents are left with fewer, small, locally owned businesses and products to purchase, and are left with mass produced items of lesser quality and fewer choices.

Neighborhoods should not be forced to accept these kinds of stores that destroy the character and charm of D.C. and reward bad business practices.

Secondly, my district in particular is Barnaby Woods and Hawthorne, so we are all residential. I would let to see the available parking kept and that residents, commuters, tourists, houseguests, tradespeople, and other service providers are factored into the final equation when you are determining the parking supply in the district.

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I personally find it hard to believe that those of us living in the District, in particular in the suburbs, are using cars less. Imposing a one size fits all parking policy without regard to a neighborhood's location, demographics, or existing conditions is just plain wrong for D.C.'s diverse historic preservation, and the goal of creating an age friendly city by 2017. For the elderly, physically challenged, and single women like myself who rely on cars for safe, reliable, cost effective transport, we may not choose to put our health or safety at risk when using public transportation, particularly at night or during off-peak hours when dangerous encounters are more likely to occur.

As an ANC Commissioner, I'm on MPD's list. So I see all the time residents being knocked up and robbed, purse snatched, coming out of the Friendship Heights Metro. It is not a safe place to exit or enter. Others may not be able to access public

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transportation. Our particular bus -- we have two bus lines -- neither run on the weekends nor after 9 p.m. So for residents in my district in particular, it would be a two to four mile walk one way to get in and out of my district to Friendship Heights Metro. With all the routes eliminations from WMATA in upper Northwest, some neighborhoods have been left with no alternative to owning or renting a car.

Parking must provide access to businesses and residents. Parking should minimize frustration associated with people searching for too few parking spaces in front of their homes, which is a definite problem in Chevy Chase, D.C.

Owning a car maintains neighborhood livability and encourages aging in place.

I recommend that you retain the existing minimum parking requirements for new development and institutions; that you don't impose penalties for providing necessary parking supply; and that you guarantee a public

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process in response to reducing parking requirements.

I would also add that the city=s increased push for ridership on Metro bus and rail, where are the lower cost passed on to us as consumers? Why does D.C. continue to operate public parking garages -- excuse me -- why doesn=t D.C. operate public parking garages unlike our neighboring jurisdictions in Bethesda, Rockville, and Arlington? That instead, we charge a servant inconsistent rates. Should District residents not be entitled to subsidized parking as an incentive to ride public transportation?

And as far as EDUs, I support internal EDUs as long as they are kept indoors in private residences, in particular in a residential neighborhood. Where I represent, to minimize the impact to neighbors and neighborhood.

I would hope that you establish a process for complying with safety code

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regulations and tax laws before removing your authorization.

I'm against external ADUs. And I actually discussed this with Chairman Mendelson, that my family when they moved here 50 years ago, chose to live in a suburban neighborhood in Northwest D.C. as opposed to the city center. Our neighborhood is asleep by 10 p.m.; streets are quiet; we have relatively spacious lots and plenty of parking available. By applying a one-size-fits-all solution that allows for two residential units on a single family home lot, you disproportionately disadvantage suburban city dwellers who forfeited the higher home values of an urban --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Can I interrupt you? I was actually wondering how much time you had. I think I'm --

PARTICIPANT: (Off-mic speaking.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. One of the things -- I haven't cut anybody off and the reason being, this whole exercise was for us to

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come out and hear from the public. So I don't want to, on the one hand, say I want to hear from the public then cut you off. But I also want to be mindful of others who want to testify. And I think I've allowed you a lot more time than I've asked everyone else when they go over. So if you can just wrap it up. That will be great.

MS. COOK: Sure.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

MS. COOK: Let's see. Again, I'm just saying that I think that you are disproportionately disadvantaging suburban dwellers who have forfeited the higher home values that people enjoy down in the city center in favor of single-family homes with quiet green spaces and free unlimited parking for cars to transport kids, pets, and grandparents when needed in town and out of town.

And I'll just finish by asking you, what are we getting for urban sprawl for our inferior home values in suburban D.C.?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Do we have your

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testimony? Do we have a copy of your testimony?

MS. COOK: I have this copy and I can e-mail --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Well, you can submit it. It's always good to give it to us because we make little dots and underline, and do little things, important points. So that would be very helpful to us. Thank you.

Next.

MR. FRANKEL: Good evening. My name is David Frankel. I live here in Ward 3 in Friendship Heights. I've been here for 28 years and I've lived in the District for years before that in Southwest D.C. and also Mount Pleasant a few years before that.

First, thank you for being here this evening and listening to us.

My house is about two-thirds of a block off of Wisconsin Avenue behind Rodman's drugstore. So over the 28 years I've lived in my house, I have seen how traffic has increased

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dramatically and the parking issues have increased dramatically over those 28 years.

In particular, I think there are two causes. One is there are many more group houses. For example, the house right next door used to be a single-family home, just one family living there, now it's a group house and there are, at least, five people living there with four cars. Over time, there have been times with as many as six cars living in that one house. Well, people owning six cars in that house.

And the other reason, of course, is that development along Wisconsin Avenue over the last 28 years. In Friendship Heights, as you all know, it's been a shopping mecca and people, both going to the Metro and also people who want to shop in the various shops or work in the office buildings that have been built there over the last 28 years, need a place to park. They parked on my street and the neighboring streets. And it's very difficult.

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I am very concerned that the proposal to get rid of parking minimums will be a -- will really diminish our quality of life, our ability to park, our ability to have friends, neighbors, service providers come to do what they need to do in our house.

Parking, it's in externality. I'm not an economist by profession but I've taken some graduate school courses in economics. And just like pollution, if someone pollutes the air in Ohio and it comes here and it -- we pay the consequences, the same thing happens with parking. You build the building and you don't require parking in the building, or there's no minimum, the builder, the developer can reap the benefits of whatever rent they can get from the tenants but they can shift those costs onto people like me who live near Rodman or near major shopping venues.

The Metro service, I want to just touch upon that. The Red Line, first of all, the Metro, WMATA did a study a few years ago of

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their core capacity. I'm sure -- I hope you're all familiar with it. And the core capacity was projected a few years ago to be reached in the year 2020 on the Red Line. Now that may have changed because the last time I read that was a few years ago. But -- am I touching? Okay. It's an issue that we're all going to address. There's problems with the service of Metro, and there's problems with the capacity.

Next, I went touch upon Portland, Oregon, always used as the -- by the transit oriented development folks and perhaps by the Office of Planning as the mecca for getting rid of parking minimums. Well, I hope we all know that the Portland City Council or Zoning Commission, I don't know which, is thinking about or has overturned that. I don't know all the details but I've read articles about it. I don't, again, I don't have the details.

