

GOVERNMENT  
OF  
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

+ + + + +

PUBLIC HEARING

+ + + + +

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IN THE MATTER OF: :
   
:
   
ZONING REGULATIONS : Case No.
   
COMPREHENSIVE TEXT REVIEW : 08-06A
   
:
   
-----:

Wednesday,
   
February 26, 2014

HFA Auditorium
   
815 Florida Ave, 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 Housing
   
Finance Agency Auditorium at 815 Florida
   
Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001, 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 BENJAMIN BARDIN, Director  
SHARON S. SCHELLIN, Secretary  
ZELALEM HILL, Staff Assistant

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

JENNIFER STEINGASSER, Deputy Director,  
Development Review & Historic  
Preservation  
ELISE VITALE

The transcript constitutes the  
minutes from the Public Hearing held on  
February 26, 2014.

## A G E N D A

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

2 6:03 p.m.

3 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good evening,  
4 ladies and gentlemen. This is the Public  
5 Hearing of the Zoning Commission for the  
6 District of Columbia for Wednesday, February  
7 26, 2014.

8 My name is Anthony Hood. Joining me  
9 are Vice Chair Cohen, Commissioner Miller,  
10 Commissioner May and Commission Turnbull.

11 We are also joined by the Office of  
12 Zoning Staff, our Director, Ms. Sara Bardin,  
13 and the Secretary to the Zoning Commission, Ms.  
14 Sharon Schellin. The young lady who will  
15 taking your cards, you=ll see her running  
16 around a little bit. And that=s Ms. Zee Hill.

17 We=re also joined by the Office of  
18 Planning Staff which to my right is Ms. Jennifer  
19 Steingasser. I think Mr. Lawson may be joining  
20 us. Okay. He=s not going to join us.

21 (Off the record comment.)

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: He=s not going to

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1 join us tonight. And Ms. Vitale.

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

7 The subject of this evening=s  
8 hearing is Zoning Commission Case No. 08-06A.  
9 This is a request by the Office of Planning for  
10 comprehensive revisions and amendments to the  
11 Zoning Regulations Title 11, DCMR.

12 Notice of today=s hearing was  
13 published in the D.C. Register on December 20,  
14 2013. And copies of that announcement are  
15 available on the table in the back of the room  
16 as you enter through the doors.

17 The hearing will be conducted in  
18 accordance with provisions of 11 DCMR 3021 as  
19 follows: Preliminary Matters, Testimony from  
20 the Public.

21 The following time constraints will  
22 be maintained in this hearing: organizations,

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1 five minutes, individuals, three minutes. The  
2 Commission intends to adhere to the time limits  
3 as strictly as possible in order to hear the  
4 case in a reasonable period of time. The  
5 Commission reserves the right to change the  
6 time limits for presentations, if necessary.  
7 Notice that no time shall be ceded.

8 As noted in the Notice of the Public  
9 Hearing, testimony will be limited to  
10 individuals, organizations or associations  
11 that have not previously testified before the  
12 Commission in this case. Witnesses may only  
13 testify in the ward in which they reside. So  
14 tonight is Wards 1 & 2.

15 Persons who have previously  
16 testified but still want to provide the  
17 Commission with additional comments may do by  
18 submitting comments in writing. The only  
19 exception to testifying again would be the  
20 Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners since they  
21 represent many District residents.

22 We do ask that if an ANC

1 Commissioner has previously testified and is  
2 going to provide additional testimony this  
3 evening that they confine their comments to new  
4 subject matter that they have not yet  
5 presented.

6 All persons appearing before the  
7 Commission are to fill out two witness cards.  
8 These cards are also located on the table in the  
9 back of the room as you enter.

10 Upon coming forward to speak to the  
11 Commission, please give both cards to the  
12 reporter. When presenting the information to  
13 the Commission, please turn on and speak into  
14 the microphone, first stating your name and  
15 home address. When you are finished speaking,  
16 please turn your microphone off so that your  
17 microphone is no longer picking up sound or  
18 background noise.

19 The decision of the Commission in  
20 this case must be based exclusively on the  
21 public record. To avoid any appearance to the  
22 contrary, the Commission requests the persons

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1 present not engage the members of the  
2 Commission in conversation during any recess or  
3 at any time.

4 In addition, there should be no  
5 direct contact whatsoever with the  
6 Commissioners concerning this matter, be it  
7 written, electronic or by telephone. Any  
8 materials received directly by the Commission  
9 will be discarded without being read and any  
10 calls will be ignored.

11 The Staff will be available  
12 throughout the hearing to discuss procedural  
13 questions.

14 I would also ask that you not repeat  
15 testimony that has already been given. Rather  
16 than repeating the same comments, I would  
17 suggest that you state that you agree with the  
18 testimony that has already been given and add  
19 any additional comments that we have not yet  
20 heard.

21 Please turn off all beepers and cell  
22 phones at this time so not to disrupt these

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1 proceedings.

2 At this time, the Commission will  
3 present any preliminary matters. Does the  
4 Staff have any preliminary matters?

5 MS. SCHELLIN: Just one. One  
6 thing that=s a little bit different in this  
7 building in addition to the witness list, there  
8 is a sign-in sheet. This building, this  
9 Agency, requires everyone that comes into this  
10 building actually sign in. So whether you=re  
11 testifying or not, you need to sign in.

12 If you haven=t done so, please do  
13 that. I think Ms. Hill is actually trying to  
14 catch everyone who walks in. But I just want  
15 to state that also. So please sign in whether  
16 you=re testifying or not.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Did everybody hear  
18 that announcement? As you come in, we=re  
19 required to sign in. So if you could please do  
20 that as Ms. Schellin has already mentioned,  
21 that will be very helpful. We want to be  
22 respectful of the Housing Finance Agency.

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1           And let me just say that I want to  
2           thank Chairman Ford and his board as well as the  
3           Housing Finance Agency Staff for allowing us  
4           the opportunity to be able to come out into the  
5           community as the Commission has been doing in  
6           the past few weeks for letting us use this  
7           facility. And I thank our Staff for setting  
8           all this up.

9           I do have -- Ms. Schellin, anything  
10          else?

11                           (No verbal response.)

12          I do have an announcement and I'm  
13          going to ask everyone to help participate in  
14          this announcement as we move through the next  
15          steps. This is also located on the Office of  
16          Zoning's website as well as the Office of  
17          Planning's website. And if you have any  
18          questions about this, you can call the Office  
19          of Planning. And I'm going to ask Ms.  
20          Steingasser if she can give me that phone number  
21          again.

22                           MS. STEINGASSER: Yes. The Office

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1 of Planning=s phone number is (202) 442-7600.  
2 And the receptionist can provide the  
3 information. Or you can ask for me directly,  
4 Jennifer Steingasser or Joel Lawson, and she=ll  
5 transfer you to us. And we=ll be available to  
6 answer any questions.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

8 Now this is the ZRR Announcement of  
9 Next Steps. You don=t have to memorize it  
10 tonight because it=s located -- The same text  
11 of what I=m getting ready to read now is located  
12 on the websites.

13 Over the last couple of weeks, we  
14 had announced that the Office of Planning will  
15 be holding open houses. We now know that OP  
16 will, Office of Planning will, be holding those  
17 on March 4th, 11th, 12th and 15th. You can  
18 check with their office and/or their website  
19 for the locations of the open houses. In  
20 addition, Office of Planning will hold open  
21 houses at their office every Friday in the month  
22 of March from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for people

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1 to walk in and have any questions they have or  
2 they need answered.

3 The Zoning Commission will hold two  
4 further hearings. First, as previously  
5 decided, the Commission will hold a further  
6 hearing in Ward 8. Also Ward 8 asked us to come  
7 back. So we=re going to hold a previous  
8 hearing in Ward 8.

9 At that hearing, which will be held  
10 on April 21st at 6:00 p.m., the Commission will  
11 first hear from residents who reside in Ward 7&8  
12 and then from those who reside in the other  
13 wards who have not previously testified.

14 After that, we=re going back  
15 downtown. Second, on April 24th at 6:00 p.m.,  
16 the Commission will hold a hearing in this room,  
17 in our hearing room, and hear from anyone who  
18 has not previously testified. In addition,  
19 the Commission will keep the record open until  
20 3:00 p.m. on Friday, April 25th. We will then  
21 decide the next steps at our April 28th meeting.

22 Again, we=re going to have to take

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1 it back in-house because now what we=re  
2 hearing, we will webcast live. About us going  
3 out, we=re not able to do that. So after the  
4 Ward 8 meeting, we=re going to go back and we=re  
5 going to do everything from that point within  
6 the confines of 441 so it can be webcast live.  
7 If you=re not able to make it, you can tune in  
8 and see exactly what=s going on at that time.  
9 Everyone across the city will have that  
10 opportunity.

11 Again, we will then decide the next  
12 steps at our April 28th meeting. Thank you.

13 Okay. Let=s go right into the  
14 list. If I mispronounce your name, forgive me.  
15 If it sounds close, I would ask that you come  
16 down to the table. Tom Millar. Daniel  
17 Levine. Michael Holzheimer. Mary Fitch.  
18 Dan Malouff. Sylvia Ruiz. Lyn Stoesen.

19 Did I call too many people? No.  
20 That=s good. Okay.

21 What we=re going to do is we=re  
22 going start to my right, your left. And if you

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1 have testimony, when you come down if you can  
2 just hand to Ms. Schellin.

3 It would be good if you could give  
4 it to us before you start so that we could follow  
5 you because we do pay attention and we do make  
6 little notations on your testimony. We=re  
7 going to start to my right, your left. Sir,  
8 we=ll begin with you.

9 **III. TESTIMONY FROM PUBLIC**

10 MR. MILLAR: My name is Tom Millar.  
11 I=ve lived in Northwest D.C. for 11 years,  
12 currently in a condo unit at 14th and W, NW. My  
13 wife and I are both Federal employees and we  
14 have a daughter recently turned three.

15 I=m here to testify in support of  
16 lower minimum parking requirements for  
17 Subtitle C. I=m from a military family. And  
18 I=ve spent most of my life in suburbs and on  
19 bases where owning an automobile was a  
20 necessity.

21 When my enlistment was ending from  
22 the Air Force, I spent about a week in Manhattan

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1 on leave and realized that at the end of that  
2 week I hadn=t seen my car in nine days. I  
3 realize that=s longer than a week. And I  
4 hadn=t missed it. Hadn=t needed it. Yet had  
5 been able to go and see and do just about  
6 anything I wanted.

7 Made the decision that I would move  
8 into D.C. proper and not stay in the burbs.  
9 After seven months, I signed my studio  
10 apartment lease in Columbia Heights and I sold  
11 my car and haven=t looked back. In the last  
12 couple of years, I even cancelled my car sharing  
13 membership.

14 My anecdote is to illustrate how  
15 owning a car is becoming less and less necessary  
16 for many D.C. families. And new parking  
17 requirements should reflect this fact.

18 There are a lot of beliefs and assumptions  
19 about car ownership and the necessity of  
20 parking which simply aren=t true like the idea  
21 that you have children you have to have a car.  
22 I understand that I used to be incapable of

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1       imagining being an independent adult without a  
2       motor vehicle.

3               As a Federal supervisor, I hire  
4       young people from all over the country who come  
5       to D.C. and can=t fathom the idea that my family  
6       doesn=t need a car. They have a hard time  
7       figuring out how somebody could buy groceries  
8       without having a trunk to load everything into.  
9       But I do it all the time.

10              My family doesn=t need a car. I see  
11       no reason why this would change with all the  
12       options D.C. already offers for public transit,  
13       biking, car sharing and walking. I don=t  
14       believe my family is an anomaly. More people  
15       realize that living car-free is not a hardship  
16       and more people are going to be abandoning  
17       personal vehicle ownership, not just young,  
18       single people, but couples and families as  
19       well.