Now I want to switch to the subject of accessory dwelling units. Because I wonder

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how many people have appeared before you who actually have a legal accessory developed apartment accessory dwelling unit in their home. Well, I am one of those people. I've gone through the process before the BZA. I did it several years ago. It was not a difficult process and I don't think the rules need to be changed. You should keep the special exception.

And I'd be happy to entertain questions on that. Because I doubt you've heard from other people who have done what I've done. I've been through the process. It does work. It doesn't need to be fixed; it's not broken, don't fix it.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
Any questions, Commissioners?

Vice Chair.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman.

I have a question because I actually

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take the Red Line up to Friendship Heights to go shopping. And what is astounding to me is -- because I do walk around and I see parking, you know, garage, it=s never full; parking lots, never full.

So my question is, who is actually parking on your block if there=s all this parking that=s available and it=s free because you get it stamped. Again, I=m not that familiar. I take the Metro up there. So I=m kind of concerned but some of your, maybe, assumptions or statements.

MR. FRANKEL: It=s working good.

During the week, Monday through Friday, business hours, people from other -- usually people from other parts are coming to my block, parking on the street. They have the residential parking passes, stickers on their car. That allows them to park in front of my house and my neighbor=s homes. They walked to the Metro. Or, my guess, I can=t say, I don=t know when you=re going to Friendship Heights to

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shop, most people go there on weekends.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Too often.

MR. FRANKEL: Too often. Okay. But most people go there on weekends. So that=s a different character of person that=s coming during the weekends than we have, say, during the week. I don=t know if that=s being clear.

And also the parking stickers for the various venues, whether it be the Rodman=s lot or the Chevy Chase Pavilion lot, they have limits on how long someone can stay there to park. So people that want to go from shop to shop to shop, they=re more likely to park on my street than if they=re going, say to, Chevy Chase Pavilion. So you get a lot of those people on the streets.

And if you talk to people that live around the Friendship Heights area, they=re very concerned about the fact that we can=t park our cars, or our friends and neighbors and service providers can=t.

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VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you.

MR. FRANKEL: You're welcome.

Thank you all.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions, comments? Okay. Thank you very much.

Next.

MR. RUBIO: Good evening. My name is Pedro Rubio. I live in the Brightwood neighborhood, 57.9 13th Street, Northwest.

I'm here to express my strong support for the proposed update to the D.C. zoning code, especially reforming the outdated parking requirement. I urge the Zoning Commission to revise D.C. 1950 era zoning regulation for parking and help to take this great city with a great neighborhood and turn it into even more vibrant, walkable, and inclusive place.

Eliminating and reducing parking minimums will help make the city that I love even more walkable and inclusive.

Why I am here. I am a native

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Washingtonian. A lifelong resident of Brightwood. A neighborhoods I like to call the suburbs of D.C. I own a car, unlike most of my fellow young people. And I love driving. I drive to Virginia; I drive to school at Georgetown; I drive everywhere. But I would rather take the Metro and walk.

Washington, D.C. changed over the last decade. I learned that nobody likes change. Even if it=s for the positive, for the community. There was once an ANC who voted against turning a vacant house into a coffeehouse because of the noise level and the traffic the coffeehouse would bring. Today the coffeehouse is a landmark in Ward 6 and it serves as a place for the community to gather and aids in the revitalization of the Union Station neighborhood.

My reason for why I=m here, I am in favor of the updating, of updating the zoning law. My mother lost her business during the recession and with my help, she=s making ends

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meet. But she has a two car garage that she would love to turn into an ADU, to help with payment of the mortgage. She has lived in that house for 30 years, an update in the zoning law would allow her to continue living in the city that has given her so much.

Number two, I am also a young professional that lives, eats, and works in the city. My friends and I value and enjoy walkable neighborhoods where we can walk to a local store, restaurant, or Metro station.

The current walkable neighborhoods are expensive and an update in the zoning law would develop new neighborhoods with affordable housing and local stores.

I also want to plant my roots here in D.C., the city I was born. I am also a Latino and a board member of the D.C. Latino Caucus; if you haven't noticed I'm Latino.

Immigrants have become the low scale working class in D.C. A majority of Hispanics working construction or in the restaurant

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industry. Hispanics own cars; they rely heavily on transportation; and it is important for them to find affordable housing. Because of the low income they receive, D.C.

is great -- D.C. is great because of its diversity in the culture. It makes D.C. special. I believe we all want to welcome everyone regardless of skin color or ethnicity. And update would give Latinos and others housing options and encourage their entrepreneurship by opening corner stores.

My parents' first business was a small grocery store. And they went on to open two restaurants after that. They employed 10 people.

Another reason is I mentor youth who are more likely to hang in front of the corner stores. I know this is a feel of the community with youth hanging out in front of the corner stores. This is a concern, but D.C. has changed. And the generation have changed. Kids would rather be on the internet than hang

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out in front of the corner store.

I=ll finish up with this. The new zoning code would benefit families, seniors, young professionals, and low skill workers. Change is hard but it must be done in order to make D.C. a greater city.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.  
Commissioners, any questions?

You did mention you are a member of the Latino Caucus, right?

MR. RUBIO: Correct.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Now, has that been discussed; this whole zoning revision?

MR. RUBIO: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: It has?

MR. RUBIO: Yes. Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Are you familiar with Franklin Garcia?

MR. RUBIO: Yes. Franklin Garcia is the president; I=m the treasurer of the D.C. Latino Caucus.

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And the reason -- it definitely benefits the Latinos as far as affordable housing. Immigrants in the city, I don't want to just say Latinos because there's other ethnicities in the city, that, you know, they rent out a room in a house and they, you know, they don't drive, they use local transportation. And the update in the new zoning law would definitely benefit them.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Has the Caucus taken a position?

MR. RUBIO: No, the Caucus has not taken a position.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Great. Okay. Any other questions? All right. Thank you.

MR. RUBIO: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Next.

MS. FRANKLIN: Good evening. Can you hear me? Good evening. My name is Rachael Franklin. I thank you for allowing me to testify.

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I apologize, my statement is not written for distribution as I just found out about this meeting today. I hope that I'll be able to submit it at a later date for your review.

I'm a third generation Washingtonian and a graduate of Dunbar Senior High School. I purchased my family home 12 years ago from my grandmother so that she could age in her own home and not go to a nursing home. She and my grandfather purchased our home in the 1940s. So our family has been in the neighborhood for over 70 years.

I love this city and I chose to return to it after graduating college because this is my home.

The recent proposed changes in parking regulations will have a severe detrimental impact on our neighborhood.

As discussed by many of the others tonight, I own a car. One point that is continuously overlooked by many is the fact

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that there are many of us who are unable to take public transportation to or from work.

I work 30 miles away from home so that I can afford to pay the taxes and cost of living in the city. Public transportation is not an option for me any day of the workweek. My doctors are not on the Metro line. Classes I take in the evening end at 9 p.m. and are not on Metro. My church is not on the Metro line. I have elderly family members who live in the city who I check on during the week from time to time, and in those cases, Metro is not an option.

Many of my neighbors are elderly and have watched me grow from a child to an adult. As many of the others speak or stated, they are unable to bike or walk to the grocery store to pick up their medication and food. And the cost of Peapod or other services do not fit within their fixed budgets.

We also have families that live within our neighborhood, some of them with

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multiple children. And I don=t know if any one of you had tried to carry two sleeping children in the house after you=ve been out visiting relatives at the end of the day, and you have to make a decision, do you park down the end of the road and try to carry both of them, and your purse, and a diaper bag, and any other items into the house at the same time? Or do you take one, with some of the items, lock the car, park down the street, and hope that the one, the child that=s left in the car will continue to sleep and is okay? That=s no way for families to live.

I am concerned that there=s not going to be a place to park when I get home from this meeting tonight.

We have people who park in front of our houses and walk to the Metro; and we have people who park their cars and leave them for days and days on end, because the new apartment buildings up at the end of the street, and the apartment planners made no provisions for them

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to park there.

March through October, when they are street cleaning, will be a nightmare because there=s only parking on one side of the street.

Never has there been this issue in the city before and the needs of the current residents are not being taken into consideration. I am all for fresh ideas, but there has to be a way to incorporate the new ideas while not driving out those who have made D.C. their home for life. But that is how we feel. It feels as if those who are in control want to do away with native Washingtonians, like myself, families, and especially the elderly who live in D.C. There=s also a severe communication issue in notifying the residents of this meeting. It is amazing that we get notices for many other things, but matters of great importance like this, we hear nothing about. I am sure that given more notice many of my neighbors would have been in

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attendance because we are very concerned; we discuss it as we shovel our snow, as we=ll have to do in a couple of days; we sit on our porches; and we visit one another.

So I am asking that you please take into consideration my motion in maintaining the existing parking requirements. Please do not make a terrible situation worse for my family, my neighbors, and myself. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner Miller.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you for your testimony. I heard the third-generation Washingtonian and I heard the Dunbar grad but I missed the neighborhood that you --

MS. FRANKLIN: Oh, I=m sorry. We live in Petworth and I --

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Okay.  
Okay. You might have said it.

MS. FRANKLIN: Quincy Street,

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Northwest.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you.

MS. FRANKLIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Can I ask you a question?

MS. FRANKLIN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: What can we do better about getting the word out about this process? Now I know you're going to help us when you all are shoveling snow.

MS. FRANKLIN: I will absolutely help you get out the word.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. FRANKLIN: So there have been times when we were having different -- we'd have block parties and people just put a little note in your mailbox. We've had community centers that were open and people put a note in your mailbox. Or there were something like post it at the corner. There's some things on the radio.

I found out about this tonight from

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a listener from my sonority organization, that I just found out about it today. And there=s no reason that other people in the other areas, and people who don=t even live in the District should have known about a meeting before I did. And I actually live and reside in Ward 4.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Any other questions, Commissioners?

Vice chair.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: Are you engaged with your ANC at all? I mean, do you get any communication from them?

MS. FRANKLIN: I used to get communication but I haven=t gotten any communication recently. I know we had a meeting; I think the last meeting that I was notified about was back in, I think, sometime in the summer. But I didn=t get any notification, especially about the meeting today.

But I would like to definitely make sure that I continue to get things. Because

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this is very important, like I said, to me and my neighbors. Because this is a serious issue that we've been having to deal, with especially since the new apartment started opening at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Quincy Street.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other comments? Okay. Thank you.

MS. FRANKLIN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: For full disclosure, the next person coming up is somebody I grew up with and went to high school together. Our families know each other. I didn't do my due diligence because I didn't invite her to this meeting. So I guess that might be part of --

PARTICIPANT: I --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, you invited her. Well thank you.

MS. ROACH: Hi, my name is Colesia Roach, and actually, I'm going to piggyback off the things she said.

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I literally did not know about this meeting till like what 3 o'clock? So I'm rushing to get over here. I didn't get a chance to look at all the specs about the zoning and everything, but I will say things about my neighborhood.

As you said, went to church -- I'll bring up church, I'll start with that. Even in the neighborhood where the church we went to, and everything, it's nowhere to park. It's literally nowhere to park. There's homes that once were single-family homes, they are now two condos or, you know, they're just shoving people everywhere.

Next to Latney's Funeral Home, I heard they sold the property, that vacant lot for \$1. It's a condo going in there.

You have the Safeway, which is coming up. That monstrosity has -- it's a 60,000 foot Safeway with 220 units on top and only 135 parking spaces.

There's just literally nowhere to

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go when you come home in the evening time, when I get off. I cannot use the Metro to get to work. What I do for a living, it doesn't allow that. I have to drive to work. So and I said, 25 to 30 miles out to get to work.

Parking is getting bad. People will come from the apartment builds, who are provided parking, will come down and park in our spots and just leave it. And I'll see them, literally, because I have two dogs -- walk up the street to their apartment buildings. And they have parking within the building and some of them don't.

And it's developers -- it's open development too. And that's what's happening in the city. It's not affordable. D.C. is almost becoming like the have and the have-nots.

And when you're coming home, like I said, in the evening time, nowhere to park. The apartment dwellers, they're parking in our area. So it's just nothing to do as far

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sparking.

So I mean, I=m kind of like -- I don=t want to ramble on because, like I said, I wasn=t prepared for it but you have to do something about it.

And I don=t want the zoning to change -- at least have us look into it. Our ANC guy is Vann-Di. No kind of e-mails or anything. So we=re not even knowledgeable about these meetings. And I would come out and I will speak up. So, I don=t know.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions?

Do you have RPP in your neighborhood?

MS. ROACH: Yes. I was the one who wrote the long letter to RPP to get it moved up from 8:30 to 12. So when you come home in the evening, I did get the signs, but no one comes around after, what, 9-9:30? So that people know that and they still park there. I tried to get the zone 4 only on our side, just as I

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did it with Mr. Patterson down at DDOT, that was stopped.

So I mean, parking is a beast. And when she saying -- it=s exactly what she=s saying. During the summer months, the street cleaning, oh, you can=t find a parking space.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. ROACH: You can not.

And people from -- Ward 4 goes all the way up to, what is it, Silver Springs. So all those people come down and park near the Petworth Metro station, get on the Metro, and go to work.