20              Zoning changes should reflect that  
21       by reducing the minimum parking requirements.  
22       Thank you for your time.

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1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

2 MS. FITCH: Thank you for the  
3 opportunity to speak. I'm Mary Fitch, a Ward  
4 1 resident and Executive Director of the  
5 Washington Chapter of the American Institute of  
6 Architects. AIA D.C. represents more than  
7 2100 architects who live and work in  
8 Washington. And we're the fourth largest  
9 chapter in the country.

10 We very much appreciate the process  
11 that the Zoning Commission, Office of Zoning  
12 and Office of Planning have undertaken to bring  
13 the City's zoning code into the 21st century.  
14 I have four points to make.

15 First, we appreciate that you have  
16 tailored the document to the specific  
17 circumstances of individual neighborhoods.  
18 While this may make it harder to read from a  
19 citywide perspective, this format makes it  
20 easier to use on a case-by-case basis and is  
21 consistent with other cities similar to  
22 Washington with complex codes such as San

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1 Francisco and Boston. Boston=s code has a  
2 searchable database by address with really  
3 clear graphics which we recommend to D.C.=s  
4 code.

5 Second, we support the proposed  
6 reduction in parking minimums as it more  
7 accurately reflects changes in travel behavior  
8 that are present in the City today and will  
9 likely intensify in coming decades.

10 Third, recent census data shows  
11 that Washington has the highest percentage of  
12 any US city of people living alone. This  
13 warrants greater attention and our chapter is  
14 currently looking at many housing alternatives  
15 that would respond to this and would provide  
16 more housing choice. Included in these  
17 alternatives are well-designed accessory  
18 apartments that can provide both lower cost  
19 housing and help to improve the age and income  
20 diversity in neighborhoods.

21 And, finally, we=d like to propose  
22 a modest amendment to a few sections of the code

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1 as they apply to mechanical penthouses.  
2 Currently, the code limits the height of  
3 mechanical penthouses to 18.5 feet. This  
4 often limits the choice of equipment that can  
5 be used and raises cost.

6 We seek a modest increase to 20  
7 feet. That extra 1.5 foot will give designers  
8 and builders greater choice in equipment and  
9 potentially lower some building costs.

10 In addition, the elevator is  
11 generally the tallest element on the rooftop,  
12 while other rooftop equipment is less tall.  
13 Yet the code requires enclosing walls to be of  
14 equal height. We seek the opportunity for  
15 some variation in the height of the enclosing  
16 walls.

17 The current requirement we believe  
18 leads to some pretty clunky-looking rooftop  
19 structures. We believe that allowing some  
20 variation in the height will improve the  
21 appearance of D.C.'s rooftops.

22 Thank you again for the opportunity

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1 to speak. We commend the Commission=s five  
2 year effort to update the code. We appreciate  
3 the tradeoffs and compromises needed to make  
4 such a complex document workable. And we urge  
5 its adoption. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
7 Next.

8 MS. STOESEN: Good evening,  
9 Chairman Hood and Members of the Zoning  
10 Commission. And thank you for this  
11 opportunity to testify.

12 My name is Lyn Stoesen and I=ve  
13 lived and worked in Washington, D.C. for almost  
14 25 years. I=ve called Ward 1 home the entire  
15 time and have lived in Parkview since 2000.

16 I=m here to express my support for  
17 the updates to the Zoning Code. The proposed  
18 changes are timely, important and necessary.

19 The Subtitle C parking proposal  
20 that lower minimum parking requirements make  
21 sense for D.C.. One of the things I love about  
22 D.C. is the fact that you don=t need a car to

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1 live here. I lived in D.C. for 10 years without  
2 a car, biking most places or taking buses or  
3 Metro.

4 The carless lifestyle in D.C. has  
5 gotten even easier recently. I love Capitol  
6 Bike Share and the increase in local, easily  
7 reached retail, restaurants and community  
8 amenities make D.C. better than ever for  
9 residents like me.

10 But I think the parking proposal can  
11 be good for all D.C. residents. My wife, Ann  
12 Stom, owns Annie=s Hardware and Petworth and  
13 the majority of her employees live in Ward 1 or  
14 Ward 4.

15 One of the biggest challenges her  
16 employees face is finding affordable housing  
17 near their jobs. Most of her staff do not have  
18 cars and rely on public transportation to get  
19 to work. Reductions in parking minimums will  
20 help slow increases in housing costs and can  
21 provide more residential options near jobs.

22 Affordable housing is also good for

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1 our older citizens who want to stay in D.C. like  
2 many of my neighbors. Our city is actually a  
3 great place to age in place. Many seniors  
4 don=t have cars, don=t want to drive or no  
5 longer are able to drive. But in D.C. it=s easy  
6 to get to services and stores without a car.

7 Our connected neighborhoods help  
8 seniors maintain community, avoid isolation  
9 and stay independent. Ensuring that we=re  
10 prioritizing housing and not parking will help  
11 us remain a great place to grow old.

12 These are reasons I also support the  
13 Subtitle D and E proposals on accessory  
14 dwelling and corner stores. Increasing  
15 accessory housing in the City will make a  
16 difference both for homeowners in an increasing  
17 expensive area and for those who can live in  
18 these units.

19 Integrating small retail into our  
20 residential area also makes sense. I=m lucky  
21 to have several corner stores close to my house  
22 where I can pick up a bag of ice, buy an

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1 emergency roll of paper towels or other items.  
2 There is no reason to prevent new stores from  
3 serving our neighborhoods and the proposals are  
4 modest and reasonable.

5 I love D.C. and I think we're moving  
6 in the right direction. Making changes to  
7 these zoning regulations can help ensure that  
8 I can stay here even if I don't have a car and  
9 maintain an integrated, acted, connected  
10 lifestyle as I age. And it will help D.C.'s  
11 diverse workforce like those employed at  
12 Annie's Hardware enjoy the benefits of our  
13 City.

14 As you can imagine in my 25 years in  
15 D.C., I've seen enormous change. I believe  
16 that cities are organic and they'll change with  
17 or without regulation. But thoughtful  
18 regulation like these proposals can help  
19 changes make sense for a city and can move us  
20 forward in directions that will benefit all  
21 residents, both current and future.

22 Thank you again for your time.

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1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

2 MR. LEVINE: Thank you,  
3 Commissioners for the opportunity to testify.  
4 My name is Daniel Levine. I will summarize my  
5 remarks in the interest of time.

6 I=d like to speak in support of the  
7 proposal and specifically in support or  
8 reducing parking minimums and increasing  
9 flexibility for accessory dwelling units.  
10 Both of these provisions will in significant  
11 ways help to reduce the growing burden of  
12 housing costs in the District.

13 I had the privilege of living in the  
14 District for close to three years now and look  
15 forward to living here for much longer. But as  
16 I plan my future in the District, I need to know  
17 that I=ll be able to afford housing and be able  
18 to continue living in great neighborhoods like  
19 where I live in Columbia Heights or the other  
20 neighborhoods in Wards 1 & 2 where we can live  
21 without being burdened by needing to drive to  
22 all of our destinations.

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1 I would like to see the proposal go  
2 even further on some of these particular  
3 issues. But I very much support the work of the  
4 Office of Planning, support the compromises  
5 made and hope the Commission will put these in  
6 place without further delay. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

8 MR. MALOUFF: Hello, my name is Dan  
9 Mouloff. I live at 1629 R Street, NW. I'll be  
10 brief in the interest of time.

11 I agree with everyone who has spoken  
12 already. I strongly support the proposed  
13 changes to the zoning ordinance including  
14 reducing parking minimums, allowing accessory  
15 dwelling units, allowing corner stores. These  
16 things are necessary for the continued  
17 livability and affordability of our urban city  
18 that we live in and that has seen huge growth  
19 of people who want to live in an urban city.

20 It's good for our economy. It's  
21 necessary for affordability. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

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1 MR. HOLZHEIMER: Hi. Good  
2 evening. My name is Michael Holzheimer. I  
3 live at 6th and G at Gallery Place in Chinatown.

4 I=m here expressing my strong  
5 support for the proposed updates to the D.C.  
6 Zoning Code, in particular, the reform of the  
7 outdated parking requirements. I urge the  
8 Zoning Commission to revise D.C.'s 1950s Zoning  
9 Regulations and help to take this great city and  
10 great neighborhoods and turn them into a more  
11 vibrant, walkable and inclusive place.  
12 Eliminating and reducing the parking minimums  
13 will help this City become even more walkable  
14 and inclusive.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Can you bring your  
16 microphone closer?

17 MR. HOLZHEIMER: Absolutely.

18 CHAIRMAN HOOD: So we can hear you  
19 and the audience.

20 MR. HOLZHEIMER: Sure. A little  
21 bit better?

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

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1 MR. HOLZHEIMER: Excellent.

2 I=ve loved living in my  
3 neighborhood because I don=t need a car and I  
4 can always get around with Zip Car or Car-to-Go  
5 or rent a car for the day or use a taxi or Uber  
6 or Lift. And those are just the options with  
7 automobiles. That is not to say anything of  
8 Capitol Bike Share or Metro or walking. And  
9 the list goes on.

10 Our Zoning Code from 1958 neither  
11 fits a modern dynamic city like D.C. nor does  
12 it respect the form of our historic  
13 neighborhoods and our many transportation  
14 choices that include not owning a car. Our  
15 current Zoning Code is based on data concept as  
16 to what a city is, how people travel and how our  
17 city should grow and contains no emphasis on  
18 sustainability or meeting the goals of Mayor  
19 Gray=s laudable, sustainable D.C. plan.

20 It is my opinion, shared by many I  
21 would argue within our age demographic, that we  
22 need to modernize our zoning code to better

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1 accommodate the needs of current and future  
2 D.C. residents and respect the nearly 40  
3 percent of households who do not own a car.  
4 Parking should be viewed as an amenity, not as  
5 a necessity.

6 Washingtonians would object if we  
7 were forced to pay for parking, gyms or doormen  
8 or pet care or weekly house cleaners throughout  
9 every building in the city. Many would find  
10 those services worth paying for, but many would  
11 not. It is equally objectionable to require  
12 entire city=s residents to subsidize parking  
13 needs of some without providing the options to  
14 go without parking.

15 Reforming parking mandates  
16 recognizes that more than half of all renters  
17 in the City don=t own a car. Why shouldn=t  
18 housing cater to these households? Thank you,  
19 Members of the Zoning Commission, for your  
20 time.

21 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. We want to  
22 thank this panel. Can you hold your seats

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1 because we might have a few questions? Hold  
2 your seats.

3 Any questions? Vice Chair?

4 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chairman. I just want to ask one of you to  
6 self-select. This will be our last public  
7 meeting to date. And one of my concerns is with  
8 the corner grocery stores. They=re very  
9 convenient, but they also seem to attract more  
10 trash, possibly crime, people hanging out.  
11 Does anybody want to share their experience  
12 whether they have seen that or is this just  
13 something that doesn=t really exist?

14 MR. MALOUFF: I live on R Street  
15 between 16th and 17th Streets. I have a corner  
16 store. There are several corner stores in my  
17 neighborhoods. It=s one of the amenities that  
18 I love about my neighborhood. It=s key to why  
19 I live there. And if I didn=t have that ability  
20 or those things within walking distance, close  
21 walking distance, I wouldn=t live in the  
22 District of Columbia.

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1                   VICE CHAIR COHEN:   Anybody else  
2                   want to?

3                   MS.   STOESSEN:     Hi.     Yes,  in  
4                   Parkview, we have a number of corner stores.  
5                   There=s one about a half block away from me.  
6                   Since I=ve lived there, there have been two  
7                   owners.    They=re I consider part of the  
8                   neighborhood.   They=re very friendly and  
9                   welcoming to everyone.

10                  There are a lot of kids who go in  
11                  there.  And the junk food is a different issue.  
12                  I won=t get into that.  But there=s a lot of  
13                  people coming and going from the store.  But  
14                  I=ve never seen a problem with loitering or  
15                  crime.

16                  There=s a trash can right outside  
17                  that is emptied fairly often.  So I don=t have  
18                  a problem with that either.  I do consider it  
19                  a good amenity to my neighborhood.  Thank you.

20                  CHAIRMAN HOOD:   Okay.  Questions?  
21                  Commissioners Turnbull.

22                  COMMISSIONER TURNBULL:  Thank you,

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1 Mr. Chairman. I have a question for Ms. Fitch.  
2 I need to point out that I am a member of the  
3 Washington Chapter AIA. And I'll try to be  
4 fair to our Executive Director.

5 I just had a question, Mary. In our  
6 lot of Zoning cases, penthouses come up. And  
7 I don't think we've ever had too many architects  
8 come before us and say they want extra height.

9 MS. FITCH: Right.

10 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: I can only  
11 remember one case on the BZA where some special  
12 elevator equipment wanted a variance because of  
13 extra height. But most of them seem to be  
14 satisfied with 18.5.

15 In fact, I think we've had one or two  
16 cases where new equipment has even said they can  
17 be lower. So I'm just wondering where the 1.5  
18 foot is coming from.

19 MS. FITCH: Well, we've been  
20 discussing height, the height of buildings, for  
21 various reasons here in the District of  
22 Columbia.

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1 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Right.

2 MS. FITCH: And this came up as part  
3 of the discussion and you would think that with  
4 the miniaturization of nearly everything that  
5 elevator equipment is actually getting  
6 tighter. But what we've learned is that that's  
7 actually not the case.

8 And as elevators go to the roof, you  
9 have to get the elevator up and the equipment  
10 up over top of it. So you can get it into 18.5  
11 feet, but you're limited on the amount of  
12 equipment. And 1.5 foot seemed when we had a  
13 roundtable discussion with a number of folks  
14 that do office buildings as well as  
15 multi-family units across the board they all  
16 said, AYes. If we could just have that little  
17 extra cushion, that would be great.@

18 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Okay.

19 MS. FITCH: So it's about 18  
20 inches.

21 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Yes, as I  
22 said, I don't think we've ever had too many

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1 architects complain. If it would help, maybe  
2 the Chapter could provide us some more  
3 information on that.

4 MS. FITCH: Sure.

5 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: If it=s a  
6 substantial issue. But as I say in all the PUDs  
7 we=ve had I don=t really think we=ve had a big  
8 concern about going an extra 1.5 foot.

9 MS. FITCH: Yes, and I was  
10 surprised when this came up. But as we talked  
11 about it with the rest of the folks on that panel  
12 they all agreed that this would be really  
13 helpful. And the kinds of equipment that  
14 they=re trying to mask is not getting smaller.

15 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: If you  
16 could -- If the Chapter could send something to  
17 the Office of Planning I think as background on  
18 why the Chapter thinks it would be worth it to  
19 do that, that would be helpful.

20 MS. FITCH: Sure.

21 COMMISSIONER MAY: I=ll also  
22 disclose I=m a member of the Chapter. But I

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1 don=t have any qualms about giving the  
2 Executive Director a hard time. No, I really  
3 don=t.

4 One thing that was interesting to me  
5 is learning more about what other jurisdictions  
6 allow. And I think that actually might be  
7 helpful, too, because I know that in Alexandria  
8 they don=t allow even 18 feet. It=s more like  
9 14 or 15. And so knowing what other cities  
10 typically allow would be helpful.

11 MS. FITCH: Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER MAY: The other thing  
13 that I have a question for you about is having  
14 to do with the rooftops. The penthouses the  
15 way they are treated in the Height Act and the  
16 Zoning Code queues to the Height Act is that  
17 these are necessary attachments to buildings.  
18 They=re not necessarily enhancements to the  
19 architecture.

20 And sometimes we get architects who  
21 are very interested in sort of dressing up the  
22 top of the building. And some of your

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1 statements go in that direction. I guess what  
2 I wonder is is it generally understood that  
3 penthouses really are supposed to be background  
4 pieces and not supposed to be the embellishment  
5 of the building.

6 MS. FITCH: Yes, I believe so. But  
7 I think they can -- there=s the possibility to  
8 make them a little bit better. And in the case  
9 of if you want them to be even more background,  
10 you don=t necessarily have to have that one wall  
11 that=s 18 or perhaps 20 feet high. So some  
12 variation and the more people are using roofs  
13 for green roofs and for terraces. I think that  
14 could be really helpful.

15 COMMISSIONER MAY: What would you  
16 think of having an allowance that everything  
17 stays at one height except for elevator  
18 overruns which are the things that really drive  
19 that extra height?

20 MS. FITCH: We can certainly look  
21 at that and we can suggest something to you if  
22 that=s helpful.

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1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other  
2 questions?

3 (No verbal response.)

4 Ms. Stoesen. Who is Ms. Stoesen?

5 MS. STOESEN: Yes sir.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. We=ve been  
7 around town, going around town. And I=ve heard  
8 this argument on both sides. You say many  
9 citizens don=t have cars, don=t want to drive  
10 or no longer are able to drive. But in D.C. it  
11 is easy to get to services and stores without  
12 a car.

13 I=ll be frank and honest. Today,  
14 the way my feet were hurting where I walk from  
15 Shaw, if somebody had come by and picked me up  
16 or if I had a car, I would have drove up there.  
17 But let me just say that that=s a two-sided  
18 argument.

19 One of the things that we have heard  
20 about that is -- I=m trying to figure this out.  
21 I=ve heard this a lot. This is my first time  
22 asking this question. Seniors don=t want to

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1 drive.

2 Now some of the seniors say -- I know  
3 some and we know some in the city that drive to  
4 90 and 95 years old. And that=s how they get  
5 around.

6 Are we talking about a code for the  
7 immediate future or a code for the long-term  
8 future? Because some of us and I=ve said this  
9 about -- I have a bike question and a grocery  
10 question. Some of us now who are doing some of  
11 the things we=re doing now, we=re not going to  
12 be able to do them later. And I hope to be  
13 driving personally if I need to at that age.

14 So I=m just putting it out there  
15 because we have people that tell of two  
16 different ways of doing this. Some people say  
17 they don=t need a car.

18 But we=re not going to be as vibrant  
19 as we are now. How are we going to do then? Do  
20 we want to sell ourselves short and say we=re  
21 not going to drive after 70? Help me  
22 understand this statement.

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1 MS. STOESEN: Certainly. I  
2 absolutely agree that there are a lot of  
3 differences here and there are some seniors who  
4 will certainly continue to drive as they age and  
5 continue to want to drive as they age.

6 Some people like my father who does not  
7 live in the District but is in his 80s no longer  
8 drive. And he lives in an area where he can't  
9 go anywhere without a car. So my brother has  
10 to come and drive him where he needs to go.

11 But I think one of the advantages of  
12 D.C. is that it is a very livable community for  
13 seniors who want to age in place. I have a  
14 number of neighbors who are probably in their  
15 70s or 80s who don't have cars and I see them  
16 walking to the corner store. I see them  
17 walking to the Metro quite often and to the bus  
18 stops.

19 I think that certainly I don't mean  
20 to imply that you shouldn't have a car when you  
21 get older or that people shouldn't have cars.  
22 But I think that we're entering a time as our

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1 population in general ages and I know that  
2 D.C.'s demographics may be a little different  
3 because we've had so many young people moving  
4 here.

5 But in general in the United States  
6 the population is getting older. And the  
7 population research shows really wants to age  
8 in place. They want to be able to stay where  
9 they are. And one of the things I love about  
10 D.C. is that you can because you're not  
11 isolated. You're in a community. If you're  
12 in a rowhouse like I am, you can go to your  
13 neighbor next door if you need help lifting  
14 something in your house, things like that. So  
15 I really think it's a wonderful place to age in  
16 place without a car.

17 In terms of the present versus the  
18 future, I'm not sure I'm understanding the  
19 difference that you're talking about. I think  
20 that right now it's a great place to age in place  
21 and I think that we can maintain that in the  
22 future as well.

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1                   CHAIRMAN HOOD:    Okay.    In other  
2 words, you=re not saying do away with it.    You  
3 just want sections like this to be included.

4                   MS. STOESEN:    Right.    I think it=s  
5 a smart move for D.C. for many reasons.    And I  
6 think one of those is that our aging population  
7 won=t need cars.    I think a lot of older people  
8 don=t have cars or don=t need cars or are unable  
9 to drive for health reasons.    So that may  
10 reduce the need for parking if I=m  
11 understanding what you=re asking correctly.

12                  CHAIRMAN HOOD:    Okay.    I=m not  
13 going to -- You=re not in court.    So you=re  
14 actually helping me to help form my decisions.

15                  MS. STOESEN:    Thank you.

16                  CHAIRMAN HOOD:    I do want to talk  
17 about the grocery.    You mentioned this, Mr.  
18 Millar, I believe.

19                  MR. MILLAR:    Millar.

20                  CHAIRMAN HOOD:    Millar.    Mr.  
21 Millar, you mentioned about the -- And these are  
22 questions I=ve already asked.    As a matter of

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1 fact, the bicycle issue I=ve gotten beaten up  
2 on. I=m just curious. How do you -- You said  
3 they really have a hard time figuring out how  
4 somebody could buy groceries without having a  
5 trunk to load everything into.

6 And I=ll tell you. The statement I  
7 made a couple of months ago was that I haven=t  
8 seen anybody -- and this is an exact statement.  
9 So if somebody tweets it, make sure we tweet it  
10 right this time. I haven=t seen anybody with  
11 ten bags of groceries on their bicycle.

12 Now I understand from what I=ve  
13 heard -- I=ve been incorrect. So some people  
14 might ride around with 15. But how do you  
15 accomplish what you have in your testimony?

16 MR. MILLAR: So I think the way I  
17 explained it to one of my co-workers from the  
18 Inland Empire in California was that the  
19 grocery store is within walking distance for  
20 me. I can go -- I will go after this hearing  
21 to pick some stuff up. I guarantee there is  
22 something in the fridge that we need more of.

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1 And I=ll get a little text and I=ll find out what  
2 that is.

3 But I can go on the way home right  
4 now. I can go on the way home before my Metro  
5 commute. I can see grocery stores -- Between  
6 me where I work and my house I have several  
7 options to go in and stop and go grab scones or  
8 milk or any other options. So I only ever carry  
9 about two bags. And then if I need to get more  
10 I go the next night and the next night. Right.

11 My wife and I are able to access a  
12 lot of places to buy food, reasonably  
13 inexpensive food and support our family. And  
14 we can do that on a daily basis. So it=s not  
15 the suburban model where you go -- We would go  
16 to the PX or the Commissary and load up the  
17 minivan and then we=d have everything for a  
18 whole week. We wouldn=t have to do any more  
19 shopping.

20 The pedestrian model is more like  
21 only buy what you can carry in one load, but you  
22 expect to make a few more trips.

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1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Thank  
2 you very much.

3 Any other questions,  
4 Commissioners?

5 (No verbal response.)

6 We thank all of you for your  
7 testimony. We appreciate it. Thank you.

8 Okay. Let me go back. I think  
9 we=ve done very well at first round. Sylvia  
10 Ruiz. Okay. Almost going in order here. I  
11 like that.

12 MS. RUIZ: Hi.

13 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Nancy Fox.  
14 Theresa Kerrigan. Megan Kanagy. Matt  
15 Webster. Bill Mosley. Darnell Grisby.  
16 Brian Levy. Vincent Verweij. He=s laughing.  
17 So I know I pronounced that wrong. Marshall  
18 Duer-Balkind. Colleen Hackett. Colleen, I=m  
19 sorry. That=s it. Okay.

20 I=m sorry. Did I skip Ms. Morgan,  
21 Commissioner Morgan? Is Commissioner Morgan  
22 here?

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1 (No verbal response.)