And another thing that=s overrated is they=re giving out the visitor passes. The visitor passes are used by Maryland, Virginia -- oh, I guess it=s -- they=re sticking it in the car and just leaving. So they don=t get anything. Visitor passes are being abused. Ward 4 gets it and I think a few other wards are getting the visitor passes. That=s like free parking for them. And you only pay the subway

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price. So that=s definitely been abused. And these people are not visiting, they only visit during working hours but not on the weekend. So.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right. Any other questions? Thank you.

MS. ROACH: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Appreciate it. Okay.

Next.

MR. MALESKY: Good evening. My name is Gary Malesky.

I=m a lifelong resident of Washington. I recently left WMATA after eight years in the Joint Development Program, which aim to create walkable urban communities around Metro stations as well as to provide additional revenue for WMATA. I=d like to comment on several issues in the proposed revisions.

For most of the city, I strongly support the accessory apartments proposal. It=s the quickest way to provide additional

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housing choices, much of it likely to be affordable, throughout the city. It's also far less costly than constructing new buildings to meet the same demand. I suspect that many people occupying the accessory apartments will not have cars, but some will. To the extent the regulations would apply in areas such as Georgetown and Glover Park, where parking is already very tight, that is an impact the Commission might want to consider.

A trend which is starting to show up in the region is building larger apartment units with more bedrooms. While the supply of small units is plentiful, there has been little to meet the expected demand from couples with children and empty-nesters who wanted to stay in the city but need space. The proposed minimum parking regulations are fine especially for buildings with smaller units. Ultimately, the market and lender requirements will determine how much parking is actually built.

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I'm somewhat concerned about the provision to establish TDM guidelines when parking exceeds 150 percent of the zoning standard. That provision is fine for efficiency and one bedroom apartments, but I think two bedroom and larger units should be exempt. It is important to keep those people needing larger units in the city and to recognize that their needs may be different from those occupying the smaller units.

With respect to another provision, I live in Wesley Heights, which like much of the city is hill. Every house on my side of the street is higher than the front than in the fact. And each has a walkout basement which is below grade in the front. For some of the houses, that walkout level would or could be construed to be a fourth story. It seems to me that measuring points are very important for the proposed R14 and R15 zones. New houses should be able to be built with walkouts and not be limited by the height and number of stories

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standard. That would be very much in keeping with the existing housing stock in the neighborhood.

The new regulation should also not create any nonconforming uses.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Next. I'm sorry. Any questions? Okay. Thank you.

Next.

MR. LANDIS: Thank you. Before I start I want to say that I heard about your event tonight from three different -- I've known about this for a couple of years. Your website is fantastic. Anybody can go on your website and get automatic e-mails sent to them about these announcements.

I felt like there's a fair amount of activity about that, but I am also in the building community so I kind of know a little bit about zoning. So I think you're doing a pretty good job. Although I know there's

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always people that are late to hear about this.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

And I wanted to speak in support of the proposed zoning changes and particularly ADUs.

My name is Ethan Landis. And I live in the Crestwood neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

But more importantly, I and my brother Chris have owned and operated Landis Construction Corporation -- remodeling firm since 1990. We're located in Takoma, D.C. neighborhood, also in Ward 4.

We are lifelong advocates for Washington, D.C. and smart growth. Here are eight reasons why we're supporting the proposed zoning changes to make ADUs a matter of right for qualifying properties. Very important to mention qualifying properties. You've done a lot of great work to specify which properties would qualify as a matter of right.

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Having a rental in a home or on a property could make these homes more affordable especially for owners in existing properties.

Number two, it increases the supply of reasonably priced housing available for students and local employees.

Number three, having other persons living on the property could provide more security for owners. This is especially helpful in our increasingly international city where many homeowners travel regularly for work, family, or when in retirement.

Number 4, ADUs also allow owners more flexibility to age in place by providing an apartment for caretakers or family.

Number five, some homeowners are finding it financially and socially preferable to have an older generation or returning younger generation move in, yet have the privacy an ADU can afford.

Creating an apartment in an unfinished basement allows the building to be

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more energy efficient from a building science and occupancy load perspective. This is particularly important in my industry. I renovate a lot of basements for people, and especially unfinished basements, by putting an apartment in there and renovating in general it actually improves the energy efficiency of the home tremendously.

Number seven approving this zoning change would likely create hundreds of new well-paying architecture and construction jobs for design build firms and other professions services, companies that support the remodeling industry.

Number eight, lastly, these new jobs with more valuable real estate would create greater employment and real property tax revenue for the District.

We realize that some homeowners might be concerned that more ADUs may impact their neighborhood negatively with the additional traffic and demand for parking. An

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increasing number of renters are choosing not to own a car. More city dwellers are commuting by bike, using public transportation, and are members of car sharing services. We feel the city is making great strides to support alternatives such as Zipcar, Car2Go, Uber, and city bikes.

Our city=s leaders, leadership is working hard to make it a more pedestrian friendly capital.

In closing, I=d like to note that Montgomery County, after much public comment and review, recently passed an update to their zoning guidelines to make it easier for homeowners to incorporate ADUs.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinions, and I=ve attached a letter to the document I handed to you from the Metro station for the remodeling industry, which supports this zoning change.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

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Colleagues, any questions? Okay. Thank you very much. We appreciate it. All right.

Here=s my friend. We had both had a problem getting in the building. So I just want him know, just you and I tonight. All right.

MR. BONHOMME: I want to say good afternoon. Well, good evening, to the Zoning Commission.

I apologize, I wasn=t able to have a printed out version of my statement. I kind of knew about this whole event going on probably two weeks ago. But I had a night class tonight and my teacher decided to have a hybrid class, so I=m here. But I typed something up really quick before I arrived here.

My name is Rapheal Bonhomme. I am currently a student at Howard University in pursuit of getting my graduate degree and hope to remain in the city to become an aspiring elementary school teacher.

I am here today to address my

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worries with the new zoning regulations that are about to be implemented. As a cyclist, the intention is to accommodate the influx of people by providing more parking spaces will congest the city even more. I am constantly on my bike from Brightwood, that=s the area where I live; traveling to school, Howard University; and to work, I work at Janney Elementary School. And even going to the grocery store and picking up groceries.

So however, the biggest concern that I have with the regulations deals with the issue of corner stores in residential areas. Ask yourself, ask yourself what makes a city? Are CVSs the first things that come to mind? In my early observations of D.C., when I moved here two years ago, I noticed a mass amount of CVSs. Coming from the tri-state area and being accustomed to corner stores, I was surprised to see the lack of them here. I was curious to know, are the restrictions on corner stores in residential areas really bad?