2 I knew she wasn=t here. I didn=t  
3 skip her. Okay. We=re going to start to my  
4 right, your left. This young lady here, you  
5 may begin.

6 MS. HACKETT: Thank you, Chairman  
7 Hood.

8 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Do you want to pull  
9 the mike up so we can hear you?

10 MS. HACKETT: Thank you, Chairman  
11 Hood. My name is Colleen Hackett and I live in  
12 the Mount Pleasant section of Ward 1. And my  
13 comments are primarily focused on asking the  
14 Board questions about enforcement.

15 I=ve lived in the District for  
16 almost 20 years. And in my neighborhood we  
17 have lots of problems with enforcement of what  
18 we have as current zoning regulations and  
19 current parking regulations. So when I read  
20 the Zoning revisions, the questions that came  
21 to my mind are how are these changes going to  
22 be enforced.

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1           First and foremost, it's my  
2 understanding that the power to change zoning  
3 is predicated on a very important quality that  
4 it has to be done to ensure the public safety  
5 and the public welfare. I'm acutely aware as  
6 a homeowner of a single family home that what  
7 is about to be applied to Mount Pleasant is that  
8 we're going to be R-1 or R-F-1 -- excuse me --  
9 which means that every single family home can  
10 be chopped up into two flats. And it's  
11 possible to add a third story.

12           Now I have concerns about  
13 architect, but that's not why I'm here. What  
14 I'm concerned about is in terms of budgeting and  
15 enforcement what is the District of Columbia  
16 prepared to do to ensure that we are not taxed  
17 out of our homes as single family homeowners.

18           To me that seems like a public  
19 welfare issue. And I would like to see what the  
20 OTR has written. Those zoning revisions have  
21 been going on. The plan is being written for  
22 four years. And I would like to see what during

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1 those four years the Office of Tax and Revenue  
2 has put together to offset the very real  
3 possibility that every single family homeowner  
4 in my neighborhood is going to be taxed out.

5 And I'm not talking about the  
6 homestead deduction. And I'm not talking  
7 about the Section 8 for seniors. I'm talking  
8 about meaningful tax revision. And I see that  
9 as a welfare issue.

10 Secondly, parking. I like Tommy  
11 Wells and I think the bag idea to clean up the  
12 Anacostia and all that is a great change  
13 project. It's probably the most successful  
14 change project in history.

15 But this idea that we're not going  
16 to issue parking stickers to people who buy  
17 these condos and that that's going to solve our  
18 parking problem, again how is the City budgeted  
19 to enforce that? In my neighborhood and I've  
20 lived there for 16 years, what we have going on  
21 is every night everyone knows after 8:00 p.m.  
22 you're free and clear. The ticketing people

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1 aren=t coming around.

2 Are you going to enforce 24 hour/7  
3 towing to ensure that when we double the number  
4 of cars that are coming to our streets that  
5 they=re removed from in front of fire hydrants,  
6 blocking alleys, that ambulances are able to  
7 get in.

8 Has anyone here ever been to South  
9 Philadelphia and seen how people in South  
10 Philadelphia deal with parking? They double  
11 park and there=s no enforcement. And I see  
12 that coming to my neighborhood.

13 And I want to hear from the panel  
14 that the City Council has a budget to enforce  
15 this no-parking idea. I don=t see it happening  
16 even now. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
18 Next.

19 MR. GRISBY: Thank you,  
20 Chairperson Hood and Members. My name is  
21 Darnell Grisby. It=s a pleasure to be here.  
22 I=m a resident of 1300 N Street, N.W. I=m a

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1 homeowner, a member of my condo association  
2 board. In my day job, I'm Director of Research  
3 for the American Public Transportation  
4 Association.

5 I'm here to express my personal  
6 appreciation of this Commission with taking up  
7 the parking issue. I'm here to express my  
8 support for the reforms that are on the table  
9 here, especially reducing the minimum parking  
10 requirements in new development.

11 I moved here from Southern  
12 California. And one of the things I love about  
13 living here in D.C. is that there's a vibrant  
14 and emerging culture of walking and public  
15 transit access. It's something I didn't have  
16 when I was growing up in Southern California.

17 And whenever I go back home to see  
18 my family, it reminds me of what we have here  
19 in D.C. And everyday I wonder if my mother can  
20 stay in her home because she has glaucoma and  
21 it's growing worse every year. But yet we live  
22 in a very transit apartment, very

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1 auto-dependent area where she has to drive  
2 everywhere.

3 I know this will be an issue for her  
4 going forward. Her community has plenty of  
5 highways and parking, but the infrastructure  
6 has crowded out the walking and public transit  
7 options that she needs to maintain her  
8 independent living.

9 This proposal to reduce parking  
10 requirements is a modest one, but it will  
11 support a less costly housing option, more  
12 affordable housing and encourage riding public  
13 transit and walking as a viable option for more  
14 people. Those of us who live in zero car  
15 households or one car households as I do will  
16 be able to decide how much parking we actually  
17 want to buy when we buy a place.

18 We have a good thing here in D.C. and  
19 I think a concrete way to keep it and to make  
20 sure that we ensure this city is one city that  
21 has prosperity for all is to support of these  
22 sort of reforms to the Zoning Code. Thank you.

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1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

2 MS. RUIZ: Good evening. My name  
3 is Sylvia Ruiz. I live at 1375 Kenyon Street  
4 here in D.C. And last year I had the  
5 opportunity to attend the Zoning Update  
6 Briefing at Tubman Elementary that the D.C.  
7 Office of Planning conducted. And I wanted to  
8 appreciate the Staff that conducted those  
9 briefings that brought me up to speed on what  
10 questions that I had. And they did a really  
11 good job of answering whatever concerns I had.

12 Thank you for the opportunity to  
13 testify tonight. It=s my first time here  
14 before the Zoning Commission. But I thought it  
15 was important to share my voice and express my  
16 support for the revision to the Zoning Code that  
17 will reinforce what I love best about my adopted  
18 my hometown. I=m also from California. It=s  
19 walkability, diversity and vibrancy.

20 I=m specifically here to express my  
21 support for the reductions in the parking  
22 minimums which were designed for a different

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1 kind of place than is the City that we have today  
2 as I understand it. I'm again from California  
3 where I drove hundreds of miles every day just  
4 to get to work and get through my life. I had  
5 a car for everything.

6 When I came here to D.C. I was leery  
7 about leaving my car in California. I wasn't  
8 sure how I was going to survive. But I'm glad  
9 to say that I have enjoyed living in this city  
10 with all the different public transit options,  
11 but also just neighborhoods that are very  
12 walkable and a city has come towards that.

13 I realize I don't need a car to get  
14 around. And I can do my shopping. I can get  
15 to work on the Metro or the bus. I can walk to  
16 restaurants or shops. And there is just so many  
17 different choices here.

18 And it's not just me. Most of my  
19 friends that I work with or my neighbors don't  
20 have cars. So many choices here that we should  
21 make it easier for people not to own a car so  
22 that they can enjoy the benefits of walking and

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1 riding transit.

2 I know that there are a lot of people  
3 I see on a daily basis on the Metro or the bus,  
4 whether they=re young parents with children  
5 taking them to school or senior citizens going  
6 about their daily lives or to businesses. Some  
7 people, this is a necessity that don=t have the  
8 money to maintain a car. For others, it=s just  
9 a choice.

10 In my apartment complex, there are  
11 a lot of people that actually don=t own cars.  
12 And I think we should continue to support that  
13 option.

14 Another way to make the city more  
15 affordable is obviously to allow accessory  
16 apartments and reducing barriers to creating  
17 accessory apartments to give extra income to  
18 either seniors, empty nesters or to young  
19 families.

20 And supporting the corner stores,  
21 I=d love more corner stores in my neighborhoods  
22 that=s more a little bit big box, Target and Best

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1 Buy and the Giant. But I=m hoping to have more  
2 corner stores.

3 And I hope that as D.C. continues to  
4 grow that the Zoning Code can ensure that  
5 moderate and low income families can afford to  
6 continue to live in the city, reducing  
7 unnecessary costs from parking minimums in  
8 order to stay in the city. Thank you so much.

9 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

10 MS. FOX: My name is Nancy Fox and  
11 I live at 1323 V Street, N.W.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: You have no more  
13 time than that.

14 MS. FOX: Okay. Thank you. I=m  
15 speaking in support of the proposed changes to  
16 the Zoning Ordinance and, in particular, to the  
17 greater flexibility that it offers on parking.

18 I=m a Ward 1 resident who speaks to  
19 you as one of the nearly 40 percent of households  
20 in D.C. that do not own a car. My family makes  
21 a willing choice not to own a car. My husband  
22 and I are both busy working professionals who

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1 have the means to own a car, but for us the  
2 advantages of not owning a car far outweigh its  
3 challenges.

4           And many other witnesses have talked  
5 about how easy it is to get around without a car  
6 so well that in the interest of time I won't talk  
7 about that. But I also want to say that I do  
8 have a toddler and we still are fine without  
9 owning a car. Our lives have gotten a lot more  
10 hectic, but we still find it less time-consuming  
11 and less of a hassle not to be burdened with car  
12 ownership and worrying about tickets and where  
13 our car is parked.

14           We appreciate the beauty and the  
15 vitality of our city as best enjoyed on a walking  
16 and a biking speed. I know other families in  
17 my neighborhood who choose not to own any cars  
18 as well. And I will happily preach the gospel  
19 of car-free living to anyone who is willing to  
20 listen. But still I recognize that many of  
21 current and future neighbors will still choose  
22 to own a car. And I don't have a problem with

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1 that.

2 The proposed changes to the Zoning  
3 Ordinance do not limit a builder from including  
4 the parking that residents want and need in a  
5 new development. But the beauty of the Board=s  
6 changes are these. They are also flexible  
7 enough to allow builders to meet the demand of  
8 families like mine who prefer not to own a car  
9 and who shouldn=t have to shoulder the extra  
10 expense of a below-ground parking space that we  
11 don=t need. Not to mention that the changes can  
12 facilitate the construction of more affordable  
13 housing and can allow the market to better  
14 respond to the future needs of the aging  
15 baby-boomer population that will own fewer  
16 cars.

17 My family offers itself as evidence  
18 of the influx of new, relatively affluent  
19 residents in D.C. Even the growing number of  
20 households with children does not necessarily  
21 have to exacerbate the city=s traffic and  
22 parking woes. In the five years that we have

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1 lived in the District, we have seen so many  
2 positive changes that make car-free living even  
3 easier, more zip car spaces, Uber for sending  
4 our babysitter home, using Capitol Bike Share  
5 to pick up our son from daycare.

6 Who knows what services and  
7 innovations will be offered in the future that  
8 continue to provide all of us with even more  
9 choices on how to get around. And as  
10 Commissioners, you have the opportunity and the  
11 responsibility to set in place a new zoning  
12 framework that can accommodate a future that we  
13 can't possibly conceive right now.

14 The last zoning overhaul happened  
15 some 55 years ago and it's possible that the  
16 zoning overhaul that you are considering right  
17 now will survive longer than any of us will  
18 before it's fully considered again. With your  
19 actions you could take the safe route, avoiding  
20 changes to parking regulations that some may  
21 consider controversial or with your actions you  
22 can bequeath a legacy that can provide our

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1 children and future residents with a  
2 possibility of a more sustainable, more livable  
3 city by institutionalizing a more flexible  
4 approach to parking as the city continues to  
5 develop.

6 And I wholeheartedly encourage you  
7 to embrace this latter choice. Thank you for  
8 taking the time to hear my comments.

9 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
10 Next.

11 MS. KANAGY: Good evening. My name  
12 is Megan Kanagy. I live in the Columbia Heights  
13 neighborhood at 1423 Columbia Road, N.W. I'm  
14 here tonight to express my support for the  
15 proposed update to the Zoning Code, especially  
16 the reforms concerning parking minimum and  
17 accessory dwelling units.

18 My husband and I purchased our home  
19 in Columbia Heights two years ago. We love our  
20 neighborhood because it's a diverse, vibrant  
21 community that is incredibly well served by  
22 transit. We are one of the nearly 40 percent

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1 of District households including several people  
2 at this table that choose to live car-free and  
3 we are able to afford to buy our first home  
4 thanks to the estimated \$8,000 we save annually  
5 by not owning a car. We've lived car-free since  
6 2006.

7 In addition, the price of our condo  
8 was comparatively lower because it did not come  
9 with an unneeded parking space. Building  
10 parking particularly if it's underground is  
11 very expensive as we all know and those costs  
12 are passed onto the renter/owner. By reducing  
13 parking minimums, the zoning update helps to  
14 reduce the overall costs of renting or owning  
15 a home and makes D.C. more affordable to all.

16 Before moving to D.C., my husband  
17 and I lived in Berkeley, California where we  
18 rented a granny flat or as it referred to in the  
19 Zoning Code accessory dwelling unit or ADU.  
20 This unit was located on a quiet residential  
21 street lined with detached homes built in the  
22 early 1900s.

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1           ADUs like ours allowed for an  
2           increase in density and affordability of the  
3           neighborhood without adverse impacts to the  
4           character of the street or the historic homes  
5           themselves. And I'm sure the couple we rented  
6           from who lived above us and had owned their home  
7           for 40 years appreciated the extra income.

8           Our current Zoning Code is outdated  
9           and does not support the growth of D.C. as an  
10          inclusive, dynamic city. I fully support the  
11          proposed update to the Zoning Code and encourage  
12          the Commissioners to do the same. Thank you for  
13          your consideration.

14          CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

15          MR. VERWEIJ: Good evening. I'm  
16          Vincent Verweij. I'm a resident of Ward 1. I  
17          live at 781 Fairmont Street, N.W., near Sherman  
18          Avenue. I'm certified arborist and I'm working  
19          for Arlington County as an arborist. And I'm  
20          going to talk about everything but parking.

21          I do appreciate the comments made  
22          about parking and I actually support

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1 everybody=s comments so far. I have three  
2 comments regarding the green area ratio in the  
3 current Zoning Code that are being looked at as  
4 part of the revision and on the section on tree  
5 protection.

6 I do really appreciate that we=re  
7 taking a look at this. Ward 1 is a ward most  
8 disconnected from nature unfortunately with the  
9 lowest tree canopy percentage in the city and  
10 very little open space compared to other wards.

11 Developing in a sustainable fashion  
12 including green space in a green area ratio and  
13 trees is vital to making our ward and our city  
14 a more livable space. Trees and green areas  
15 provide us with much better public health and  
16 a better environment for our residents.

17 First off, I=d like to suggest a  
18 revision to the approach on tree planting laid  
19 out in the current code. The Code seems to  
20 focus most on the planting of trees based on  
21 caliper size as opposed to what the tree is going  
22 to provide for us in the future. We really need

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1 to be looking at larger canopy trees to be  
2 planted on properties. And I'm sure this has  
3 been mentioned before.

4 But that is currently not one of the  
5 focuses of the Zoning Code. Many  
6 municipalities in the area have actually done  
7 research on this. You don't need to do new  
8 research. And I actually brought a list of  
9 canopy targets that you could use from Arlington  
10 County. I know people hate comparing to  
11 Arlington County, but they do do some things  
12 right.

13 Secondly, I'd like to express a  
14 desire to emphasize the use of native plants  
15 more. There is already some bonus for using  
16 native plants. But it seems to be a little bit  
17 unclear how that's applied.

18 It could be either just planting one  
19 native plant and getting the bonus which would  
20 be ridiculous as to also having to plant all  
21 native plants on your property which would also  
22 be ridiculous. I suggest something in between.

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1 Maybe getting the credit when you plant 75  
2 percent or 50 percent native plants.

3 And, finally, I have a concern as an  
4 arborist with the tree protection section. It  
5 does not seem to talk at all about how these  
6 trees are protected when you are trying to  
7 preserve trees. I have a little bit of document  
8 on how to properly protect trees. That really  
9 needs to be part of the Zoning Ordinance if these  
10 are being given credit. Otherwise, we're going  
11 to end up with projects that have pretended to  
12 protect trees and not actually done anything and  
13 they die after a year or two. And we have  
14 nothing as far as our tree canopy. Thank you  
15 very much.

16 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Good  
17 testimony. All of it is good. We appreciate  
18 everyone=s testimony. Very helpful. Any  
19 questions? Commissioner Miller?

20 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes. I  
21 thank each of you for your testimony and Mr.  
22 Verweij.

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1 MR. VERWEIJ: Verweij.

2 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Verweij,  
3 sorry. Thank you particularly for the specific  
4 suggestions. All of the suggestions that  
5 witnesses from the public are making are going  
6 to be looked at by the Zoning Commission and are  
7 being looked at by the Office of Planning and  
8 we will get recommendations on them from them.

9 I appreciate your green area ratio.  
10 The green area ratio we've already adopted.  
11 But we have received during these hearing  
12 suggestions for improving the green area ratio  
13 from Casey Trees and others. And I appreciate  
14 your specific suggestions and references to  
15 other jurisdictions.

16 Ms. Hackett, I think you're raising  
17 a good point about enforcement. It's something  
18 that isn't something that we do, but we  
19 obviously have to be aware of whether the  
20 policies we adopt are enforceable or making it  
21 easier. Now we're actually looking at that  
22 issue in the context of the --

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1           Well, we=re looking at the  
2 particular issue of the condition that we have  
3 been imposing in a couple of cases of  
4 prohibiting a building from having RPP or  
5 requiring that the leases or the sales documents  
6 to preclude that. We are aware that we=re going  
7 to be looking at that issue whether that is  
8 workable with DDOT and DMD. So I appreciate  
9 your bringing that up as well.

10           And I think the Office of Planning  
11 also is looking at the particular problem in  
12 your neighborhood of the breaking up of houses.  
13 So thank you for bringing that up. Thank you  
14 all for your testimony.

15           CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Any other  
16 questions or comments?

17           Let me just say this about the  
18 enforcement issue. I can assure you that  
19 Councilmember Graham is definitely letting us  
20 know about some enforcement issues in Ward 1.  
21 Trust me. So if you leave here and you see him  
22 today, you can tell him we mentioned it. He=s

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1 asked us to look at it not once, not twice, not  
2 three times, but four times.

3 And I'm not sure if he's going to  
4 come tonight. But I can tell you if he does  
5 come, the Commission, we already know what it's  
6 about. It's about pop-ups. And we asked the  
7 Office of Planning to address it. We're  
8 working on that. Believe me. We've heard him  
9 loud and clear. So if you see him, you can tell  
10 him, The Zoning Commission has heard you loud  
11 and clear. Okay. And as part of that  
12 enforcement I'm glad, Ms. Hackett, you brought  
13 that up.

14 Any other questions, Commissioners?  
15 Commissioner May.

16 COMMISSIONER MAY: Actually, Ms.  
17 Hackett, I had a question, a couple of  
18 questions, to clarify what you had testified  
19 about. You said that your neighborhood is  
20 going to be zoned R-F-1. And what is it now?

21 MS. HACKETT: R-4.

22 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And

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1 you=re concerned because under R-F-1 the  
2 properties could become flats and divided into  
3 two units.

4 MS. HACKETT: And then also --

5 COMMISSIONER MAY: You need to be on  
6 a microphone if you=re going to speak.

7 MS. HACKETT: Thank you for the  
8 opportunity to expand on my comments there  
9 because it=s hard to put everything in three  
10 minutes.

11 COMMISSIONER MAY: I understand.

12 MS. HACKETT: I think there are  
13 other people here from Mount Pleasant tonight  
14 who are going to address components of our  
15 concerns on specifically what=s being proposed  
16 for Mount Pleasant.

17 I think it=s important for everyone  
18 here to recognize that Ward 1 is very varied and  
19 diverse. Columbia Heights is pretty much  
20 wall-to-tall impervious surface; whereas Mount  
21 Pleasant probably holds the largest tree  
22 reservoir in the city and contributes to the

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1 largest CO2 offset in the city.

2 And we also sit at about 280 feet,  
3 Mount Pleasant. And so when we have rainfall,  
4 we have runoff and we have flooding into the park  
5 and that flood plain.

6 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And I  
7 appreciate all of that. But my question was  
8 really about the zone that you're in.

9 MS. HACKETT: Right. If we --

10 COMMISSIONER MAY: So related to  
11 that or I'll ask another question.

12 MS. HACKETT: Where the changes  
13 impact those issues are the lot occupancy.

14 COMMISSIONER MAY: Right.

15 MS. HACKETT: Right now, you can  
16 only convert from 40 percent lot occupancy to  
17 60 percent if you're converting from single  
18 family home to condominium. The new zoning  
19 changes us to matter-of-right conversion from  
20 40 percent to 60 percent which means you're  
21 incentivizing loss of our impervious surface.

22 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. So

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1 that=s an area where I think there needs to be  
2 some clarification because the R-F-1 is not  
3 supposed to be substantially different from  
4 R-4. It=s supposed to be pretty consistent  
5 with R-3 and R-4. And lot occupancy is limited  
6 to 60 percent in R-4 and it=s 40 percent  
7 currently in R-4 when you have a side yard, when  
8 you=re at the end of a row or something like  
9 that.

10 So I think there needs to be some  
11 clarification of exactly what is in there.

12 MS. HACKETT: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER MAY: And maybe it=s  
14 worth talking to the Office of Planning about  
15 what the difference is. Although I have  
16 studied the new Zoning Code, I haven=t memorized  
17 it and I can=t tell exactly how it differs from  
18 the -- The new proposal differs from the  
19 existing code, but I don=t think it=s as  
20 different as you might think it is.

21 MS. HACKETT: I live on a street  
22 with predominantly detached homes. So it will

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1 impact us greatly.

2 COMMISSIONER MAY: Right. So if  
3 it=s a fully detached home, yes.

4 MS. HACKETT: Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER MAY: But I don=t know  
6 that that=s necessarily -- I=m not sure how  
7 that=s treated in the Code. So it=s worth  
8 figuring that out.

9 Then the second thing you said was  
10 the concern about -- Now I=m not sure I can relay  
11 it exactly. But your concern about  
12 condominiums and having no parking. I mean I=m  
13 not sure that there=s a broad provision that  
14 condominiums are not going to have a parking  
15 minimum. Are you talking about granting  
16 variances for parking minimums?

17 MS. HACKETT: There=s a provision I  
18 believe to allow a builder to not put in the  
19 required parking per unit. And the agreement  
20 will be that the city will not issue a parking  
21 sticker to anyone who purchases those units.  
22 And I don=t believe that=s enforceable.

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1 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

2 MS. HACKETT: And the problem that  
3 I have with it is I think it=s a rationalization  
4 and a wishful thinking on parking change. And  
5 as someone who came to the District without  
6 money to buy a car and is now the mother of a  
7 11 year old, I will testify to the fact that  
8 people=s needs change. And children change  
9 your priorities. And it is a reality that at  
10 some point people need a car.

11 And I would just say that do you know  
12 what the developers do with that gift. They put  
13 another basement condominium in and they get  
14 more money out of the property.

15 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay.

16 MS. HACKETT: They=re not making  
17 the city car-free. It=s just a wish.

18 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. So I  
19 think the concern that you=re talking about is  
20 a tradeoff that=s sometimes made when a proposal  
21 is made for a condominium building where for  
22 some reason the developer can=t put in the

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1 parking and how that sometimes gets, that  
2 impact, is mitigated by excluding that building  
3 from residential parking programs so to ensure  
4 that people can=t park in the neighborhood.  
5 The only area where we=re talking about an  
6 elimination of parking minimums is in the  
7 downtown area. It=s not -- Well, anyway.