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Now corner stores have been negatively generalized to become places of loitering and illegal activity. Beyond the zoning regulations, the city could support and provide assistance to these small businesses so they can have a decent chance of competing with CVSs and Walmarts. Large chain stores are usually heavily protected by security guards and police officers. Are corner stores?

Wouldn't they bring revenue and provide a sense of identity back to the community instead of a large corporation chain that is far removed from the city?

D.C. has undergone much in the last decade. And one step for the city to regain and keep its history, culture, and sense of community would be to allow and promote corner stores to exist in residential areas.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Let's see if there are any questions. Any questions? You're going to make sure we get a copy of your

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testimony right? Okay. All right. Thank you.

Next.

MS. RAJARAM: Good evening. I am Jennifer Rajaram. And I am here to talk about my area, Ward 4, the Fort Totten District.

I purchased my house in D.C. because of the green areas, the quietness, the closeness to the Fort Totten Metro and the fact that there was an elementary school there, Rudolph, which is gone, but fortunately, we were able to get our councilmember to recommend -- a middle school move in there. So luckily for the kids, it's still a school.

The Council, the Zoning Board is proposing that we artificially place businesses, not only on the corner of our streets, but in the middle of our blocks. That proposal is not -- I don't see the need. In my area, we are surrounded by major arteries with lots of stores. We have Kennedy Street; we have Riggs Road; we have Georgia Avenue on the

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east; New Hampshire on the right; Sergeant Road, we have lots of stores everywhere that we can get to.

And placing stores on corners, in the middle of our blocks, it allows for people to loiter, and loiterers end up being drug deal spots. And it takes years of vigilance and drive-bys by the police to get rid of drug deal spots once they're established. I've seen it in action. The police don't have the number of personnel to police that sort of situation.

So that would be a security problem for us. Our neighborhoods would no longer be quiet.

Secondly, technology has changed. We don't need to go to the store on our way to get gourmet coffee. We have machines in our house, our jobs sell gourmet coffee, they're equipped with machines, all you have to do is bring your little pot or your little thing of gourmet coffee to get that. So we don't need all you're telling us that we need.

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I am lucky enough that I have no parking problems at the moment in my area. I can park freely, any day of the week. You put businesses there, the next step will be parking meters. And then confrontations with the people who live in the area. I don't want that problem. I don't have it.

Plus, with strangers in the neighborhood, our kids would become prisoners in their homes; gone would be the days of come in by the streetlight comes on because it would not be safe. I don't like this proposal at all.

Also, if you put businesses all over the streets, you have to put four-way -- on every corner so that you don't increase pedestrian struck fatalities.

And I really do not agree with the Zoning Board targeting people based on the fact that they live in rowhouse style houses. To me, that=s discrimination. You can't make decisions about my neighborhood based on the style house I live in, according to the site.

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That=s not constitutional and it=s illegal to discriminate like that. I do not agree with this proposal at all.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions?

I do have one quick question for you. When you mentioned Sergeant Road, you were talking about the businesses on Sergeant, you=re talking about on the Maryland side, right?

MS. RAJARAM: Well, we are right, we are close to the border. So we can have anywhere; I can go to Sergeant -- there is a -- there is, on the other side I have Safeway, to the west; I have other Safeway=s as well I can go to.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: I can go anywhere in that circle because I drive.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Right. Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: And I don=t want to

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walk anywhere anymore.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: Okay. I go to work to this side, that=s why I=m here this evening.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: Because I work this side. So -- and also, I work varying hours. I don=t have a 9-to-5 job.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: I need my car.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: If I have to come at 1 a.m. in the morning, I don=t want to be taking the bus.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I understand. But let me also just help you with something that I think we want to make sure that we understand. The Office of Planning is making recommendations to us and we=re going to either vote them off or vote them down. So I want you to know, they=ve been going through a rewrite; they=ve been doing certain things before this

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rewrite, or revision, or whatever you want to call it. And this Commission is evaluating and looking at all of that. So I want you to understand, Office of Planning is making the recommendations on the rewrite; we're the ones that's going to vote it up or down. Let's just help you get started through this process. Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: So why did that say people in rowhouse zones?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: No. What I'm saying to you, is your comment was that you said to the Board that we were making the recommendations. That's an Office of Planning recommendation. The whole -- what the proposal in front of us now is what the Office of Planning is proposing to the Zoning Commission, not the Board.

MS. RAJARAM: Okay.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: The Board of Zoning Adjustment as another Board, which we will rotate on. And I'm saying this because I think

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it=s important. A lot of people don=t know the Zoning Commission, the Board of Zoning Adjustment and the Zoning Administrator. And I think, in my 16 years on the Commission, that=s one of the things that we=ve tried to explain to residents. Because once you understand that, there are distinct differences. And I think you can find a lot of that information -- and I=m not just saying it for you, I=m saying it for anybody who=s listening -- a lot of the information is on the website. So let=s make sure that we=re coming up to speed and understand exactly how this thing is working. Because Office of Planning - you brought up some very good points but what I=m saying is the recommendations are coming from -- to the Office of Planning to this Commission.

MS. RAJARAM: Okay. But --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: We=re not making the recommendations.

MS. RAJARAM: -- I=m still

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mystified as to who gave the Zoning Board all this unlimited power that you can just decide that if I live in a row house zone then you're going to put artificially placed businesses everywhere.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. What I want you to --

MS. RAJARAM: I'm mystified.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. -- and what I want you to do is maybe call the Office of Zoning -- and what I always do is I like to call 101 -- and they can help you understand exactly how this process is working.

Let me just say this. This process was in place long before any of us got here. Okay. So I think what we need to do is find out how the process actually works and then we'll go from there. Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: Well, the problem is is that technology has changed so much.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Which makes it even better. You can go on the website and get the

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information.

MS. RAJARAM: Yes. But what they proposed way back when is like no longer relevant.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: It=s old. It=s --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: -- you know, it=s changed. Our needs have changed.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RAJARAM: All right. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Any other comments? Thank you.

Next.

MS. BLYNN: Good evening, members of the Zoning Commission, and thank you for this opportunity to testify.

My name is Kelly Blynn and I=ve lived here in D.C. for three years.

I=m here to express my support for the updates to the zoning code which I believe

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are essential to setting a blueprint to guide our changing city to be more sustainable and equitable as it grows.

I live with my boyfriend and three friends in a rowhouse in Petworth. We love our neighborhood; we know our neighbors due to the great porch culture; and love being close to several Metro and bus lines. We love the choices for getting around and we all commute by bike, foot, and transit.

I know that someone like me can make that choice not to drive, to be healthier and more sustainable, or for whatever reason but that many more of the 40 percent or so D.C. households without cars do so out of necessity, and due to the rising cost of housing and transportation in our city.