8 MS. HACKETT: I can tell you there=s  
9 a development proposed across the street from  
10 my house. And that developer would like to not  
11 have to put in parking at all because then he  
12 could --

13 COMMISSIONER MAY: So is he seeking  
14 a variance for that?

15 MS. HACKETT: Well, if she gets the  
16 Zoning law, she won=t have to.

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Thank  
18 you.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Are there  
20 any other questions?

21 (No verbal response.)

22 I want to thank this panel. We

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1 appreciate your testimony.

2 Ms. Hackett, do we have your  
3 testimony? We may have it. Okay. Do we have  
4 it?

5 MS. HACKETT: I can send it to you.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: That would be good.  
7 Thank you.

8 Okay. Again, Theresa Kerrigan.  
9 Commissioner Marc D. Morgan. Matt Webster.  
10 Bill Mosley. Brian Levy. Marshall  
11 Duer-Balkind. Thomas Conway. Andrew  
12 Krieger. Steve Watkins. Jerry Malmo. John  
13 Tinpe. Aaron Goldstein. Melissa Kramer.  
14 Linda Houghton. Sebastian Guilnard.

15 How many people do we still have left  
16 that would like to testify?

17 (No verbal response.)

18 How many people do we have left whose  
19 name is not on the roster?

20 (No verbal response.)

21 All right. Everybody has signed.  
22 That's all right. Let me withhold my comments.

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1 All right. We're going to start to my right,  
2 your left. You may begin.

3 MR. MALMO: Thank you. Thank you,  
4 Commissioners.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Make sure the mike  
6 is on and pull it up. There we go.

7 MR. MALMO: My name is Jerry Malmo.  
8 I'm a Ward 1 resident and I live at 1331 Park  
9 Road, N.W. And I'm here to testify about some  
10 concerns I have about the credit system in the  
11 green area ratio.

12 I do support the previous witness=  
13 testimony concerning the green area ratio and  
14 how the trees are scored based on the caliper  
15 at the time of planting. I have more detail in  
16 my testimony that I submitted to you.

17 But I just want to make sure that you  
18 understand at least the point I'm trying to make  
19 or that we'd like to make is that only trees  
20 should be 2.5 inches at caliper at the time of  
21 planting, but there should be incentives for the  
22 trees that will grow larger. And some changes

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1 to the green area ratio and the scoring that I  
2 have in my testimony would do that.

3 The regulations must provide for a  
4 higher ratio for trees that are based on their  
5 size at maturity, not at the time of planting.  
6 This is subtle but critical and a win/win for  
7 developers in the community.

8 Right now, a developer working to  
9 meet the GAR has a zero rate incentive to plant  
10 large canopy trees. This is like creating a  
11 scholarship program for math teachers and then  
12 awarding the scholarships to English majors.

13 Since 1950, the D.C. tree canopy has  
14 declined from 50 percent to its current level  
15 at 36 percent. To reverse this trend, the  
16 District has adopted a 40 percent tree canopy  
17 goal. Trees planted to meet the GAR are  
18 critical in reaching this goal. Our policy and  
19 our regulations must align with this goal.

20 Also I=d like to speak about the  
21 scorecard and how it assigns a multiplier of 0.8  
22 for preserving existing trees that are 24 inches

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1 in diameter or larger. This multiplier is too  
2 low. I=d like you to change this multiplier  
3 from 0.8 to 1.0 and add a new multiplier of -1.2  
4 for the removal of existing trees 24 inches in  
5 diameter or larger. Again, we must align  
6 policy and regulations with our goals.

7 The decisions that we make today  
8 will have a lasting impact on future  
9 generations. Trees are a perfect symbol of  
10 this maxim. It=s important to protect our  
11 trees and encourage developers to plant more  
12 large canopy trees.

13 Changing the zoning regulations to  
14 score trees based on their size and maturity and  
15 increasing incentives to preserve existing  
16 trees will greatly improve the GAR and our  
17 quality of life in D.C. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

19 MR. TINPE: Good evening, ladies  
20 and gentlemen. I=m John Tinpe, Advisory  
21 Neighborhood Commissioner from 2C01. Thank  
22 you for allowing me to testify.

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1           In my neighborhood concerning the  
2           debate over whether or not to have parking, I  
3           found that the straw poll is equally tied  
4           between who want to have parking and people who  
5           don=t need cars.   Apparently, the age group  
6           under 40 they don=t feel the need to have cars.  
7           They are very happy with bicycles and other  
8           means of transportation.

9           But there=s a generation between 40  
10          and 70 which feel that they need to have cars.  
11          And therefore I came to the conclusion that the  
12          answer is choice.   And that is some people can  
13          get around without cars while some people feel  
14          a necessity to have cars.

15          Some other concerns in the  
16          neighborhood that we have are I live in an area  
17          which is downtown and there=s a growing number  
18          of businesses over there which is welcome to the  
19          neighborhood.   And the residents find it  
20          increasingly challenging to live with the  
21          growing businesses,   namely bars and  
22          restaurants.   The noise is the issue.   And then

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1 other than that, we would like to take the Office  
2 into consideration when making decisions of  
3 allowing mixed use zones to take into  
4 consideration the issue of noise.

5 Another issue is parking and we  
6 talked about it already. They feel the  
7 necessity to have choices when living downtown.  
8 Some people can easily get around without cars,  
9 but some people need cars.

10 Another issue that they would like  
11 to have seen is a cost sharing. They would like  
12 to see parking garages to be able to offer car  
13 sharing so that the people who don=t have cars  
14 will be able to use cars to go shopping.

15 And then another issue is the  
16 downtown residents would like to see loading and  
17 unloading 20 minutes in front of their  
18 buildings. Currently, there is no loading and  
19 unloading. They live in front of bus stops and  
20 they find it extremely challenging to get in and  
21 out of their cars or load and unload groceries  
22 and so forth. So they would like to see loading

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1 and unloading in front of their residential  
2 buildings.

3 Another being that came to attention  
4 was newspaper boxes in front of buildings.  
5 They find it to be growing and just spreading  
6 all over the place and currently blocking  
7 entrances to the residential parking. So  
8 newspaper boxes should be moved like 20 feet  
9 away from entrances to the building.

10 In addition to that, I would like to  
11 add that the Office when taken into  
12 consideration of zoning, they pay particular  
13 attention to the architecture, design and the  
14 historic significance of the building which are  
15 all great. But what seems to be missing is the  
16 human element and that is every time there is  
17 gentrification we forget what happened to the  
18 previous residents. Where did they go? The  
19 City currently has about 40,000 homeless  
20 residents, mainly minorities and poor people.  
21 And we have to take into consideration the human  
22 element.

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1 Another thing if I may is -- one more  
2 thing -- would be the same thing with in the  
3 commercial areas. There is a lot of new  
4 developments being done in the downtown area.  
5 And when there is a new -- For instance, in my  
6 neighborhood, there were seven businesses that  
7 were evicted when a building was purchased to  
8 be developed. And that was a loss of 70 jobs  
9 and \$500,000 in sales tax revenue.

10 So whenever a building is approved  
11 to be down for redevelopment, we would like the  
12 Office to take into consideration the human  
13 factor. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

15 MS. KRAMER: Good evening and thank  
16 you for the opportunity to testify in support  
17 of D.C. Zoning Code=s update. My name is  
18 Melissa Kramer and I=ve lived in the U Street  
19 neighborhood since 2002.

20 In that time, I=ve seen a degree of  
21 change in the neighborhood that I could have  
22 never have imagined since I moved there. And

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1 those changes have by and large been positive  
2 from my point of view. And I=d like to continue  
3 to see things improve.

4 I=m here to express my strong  
5 support for the Zoning Code update especially  
6 reforming the outdated parking requirements.  
7 I moved to the U Street neighborhood because  
8 living here allowed me to walk to work and the  
9 grocery store and gave me convenient access to  
10 the bus and the Metro when I needed to go other  
11 places.

12 Since then this neighborhood has  
13 become even more convenient and livable. Now  
14 I have a half dozen grocery stores that I can  
15 walk to, a hardware store, a brand new gym and  
16 the stores just up the street at DC USA. There  
17 are new car and bike sharing options, a new  
18 circulator bus route and the Yellow Line service  
19 from the U Street Metro station.

20 I recognize that these things have  
21 come to the neighborhood because of the new  
22 people that have moved here. And since I did

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1 encourage more businesses to come here, that  
2 makes walking around safer.

3 The 1958 Zoning Code update reflects  
4 the outdated belief that what would make the  
5 City great is a car for every one of these people  
6 that moved here with a place to park it at home  
7 and everywhere that they might want to go. But  
8 this neighborhood really has not improved by  
9 mid-lot curb cuts that makes walking around more  
10 dangerous and less appealing nor by the traffic  
11 that=s generated when everybody has a car near  
12 their house and it=s the cheapest and easiest  
13 way for them to get around.

14 I should be clear that unlike a lot  
15 of other people that testified here my husband  
16 and I actually do own a car and we don=t have  
17 access to an off-street parking space. So I  
18 understand the frustrations that lots of people  
19 feel about how difficult it is to find parking  
20 at U Street particularly on a Saturday night.  
21 The problem is I=d like to see D.C. address that  
22 through a comprehensive parking management

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1 strategy that covers the entire neighborhood  
2 and recognizes that market value of our street  
3 side public spaces.

4 Requiring private developers to  
5 provide something at great expenses increases  
6 the cost of housing even for people who choose  
7 not to own a car and will not solve our problems  
8 as long as D.C. continues to give away the same  
9 product essentially for free.

10 I want more people to live in the  
11 neighborhood and continue to support the things  
12 here that I love. But I certainly hope that  
13 more and more of these people choose to move here  
14 without a car to compete with me for those  
15 on-street parking spaces that I so desperately  
16 need. And if developers= market research  
17 indicates that they can attract those types of  
18 renters or buyers to the neighborhood, D.C.  
19 should not stand in their way and demand that  
20 they create parking that they don=t want to  
21 provide, that renters and owners don=t want to  
22 buy and that many people in the neighborhood

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1 don=t want to have. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

3 MR. CONWAY: While there are many  
4 things in the proposed Zoning rewrite that are  
5 appropriate for a more public transit-oriented  
6 --

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Excuse me. Could  
8 you introduce yourself first?

9 MR. CONWAY: My name is Thomas  
10 Conway. I live at 1833 Park Road. While there  
11 are many things in the proposed Zoning rewrite  
12 that are appropriate for a more public  
13 transit-oriented city with a growing  
14 population, my community, Mount Pleasant, will  
15 be poorly served if a customized residential  
16 zone is not established to protect the Mount  
17 Pleasant historic district.

18 Mount Pleasant is a unique  
19 neighborhood. It has a wide variety of  
20 building stock, commercial, institutional and  
21 apartment buildings, rowhouses, many of which  
22 are semi-detached and individual,

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1 free-standing single family homes, many of  
2 which have English basement. In short, the  
3 neighborhood already has a density and  
4 diversity that is well-balanced and contributes  
5 to the increasing performance of neighborhood  
6 schools, the viability of community  
7 institutions and the overall neighborhood  
8 stability.

9 The Mount Pleasant Historic  
10 District is a unique asset to the City that  
11 includes individually listed houses on the  
12 National Register of Historic Places, that are  
13 also recognized as city landmarks. Yet this  
14 unique resource is under a sustained assault by  
15 developers who are exploiting what is  
16 derisively known in the community as the  
17 developer conversion bonus. This bonus  
18 encourages the conversion of single family  
19 houses to multiple unit condos by allowing the  
20 developer to expand the lot occupancy to 60  
21 percent rather than stay in the 40 percent  
22 maximum allowed for single family houses.

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1                   Because    Mount    Pleasant    has  
2                   literally hundreds of houses of that type  
3                   sitting on large lots developers are able to  
4                   routinely outbid families who want to purchase  
5                   a single family home because even with the 900  
6                   square foot per unit minimum they can blow out  
7                   the back or sides and jam three, four, five or  
8                   even more pricy, not affordable condos and make  
9                   a financial killing.    But their financial  
10                  killing    is    relentlessly    killing    the  
11                  neighborhood and the pace is dramatically  
12                  accelerating.

13                  What made the community historic is  
14                  being physically defaced front and back of what  
15                  has been 30 years of steady progress to  
16                  stabilize the long-term family residency with  
17                  a focus on neighborhood school improvement.  
18                  It=s being jeopardized by the transit character  
19                  of pricy started condos that cannot sustain  
20                  family growth over the long term.    The proposed  
21                  zoning for Mount Pleasant will facilitate  
22                  everything that is rewarding to the bottom line

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1 of developers while doing both immediate and  
2 long-term damage to the character, quality and  
3 unique social and economic composition of our  
4 community.

5 Further, the proposed zoning for  
6 Mount Pleasant is at odds with the objectives  
7 of the District=s 2006 Comprehensive Plan.  
8 What Mount Pleasant deserves from this zoning  
9 rewrite is not the proposed cookie-cutter  
10 residential flat zoning, but a customized  
11 residential zone that reflects and protects the  
12 unique assets recognized by the historic  
13 designation and will balance the density and  
14 stability of the neighborhood which it  
15 currently enjoys.

16 Our neighborhood was essentially  
17 promised that customization at the Ward 1  
18 presentation, by the City Planning Department  
19 last year. We want to see that customization  
20 zone in place as soon as possible and we=re  
21 prepared to begin those discussions  
22 immediately.

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1 (Applause.)

2 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I'm trying  
3 to refer back to the opening statement and most  
4 people were here at the opening statement.  
5 Normally, in our hearing room, I usually say we  
6 don't do applause like in counter chamber.

7 But I'm going to let that one slide  
8 because we're not in our hearing room. But we  
9 ask you refrain if you feel good, positive or  
10 not positive. Just hold it. Just hold it  
11 tight. Okay.

12 So are we all together? Mr. Conway,  
13 you obviously have a lot of support. Okay.

14 Let me ask next. We're going to go  
15 to Mr. Krieger.

16 Mr. Krieger, I'm going to ask you not  
17 to demonstrate anything to us about a pending  
18 case that you have in front of the Board of  
19 Zoning Adjustment which one of us may be sitting  
20 on or are sitting on. Let's not refer to any  
21 cases. Let's just keep it general.

22 Okay. All right. Are we on the

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1 same page?

2 MR. KRIEGER: I believe so. I  
3 think I have some different paper in front of  
4 you that is about --

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I have your  
6 testimony. But I just want to make sure we're  
7 not referring to what you brought to the BZA  
8 hearing the other day.

9 MR. KRIEGER: No, I'm going to be  
10 referring in general terms to other things that  
11 are going on in our neighborhoods and in our  
12 community.

13 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. That's fine.  
14 But you're not referring to what you brought the  
15 other day.

16 MR. KRIEGER: That is correct.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. KRIEGER: Is this on?

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: You may begin.  
20 Yes.

21 MR. KRIEGER: Okay. My name is  
22 Andrew Krieger. I live at 1309 Irving Street,

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1 N.W., Washington, D.C. I'm a District resident  
2 in Columbia Heights for 35 years. I think the  
3 Zoning revisions are way overdue. But I also  
4 feel that I just found out about these by chance.  
5 Many of my neighbors and people in my community  
6 have no idea that this process is even going on.

7 The failure to adequately  
8 communicate this process or to provide the  
9 opportunity for public inclusion in it  
10 nullifies the process itself. The result of  
11 this rewrite are going to affect the profile,  
12 quality of life, neighborhood character and the  
13 world reputation of this city for perhaps 200  
14 years or more. For the public, taxpayers and  
15 residents not to be made aware of the depth and  
16 the ramifications of these guidelines is  
17 criminal.

18 Residents already have serious  
19 questions about the current District  
20 guidelines, their enforcement, their  
21 experience with ineffective monitoring of  
22 government agencies, cross permitting, how

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1 development is strip-mining the character of  
2 the neighborhoods, zoning actions that are  
3 pushing residents into hardship, increasing  
4 levels of density under a foundation of faulty  
5 and worn out infrastructures.

6 Residents are asking AWhat is going  
7 on in the District of Columbia?@ This is the  
8 Nation=s Capital. The City is supposed to be  
9 setting a standard for the nation, the standards  
10 of comprehensive planning, leading the green  
11 revolution of the commercial/residential  
12 sectors, creating a healthy urban  
13 infrastructure that can be examples for other  
14 American cities to model on. These concepts  
15 that are totally be dismissed by the City and  
16 sold to the highest bidder with no effort or  
17 little approach to approach these guidelines  
18 are the results of short-sighted planning and  
19 resource management going to be left to our  
20 children to live through and manage.

21 What is going on? We have  
22 developers who are coming into our communities

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1 to do projects that show respect,  
2 consideration, flexibility and work on their  
3 sites responsibly. They=re organized,  
4 responsible workforces and work practices.  
5 They have good reputations and they walk away  
6 from their successful jobs to the next with  
7 recommendations and a profit.

8 We have others that are grossly  
9 taking advantage of the District of Columbia,  
10 the taxpayers and our neighborhoods.

11 I have submitted several pictures to  
12 you here and I=d just like to go through them  
13 quickly. The first one is of a pop-up. This  
14 is of the 1300 block of Irving/Kenyon Street,  
15 N.W. Four stories above, blocking all kinds of  
16 light, vistas, air circulation and again taking  
17 away the character of our community.

18 To picture number two, this is the  
19 back of a property that was knocked down on  
20 Martin Luther King Day. The whole back of the  
21 building. Never mind disrespect. What kind  
22 of enforcement was there? None.

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1                   Picture number three, this is that  
2                   same structure going up. Four floors of two by  
3                   fours. I have no idea what code that is. By  
4                   the way, that same developer had to pushed by  
5                   residents to get permits for plumbing and  
6                   electrical.

7                   This is another property on Girard  
8                   Street. Another built-out drastically  
9                   changing the profiles of our community.

10                  And the last picture is the house  
11                  right next door which was Dorothy Brizil=s house  
12                  going up in flames. The next picture that was  
13                  taken 20 seconds after this is a complete  
14                  whiteout.

15                  And I thought the building that was  
16                  next door had gone up. Luckily, it hadn=t.  
17                  Fire could get nowhere near the back of that  
18                  building to put out any kind of fire that was  
19                  brewing and it was just luck that they got  
20                  Dorothy=s house out in time before the other one  
21                  caught fire. And if you talk to any of the  
22                  firemen that have been in that situation before

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1 those houses go up like that.

2 That=s what=s going on in our  
3 communities. And, excuse me, but people in my  
4 block are asking what=s going on. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
6 The next person I know, but I have not discussed  
7 anything about this. So since we were doing  
8 AIA, I figure I would disclose too.  
9 Okay, Sebastian. Thank you.

10 MR. GUILMARD: Hi. My name is  
11 Sebastian Guilmard. I=m at 14 --

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Do you want to pull  
13 the mike up so we can hear you?

14 MR. GUILMARD: -- 14th and Girard.  
15 I generally support the Zoning update proposed  
16 by the Office of Planning. On accessory  
17 dwelling units, the District needs to look at  
18 our alleys in a different way. Instead of  
19 seeing them as back of the house, the utility  
20 area or forgotten space, we can look at  
21 sculpting this into a living space.

22 Most architecture looks away from

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1 alleys, making them dark, ugly, foreboding  
2 spaces that may encourage crime, dumping and  
3 other illegal activity. I've always --

4 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Excuse me. We want  
5 to hear you. So pull your microphone up.

6 MR. GUILMARD: Sure. I've always  
7 been disappointed while experiencing the  
8 typical D.C. alley. To allow accessory  
9 apartments or dwellings in alleys would allow  
10 for more interesting, safer, beautiful spaces  
11 that could only bring value to D.C. on many  
12 levels. What if owners spent as much time  
13 planting, fixing and beautifying our alleys as  
14 they do the front of their homes? Imagine how  
15 nice it would be to allow the alley to be an  
16 extension of our streets, more people living,  
17 walking, playing and making them safer spaces.

18 I was told that the fire marshal was  
19 concerned that alleys smaller than 30 feet  
20 should not be allowed to have accessory dwelling  
21 units. This is absurd. If fire is a concern,  
22 then perhaps the Zoning Code could put

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1 requirements that all buildings in alleys  
2 should be noncombustible type material, greatly  
3 reducing the possibility of an out-of-control  
4 fire.

5 Finally, having separate, rentable  
6 spaces in a larger residential, single family  
7 home gives owners greater flexibility in living  
8 their lives and remaining in their communities.  
9 Owners that fall on hard times can rent out a  
10 space. Elderly parents, adult children,  
11 family or friends can move in. The space could  
12 even be used by domestic help for children,  
13 elder care and other, all this while maintaining  
14 a personal space for the owner=s family and  
15 possibly bringing in a little revenue.

16 On the parking issue again, we need  
17 to look outside the box and find new options for  
18 transportation. I support the change to remove  
19 restriction on parking. However, I would like  
20 to see some provision for larger residential and  
21 commercial buildings whether they provide  
22 vehicular parking or not to provide secure

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1 bicycle parking on premises.

2 I also notice that there was no  
3 provision for motorcycles or scooters.  
4 Motorcycles take up considerably smaller  
5 footprints in cities and can be parked in very  
6 little space. In a density environment, they  
7 are perfect to quickly get around while carrying  
8 a passenger or groceries and whatnot. All new  
9 construction should be required to provide a  
10 good amount of dedicated motorcycle parking.  
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

13 Commissioners, any questions of this  
14 panel? Mr. Turnbull.

15 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Mr. Chair,  
16 I just had one comment just to tell Mr. Malmo  
17 that we=ve had several comments in several of  
18 other wards of both the tree canopy and the  
19 calipers. And Office of Planning is taking  
20 into account those changes.

21 MR. GUILMARD: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Commissioner

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1 Miller.

2 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you,  
3 Mr. Chairman. Thank you to you for your  
4 testimony.

5 Ms. Kramer, I think you're  
6 absolutely right that the City needs a  
7 comprehensive parking management strategy. We  
8 hear that those recommendations are coming soon  
9 from DDOT, although we've heard that for a  
10 while. But we think they are coming soon. So  
11 I appreciate you bringing that point up.

12 We obviously can't solve all parking  
13 and loading problems in the Zoning Code. This  
14 is just dealing with the reduced parking  
15 minimums. But I appreciate you bringing that  
16 up. It's something the City is looking at and  
17 I hope those recommendations come forward soon.

18 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Anybody  
19 else? Commissioner May.

20 COMMISSIONER MAY: Mr. Conway, I  
21 wanted to follow up on your points. You spelled  
22 out in detail the issues with the Mount Pleasant

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1 Historic District. Just so I understand what  
2 you=re suggesting, you=re suggesting -- You  
3 understand that the R-F zones are not  
4 substantially different from the existing R-4s,  
5 right, in terms of lot occupancy?

6 MR. CONWAY: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. And this  
8 is about additional protections that you would  
9 like to see. That=s really what your testimony  
10 is about whether it=s done through a  
11 customization or even broader changes to the  
12 Zoning regs.

13 MR. CONWAY: Yes, I would say that=s  
14 correct and also bring it into alignment with  
15 the 2006 Comprehensive Plan which calls for just  
16 the type of things we=re suggesting.

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Thank  
18 you.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Vice Chair Cohen.