Conversations over dinner at my house frequently returned to the rapid pace of change in D.C.'s housing market playing out right in front of us in our own neighborhood. We love being in D.C., and want to be here for the long

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haul, and want to be positive forces for change in the city but are fearful that without action the city could become a place that only the wealthy can afford.

I believe that the proposal to lower parking minimums that is part of this update is one of the many measures we must take to make it possible to build and preserve more affordable housing in the city.

A year ago there was a debate in my neighborhood about this very issue. An affordable housing developer had to seek an exception to build less parking for an all affordable unit development right on Georgia Avenue. Building a parking space can easily cost \$50,000. So building fewer spaces meant being able to go forward with the project and create more affordable units in the neighborhood that desperately needs them.

When faced with a clear choice like this, of more parking or more affordable housing, which I recognize is a difficult choice, in a

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rapidly changing neighborhood like Petworth, I believe that choice should be obvious.

Overhauling the 1950's zoning code is the right move for D.C. right now. Moving away from car dependence is not just a fad embraced by young people like myself, it is essential for embracing what I believe are the twin crises of our time: climate change and inequality. By creating a blueprint for D.C.'s future growth that supports sustainable transportation choices and affordable housing we can simultaneously lower carbon emissions and lessen the high burden of transportation and housing costs.

Thanks so much for this opportunity.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. Commissioners, any questions? Okay. Thank you.

Next.

MR. DRURY: First, I want to thank all the people that testified before me. I

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learned a lot about their lifestyle and their diverse needs. It was really informative.

My name is Greg Drury. I'm a Ward 3 resident. I lead or participate in numerous socially conscious organizations, events, and programs in the D.C. metro area and the Chesapeake Watershed.

I support the proposed zoning regulation and code updates. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. That was straight to the point.

Next.

MS. HALL: So good evening. And thank you to the Zoning Committee for allowing me to testify.

My name is Melissa Martini Hall. I am a new resident to D.C. I live and own a business on the 4500 block of Wisconsin, Northwest, right here.

And I moved to D.C. with the intent of living very locally and utilizing the

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systems that exist in D.C. to maneuver around the city.

And I just wanted to express my support of the updates to an antiquated zoning system. I believe the updates, specifically in relation to the parking limitations and the accessory apartments, are positive changes in the code that can lead to smart development for a vibrant, dynamic, and modern city that D.C. can become.

Due to my relocation to D.C., I've revamped my business model and I chose to locate my home and business near enough to walk between them. I currently do not own a car, for the first time since 1985. And I extensively use, I walk, I use Car2Go, I use Zipcar, Metro, bus, and taxis to make my way around the city.

And I'm just looking forward to smart development, specifically in the Tenleytown area that can eliminate some of the abandoned buildings, encourage more walking and the use of public transportation.

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Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.  
Commissioners, any questions? Okay. Thank  
you.

Okay. I want to thank this panel.  
I think this concludes this panel. We're going  
to call -- Ms. Renshaw, you know I didn't forget  
you. I'm going to ask Ms. Renshaw and anyone  
else who has not testified, if you can come sit  
on the front row in the middle. Okay. So  
anyone else who has not testified tonight, who  
wants to testify at this point -- I think this  
may be our last panel. Again, this is the last  
call for anyone who has not testified. Okay.  
Okay. Ms. Renshaw, you may  
begin.

MS. RENSHAW: Thank you.

My name is Anne Renshaw. I'm  
president of the D.C. Federation of Citizens  
Associations; a former Chevy Chase ANC chair;  
a former vice chair of the Board of Zoning  
Adjustment. I live in the Ward 4 part of Chevy

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Chase on one of our major arterials, Military Road.

On behalf of the Citizens Federation, our thanks to members of the Zoning Commission for holding these ward-based hearings to gather additional public comments about proposed changes to D.C.'s intricate zoning regulations.

I am the Federation's wind up hitter this evening. Given that member associations and friends of the Federation have appeared before you to debate, in part, how so-called visionary transformations of the zoning regulations may also be a threat to D.C.'s neighborhoods.

Two years ago, the Citizens Federation recognized that the zoning redo was gathering steam, leaving behind an unknowing public. Good information was scarce at that time. Residents, for the most part, had no clue about how changes in the zoning code would affect their lives and property.

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In February 2012, the Citizens Federation held the first of three public briefings on OP zoning rewrite asking whether changes in the zoning code will improve or erode the city=s residential areas. Our guests were OP=s deputy director for development review, as well as its zoning update manager. Members of the zoning rewrite task force provided a forceful contrast to OP=s presentation. Audience concerns centered on the possibility that neighborhoods could be significantly changed if various proposed regulations, for example, side yard, accessory dwelling, increased density, and minimal nonresidential parking, take hold.

In October 2012, the Federation held its second and third citywide zoning rewrite briefing, one on transit corridor development, its impact on abutting residential neighborhoods, parking, traffic and mass transit, with DDOT and WMATA, followed by a program on the District=s re-zoning redo.

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Can D.C. business and residents, re: consumers, be equally invested in D.C.'s zoning rewrite?

We had with us that evening a well read *Washington Post* business reporter because the business editor of the major publication confessed over the phone that he knew nothing about zoning. And at last we had with us the director of the Office of Planning. Which I just want to say, it took us over four months to get her to appear before the Citizens Federation.

We're at the point now of asking the Zoning Commission to pause and not to rush into any judgment on the proposed zoning changes. Even if zoning language and regulations are streamlined, the intent of the zoning redo seems to diminish neighborhood protections.

Here is how we see it. If the city can't build higher downtown then why not build up neighborhood areas abutting arterials, as has been publicized, to house newcomers and downsizers? Why not encourage the building of

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accessory dwelling units in accommodating backyards? Why not lessen, if not eliminate, neighborhood parking requirements because the city advocates Metro and bike travel?

Neighborhoods are feeling pressure, sensing that zoning regulations, as currently proposed, offer minimal protection.

This is not an argument about the direction and amount of growth. But that zoning regulations should support individual neighborhoods trying to retain their special character and diversity.

While the city has become more vibrant and modern, the Citizens Federation is also concerned that necessary infrastructure improvements cannot keep step with accelerated development. The city should be hiring more police as there is crime in the neighborhoods. Additional ambulances and paramedics are needed to absorb the stresses on the city=s emergency medical service system. Our roads are in disrepair; our sewer system is

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not getting any younger; our Metro system is at capacity; non-rush-hour bus hours is poor; and traffic is a trial. DCRA, moreover, is woefully short of inspectors. The Federation could see the cracks in the city's plans for growth when D.C. agencies appeared before us to discuss how revisions to the city zoning regulations would impact their departments.

In summary, the end result of the zoning rewrite must show a balance between neighborhood preservation versus accelerated development and increased density.

That request is what we're asking the Zoning Commission to guarantee and be reflected in any change to D.C.'s zoning regulations.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Renshaw. Colleagues, any questions? Any questions?

Ms. Renshaw, let me just ask you

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this. Being a former vice chair of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, would you say -- and I see your testimony and I understand -- would you say that it's time for us to revisit the zoning regulations? I'm just asking. Would you say that it is time -- your experience on the Board -- would you say it's time for us to revisit?

MS. RENSHAW: Yes. You mean these proposed zoning regulations?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: No, not necessarily these proposed, but you would say -- we could agree that it is time to revisit?

MS. RENSHAW: We can agree that it is time --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

MS. RENSHAW: -- to revisit the zoning regulations but with care, and with attention to the neighborhoods, and the citizens who are paying the taxes, who have long term association with the District.

I, myself, have been a resident of the District for, and I did the subtraction

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today, 40 years. And I can see the necessary changes coming about but I also fear, when I mentioned to you earlier, that I live on Military Road, and I can say, at this point, that if we are not careful, we're going to lose Military Road to development, to residential development. We're being squeezed. We have a school; two senior facilities; a Temple at either end of Military Road. We have a Little Forest park across the street from my door, which some years ago was in the newspaper as being acquired by the city when it's national park property. But we got on it and we set the record straight with the city official. It's not yours; it's federal property.

But we have to be so aware of what is happening in our neighborhoods and respond to pressures or we're going to lose the character of these neighborhoods, if not lose the neighborhoods altogether.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: How could this process get more people in the city engaged?

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What can we do to -- I know we've been working on this since 2000 -- personally, the Commission has been dealing with this since 2007. That's not an issue for me. How can we get more people engaged at this point? What suggestions do you have, with your experience?

MS. RENSHAW: Well, first of all, pick a month which is good for people to get out and about. When you have hearings in colder weather, it is a problem for residents to get to a particular meeting, at least the Citizens Federation has experienced that. So the warmer the weather the better the turnout maybe.

As far as publicity and outreach, to get a hold of the newspapers and say, APrint this, advertise this, @ not only in the paper but in the digital editions, which are popular with the younger people. And certainly to have a conversation with Mr. Bezos, who is this new owners of the *Washington Post*, and who is stressing the need for local news. Where is

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it?

We had, the Federation had a program on our disappearing local news. And we said, AYou used to print information about ANC meetings; nothing now. We can barely see one or two maybe articles in the newspaper about local matters. Why not?@ And so he said, AWell, that=s just the way it is.@ Well, it=s not the way it is if we say we are the computer consumers of your newspaper and we want better.

So I would say that we need to get Mr. Bezos and make our feelings known.

Continue the good work that you do with your website; with the outreach, get to the electronic media, radio, and television and ask them -- a meeting is coming up in two weeks at such and such a location, advertisement it please.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
Any other questions or comments?

Vice chair.

MS. RENSHAW: It=s a big job. It=s

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a big job and it=s a constant job.

VICE CHAIR COHEN: I just have a comment. The *Washington Post* has really been negligent in their coverage of the city, unless we are a sports team, you know, the zoning commission sports team, they will not cover us. And it=s a mistake that they=re making because, you=re right, we are consumers. But frankly, I don=t -- it=s been my experience, based on my civic engagement over the years, they really don=t care.

So I would suggest that we could do a lot, but unless we=re a sports team, I don=t think we will be covered.

MS. RENSHAW: Well, we could rename ourselves.

But in any case, I do feel that we have to keep pressing on the newspapers, especially the *Washington Post*.

We had a session with the former ombudsman to the *Washington Post* and we had him to a meeting. And unfortunately, he no longer

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is employed by the *Post*. That cut that column. But he gave us some valuable information, and that is to keep at the city editor; keep at the columnists, you know, get in touch with the columnists; explain that you are not being covered; you need to get the word out at particular times about meetings you hold; you need to explain this very technical zoning language to people.

They=re confused, their eyes glaze over some times when you say, oh, zoning. And they say, ADon=t understand it; don=t want understand it.@ But if you push, they will see how it affects their house, their property, even their school, a business on the corner.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. RENSHAW: All right.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Next.

And I will say, for the record, Mike DeBonis did do what I asked him to do. I don=t know how many people read it, but I don=t want

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anything to go unnoticed because I asked Mike DeBonis personally to commerce some of this, and he did do what he could. And we didn=t even pay for.

So, next.

MS. QUINN: My name is Kathleen Quinn and I=m a resident of Friendship Heights. I=m also the parent of a pair of young fifth-generation Washingtonians.

And during the 100 years my family has lived in D.C., the city has changed a lot, both for better and for worse.

My great-grandmother owned and lived for many decades in a row house at 5th and H Street, Northwest, that exists today in what is now known as Chinatown. But on the ground floor of that rowhouse, she ran, for many decades, what today we would refer to as a corner store.

And as I understand it, some in the city think such corner stores are a bad idea.

Some folks in my community also

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believe that allowing people to rent out their basements or convert their garages to additional apartments is a bad idea. But over the century that my family has been living in Washington, D.C., both practices have been common, and both 100 years ago and 50 years ago, most households had many more members than they do today.

But housing in D.C., historically, has been less expensive than it is today. So allowing people to rent out their basements or to convert their garages to apartments will enable more people to afford to live in D.C., and more importantly, allow more people to age in place by generating revenue from homes that cost much more to maintain relative to their incomes than they did when they were younger.

On the question of parking requirements and new buildings, the city is full of older buildings and homes that don't meet today's requirements. In fact, my family lives in a 95-year-old block of row houses that

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were built without off-street parking and there are numerous older multi-unit buildings of various sizes throughout the city that were built without parking. But a progressive zoning code should discourage cars and driving, not encourage it by requiring more parking spaces.

My concern as a resident who lives on a narrow side street already burdened with too much traffic, is how we will accommodate all of these extra cars when they are not parked.

Most high demand neighborhoods don't have enough on-street parking spaces on the street today. It sounds logical to say we need off-street spaces in those neighborhoods for new residents. Except their cars won't stay parked all the time, and their drivers will likely follow the pattern of existing drivers, and seek out underpriced on-street parking when they leave their new buildings. And which congested neighborhoods have space for the tolerance for more traffic?

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It is idealistic to plan for housing cars but not wise to simultaneously have no plan for how you will move them. And I, for one, don=t want any more traffic on my street, which is what we will get if we keep encouraging more cars by requiring more parking.

I realize I am short on time so I will just cut to the chase. I support and urge you to support the proposed changes to corner stores, accessory apartments, and parking minimums as currently proposed by the Office of Planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight and coming to our community to hear from us.

Although the zoning rewrite has been covered in the northwest *Current* and extensively online, this is my first contribution to the process and I hope it does not come too late.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

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And let=s see if we have any questions. Any questions? Okay. Thank you.

MS. QUINN: Really? I=m ready.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: She=s ready for some questions. Thank you.

MS. QUINN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Next.

MR. CARTER: Hello. My name is Thomas Carter. I am a 4th District resident; I=m also a third-generation Washingtonian.

And I would just like to speak on behalf of some of the students in the area as well as some of the teachers in the area.

I work at Woodrow Wilson High School and I=m also a teacher here at Woodrow Wilson High School. I live off of Georgia Avenue, about two blocks.

It takes me 15 minutes, roughly, to get from my home to school. I spend a lot of nights here, as you can see, I=m still here with you guys, play productions, musicals, all types of things.

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I have two dogs. It takes me 15 minutes to run home so I can let my dogs out; so I can eat; they can eat; and I can come back to school. If I was forced to catch the Metro because of lack of parking, it would take me more like 45 minutes to travel just to do a simple task, so my dogs don't go hours without eating. At the same time -- that=s speaking from a teacher=s perspective.

I know at Wilson we have over 1700 students and not all of them live in the surrounding areas. These students make up our sports teams, our after school activities, all these different matters. And it=s difficult at 9 o=clock/10 o=clock you=re leaving school, you have to get on the train, travel home, across town, catch a bus, maybe catch two buses.

I had a car in high school because I was doing similar things where I was staying after school relatively late, and my bus that took me from my house to the Metro ran about every 30 to 45 minutes after about 7 p.m.

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It's difficult for students, it's also difficult for teachers in the surrounding area because there's residences and then there's street parking, but you come to work, you're working 9-10 hours a day, you don't want to have to check your phone, feed the meter every so often. So parking is already limited. So we're dealing with more limited spaces.

And yes, the Metro is across the street, and it's capital bike share but we live in Washington, D.C., which is a city of extreme weather conditions. In the summer, it's anywhere between 99 and 105 degrees feeling more like 110-116. Honestly, you don't want to stand at the Metro waiting for a bus in 110 degrees the same way you don't want to stand at the Metro or a bus or take capital bike share when it's almost -3 degrees with the wind chill. These things are -- I appreciate them. I see people utilizing them all the time and I grew up on the Metro as a kid. But there are difficulties that come along with this and with

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already the lack of parking that=s around, somewhere between me turning 16 and getting my car, and now I pay D.C. parking enforcement thousands upon thousands upon thousands upon dollars. And I know everyone else here has to. If you have to deal with two-hour parking, feeding the meter, just simply so you can go to the doctor=s office. And we=re dealing with these -- I guess I=m saying, you=re looking to reduce more parking spaces when there=s already a limited amount parking spaces.

I just heard everyone=s testimony; I=ve heard both sides, and I figured I=d add my two cents.

So thank you guys.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you very much. What was your last name again?

MR. CARTER: Carter. Thomas Carter.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Carter. Okay. Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner Miller.

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COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you for your testimony. I appreciated and thanks for helping out tonight.

So when you=re able to find a legal spot, is it, I guess it=s on-street somewhere around this neighborhood, right?

MR. CARTER: I=m fortunate because I have a spot in the parking garage but I=m one of 300 plus faculty members that work here. And the parking lot that you guys are parked in now was first come first serve. So if you don=t get one of those 30 spots in the morning then you=re kind of up to the drawer. You know, you=re up to the luck of the draw.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: So you say you park in the garage?

MR. CARTER: I personally park in the garage but I think there=s 20 spots in the garage and maybe 30 in the lot for a school with 100 plus faculty members, plus students, student athletes, choir members, all these kids that are doing after school activities. I=m

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sure you saw a number of children still here and working at after school activities as you were entering the building. And that=s not including sports events that may start at 7, don=t end till 7, I mean, 9:30-10 o=clock at night. And then these kids still have to travel home.

And just like everyone said, everyone=s parent doesn=t have a car, who=s going to pick them up at the end of a long evening at school? And these kids have to travel home.

So it really helps them out if they=re able to drive to school or drive home or carpool or anything. But I think the option should be there. I don=t think taking away more parking spaces is necessarily the correct answer.

COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Any other comments? Mr. Carter, thank you very much for your testimony, and thank you also for taking

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care of the audio for us tonight. Great job.  
Thank you.

MR. CARTER: (Off mic speaking.)

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. No problem.

Thanks.

Next. Is there anyone else?

Okay.

Mr. Carter, we're going to get you  
out of here shortly.

MR. CLANCY: Good evening. My  
name is Frederick Clancy, Ward 1.

I have a suggestion. This process  
is obviously --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I'm sorry. Did  
you say you were in Ward 1?

MR. CLANCY: 1. Is that okay?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: We'll be in Ward 1

--

MR. CLANCY: On --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: We'll be in Ward 1  
Thursday and we have some snow information just  
in case. So we'll be waiting to hear your

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testimony when we come to Ward 1.

MR. CLANCY: I'll be quick.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: We'll hear you in Ward 1. Okay.

MR. CLANCY: What does that mean?

CHAIRMAN HOOD: That means that you can come back and testify in Ward 1.

What we're doing is wherever you live -- we're going to be in Ward 7 and 8 tomorrow night, and depending upon snow, we'll be in Wards 1 and 2 on Thursday night, which is the Housing Finance Agency. Am I correct?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: And you can talk with staff right after this is over. They'll give you the address and everything. Okay.

MR. CLANCY: I just have one suggestion.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: I know you do. Just work with me.

MR. CLANCY: Okay. Never mind.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let's play by the

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rules, let=s play by the rules.

MR. CLANCY: I won=t be back.

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

PARTICIPANT: You can --

CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. You can always submit testimony. Okay.

I want to really thank everyone tonight. I really want to thank our, I want to thank Wilson High School, first of all, the principal and also Mr. Carter. I want to thank everyone here in Ward 3 and 4. We really appreciated your testimony. I want to thank our staff.

This is not easy. This is the third or fourth, the third time that the Zoning Commission has been on the road. Typically, the Zoning Commission, my tenure has not left from the zoning room. We=re on the road. We want to hear from the constituents; we want to hear from people.

If you notice, we did not cut you off tonight when the bell rang, we wanted to hear

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from you unless you just went way over. I think I only had one person to do that.

We=re concerned too. We want to make sure we hear from the residents of this city, as Ms. Renshaw and others have said tonight, we appreciate all the testimony.

And again, I want to thank the staff for putting this all together. It=s not easy. Okay.

So with that, I want to thank everyone again and this hearing is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter was concluded at 9:10 p.m.)

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