20 VICE CHAIR COHEN: My question is  
21 for Mr. Krieger. At earlier panels a person  
22 from I believe Mount Pleasant stated that -- She

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1 complimented the Office of Planning and  
2 attended a meeting at a school. And we've heard  
3 various residents of the District, some of them  
4 saying that they've been following the Zoning  
5 rewrite for many years and others suggesting  
6 that it's brand new to many people.

7 So my question is because we did not  
8 have our local newspaper that's widely  
9 circulated -- The Washington Post did not cover  
10 it -- but many of our neighborhood newspapers  
11 did.

12 So I would like you to elaborate a  
13 little bit as to when you heard about the Zoning  
14 rewrite and just again how the disparity exists  
15 among people who either knew about it or didn't  
16 know about it. Do you have any insights into  
17 that?

18 MR. KRIEGER: Sure, Ms. Cohen. I  
19 thought it very interesting, too. The only  
20 reason that I found out about the Zoning rewrite  
21 was actually going to the Zoning Office by  
22 chance and finding a circular on the desk in that

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1 office. And I consider myself pretty active in  
2 my neighborhood with what is going on with my  
3 ANC and close to my ANC representative also.

4 But I had never heard anything about  
5 the rewrite. And many of my neighbors and other  
6 people in the community were not familiar with  
7 the process that was going on either. When I  
8 did find out about it, I tried to circulate it  
9 around as quickly as possible because I think  
10 this process is tremendously important because  
11 it is going to be changing the face of the City  
12 for the future in a great many ways. And it=s  
13 going to be impacting everyone.

14 So once I found out about it I wanted  
15 to plug as many people into it as possible. But  
16 I just found out about it three weeks ago I think  
17 when I went to the office or four weeks ago.

18 VICE CHAIR COHEN: What is your  
19 neighborhood newspaper? I live in Ward 2 and  
20 it=s been covered pretty extensively since the  
21 setdown at least.

22 MR. KRIEGER: What is my

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1 neighborhood newspaper? We do get The  
2 Washington Post. That is the newspaper I get.  
3 And we really don=t have time to read many  
4 newspapers anyway. But we do get one paper and  
5 that=s supposed to be the paper that=s cluing  
6 me in into what=s going on where I live, my  
7 hometown, my city. That=s it.

8 VICE CHAIR COHEN: You may need to  
9 subscribe to something else I=m sorry to say.

10 CHAIRMAN HOOD: We have on our own  
11 asked folks like Mike Debonis to help us get the  
12 word out. Just recently Hamil Harris -- I think  
13 he=s still with The Post -- was just asked last  
14 week. So we=re also doing the best we can.

15 And you=re right. Everybody  
16 doesn=t read The Washington Post. I don=t read  
17 it. But you=re right. We=re still trying --  
18 We=re still doing the best we can to try to get  
19 this word out.

20 A lot of us go to a lot of civic  
21 meetings. We don=t talk about any particulars,  
22 but we AHey, get involved with the ZRR or the

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1 revision. Get involved.@ And some of us have  
2 been doing it since 2007. Okay.

3 But, Mr. Krieger, were you here when  
4 I made the announcement about Councilmember  
5 Graham and the pop-ups because I do not want  
6 anyone to leave here to think that he has not  
7 mentioned to this Zoning Commission on more than  
8 one occasion about pop-ups? Were you here when  
9 I made that announcement?

10 MR. KRIEGER: I was here.

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

12 MR. KRIEGER: When you made that  
13 announcement.

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I just want you to  
15 know that it=s definitely on our plate. It=s  
16 running over because he=s made that point to us  
17 like I said not once, not twice, not three, a  
18 number of times. And he wants us to deal with  
19 it and he wants action and he wants it swiftly.  
20 Okay.

21 So don=t leave thinking that he=s  
22 not on it because he=s definitely on us. Okay.

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1                   Commissioner -- How do you pronounce  
2 your last name?

3                   MR. TINPE: Tinpe.

4                   CHAIRMAN HOOD: Tinpe. Do we have  
5 your testimony?

6                   MR. TINPE: I did not. No, it=s  
7 just --

8                   CHAIRMAN HOOD: I really would like  
9 yours because your testimony gave a balance.  
10 You included the neighbors under 40 as well as  
11 the ones above 40.

12                   Let me ask you all. Have any of you  
13 all been to a special session? I know there are  
14 some groups that are having special sessions  
15 that are -- Oh, you can=t hear me.

16                   (Off microphone comment.)

17                   But I can=t -- If you can ask Staff  
18 or you want to respond to a question. Or am I  
19 talking too loud? Could you just come and let  
20 Staff know what the issue is because we don=t  
21 really have anything like that from the audience  
22 unless you=re at the table? Okay. If you have

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1 a question or something, you can come and  
2 mention it to Staff.

3 Actually, I want to know what it is.  
4 So if you can come tell Staff. But if you could  
5 do that would be very helpful.

6 MR. TINPE: Yes. Fine.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Has anyone been to  
8 any special -- I understand there are special  
9 groups going on that have any insight trying to  
10 help people come up to speed. I don=t know what  
11 issues. Has anyone been to that? Any of those  
12 groups?

13 MR. KRIEGER: Can you explain that?

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Like the Committee  
15 100, Smart Growth, ANC meetings, the Office of  
16 Planning when they came out to the wards? Okay.  
17 If everybody wants to participate in that, that  
18 would be good.

19 MR. MALMO: I would say no. And I  
20 think I=m a pretty active member of my  
21 community. Columbia Heights I don=t believe  
22 has a community newspaper. I heard first about

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1 the Zoning rewrite in an article in the City  
2 paper that I happened to pick up. But no.  
3 There is no -- And I don't subscribe to The  
4 Washington Post.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. My question  
6 was a little different and I just -- Okay. I  
7 understand about the publication issue. My  
8 question was there are different groups who are  
9 trying to educate, inform, help, make sure  
10 groups understand what's in front of us. And  
11 I want to know if anyone at least at the table  
12 -- If anyone wants to participate that's great  
13 -- If any of the folks present tonight been to  
14 any of those sessions, if you could just raise  
15 your hand.

16 (Show of hands.)

17 So may I ask this? If you did not  
18 go to these sessions, would you still have been  
19 here tonight? Raise your hand.

20 (Show of hands.)

21 Okay. You were asked to go to those  
22 sessions. Were you asked to come here tonight?

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1 Raise your hand. By those groups, any of those  
2 groups?

3 (Show of hands.)

4 Okay. All right.

5 MR. CONWAY: Can I clarify a point  
6 of order here?

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Sure.

8 MR. CONWAY: I mean in Mount  
9 Pleasant this issue is boiling. I don=t think  
10 there=s hardly anybody that doesn=t know what=s  
11 going on on this issue. There have been  
12 repeated discussions at the ANC. There have  
13 been discussions in and around. Within 200  
14 yards of my house there are three real world  
15 examples of what my testimony was trying to get  
16 at in terms of these issues.

17 I have attended sessions that  
18 Councilman Graham organized within the last ten  
19 days or so. The Committee of 100 has been  
20 active on this issue. I actually got an email  
21 from an organization that was all about pro the  
22 proposed changes, largely on parking and

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1 transit issues. And that=s how I signed up even  
2 though I don=t -- that=s not my major concern,  
3 although I=m sympathetic to a number of those  
4 issues.

5 Yes. There is a lot of advocacy out  
6 there. And I=ll tell you in my neighborhood  
7 this is a boiling issue.

8 CHAIRMAN HOOD: And I=ll tell you.  
9 Let me just explain why I asked that. Again,  
10 as we continue to go on, I=m hearing a lot of  
11 people who mentioned to this Commission that  
12 they didn=t know about it. And it seems like  
13 from my opinion while I know the Office of  
14 Planning is doing what they can do. I know the  
15 Office of Zoning and I=ve had this discussion  
16 with them is doing what they can do.

17 But it=s something that those groups  
18 are doing that seems to be effective. Wherever  
19 you fall on the issue is not my issue. I need  
20 to probably figure out -- we need to figure out  
21 how those groups are getting out in the  
22 neighborhood. Maybe I don=t know. Do they

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1 spend 24/7? But they seem to be getting more  
2 people engaged.

3 And I just want to encourage all  
4 those groups regardless of where you fall on the  
5 issues to continue to help us. That was my  
6 point. It wasn't anything else but that.  
7 Okay.

8 All right. Any other questions?

9 (No verbal response.)

10 Thank you all very much. We  
11 appreciate your testimony. We don't normally  
12 ask questions from -- I go to many ANC meetings  
13 and many civic meetings. We don't ask  
14 questions from the audience.

15 What we do is call your name and you  
16 come up. And if you have a question and you want  
17 to know about a process question, you can come  
18 and ask Staff. But there's going to be a time  
19 if you didn't sign up tonight and you live in  
20 Wards 1 and 2, I'm going to bring you to the  
21 table. Okay.

22 Peter Lyden. Jeremy Van Ess. Now

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1 I know -- I think I'm getting ready to mess up  
2 somebody's name. Toby Olowofoyeku. David  
3 Marlin. Mary McReynolds. Gerry Widdicombe, I  
4 think he's left. Janet Brown. Melissa  
5 Esposito. Paul Alan Levy.

6 Oh, I may enough. Hold tight. I'm  
7 sorry. If the seats don't fill up, I keep right  
8 on going. So forgive me. I might have called  
9 too many people. If you can have a seat and  
10 whoever I called -- Okay. If you could stay  
11 close though. You can come right back. Just  
12 do me a favor. When we get to your name, just  
13 come right back up. Thank you. And I apologize.

14 Okay. Let's start with the young  
15 lady to my left this time. Let's give everybody  
16 a chance to get settled so they can hear your  
17 testimony. Okay. You may begin.

18 MS. BROWN: I'm Janet Brown. I  
19 live with my husband in a rowhouse at 1746 Q  
20 Street, N.W. in the Dupont Circle area.

21 We first moved here to this area in  
22 1957, two blocks from where we now live at that

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1 time in a 60 unit apartment building that=s only  
2 a couple of blocks away from we live now. It  
3 had no interior parking.

4 If one arrived at home at night after  
5 10:00 p.m. by car on a week night, it would take  
6 you 20 minutes to a half hour to park even then.  
7 And it=s just about the same now.

8 I remember when this current Zoning  
9 revision process first started. Was it four or  
10 five years ago? And I=m here tonight to urge  
11 the Commission=s prompt approval of the  
12 proposed revisions especially on accessory  
13 apartments in single family homes, on a  
14 reduction of the parking requirements in  
15 multi-family buildings -- I would go even  
16 further than you proposed at this point -- and  
17 licensing of appropriate neighborhood stores  
18 and restaurants. This combination of changes  
19 will make even more neighborhoods in the City  
20 really enhanced in the quality of life.

21 I=m 82 years old. And I have lived  
22 in this area for most of my adult life. I love

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1 my neighborhood and including the stores and the  
2 restaurants at the end of my residential block.  
3 There are almost no parking spaces in the  
4 apartments and condo buildings in our area.

5 In our 120 year old rowhouse we have  
6 an apartment that helps pay the mortgage and is  
7 very nice as we get older. It=s very nice as  
8 we get older to have somebody else in the  
9 building in case of emergencies and just to help  
10 shovel the snow in the wintertime.

11 I have made it a point over the years  
12 not to rent the apartment to anybody who has a  
13 car. It doesn=t seem to me necessary in this  
14 neighborhood. And besides I can demonstrate to  
15 them that by using public transportation,  
16 bicycles, walking, and renting a car on the  
17 weekends when you need to go do an errand in the  
18 suburbs or get away from the city altogether,  
19 you can do it much more cheaply than owning and  
20 operating a car in our neighborhood.

21 I just wish that all of the  
22 neighborhoods in the city had the same kinds of

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1 amenities that we have here. Modern,  
2 efficient, public transportation, plenty of  
3 good places to shop and eat, a dry cleaner and  
4 a bank. I regret that some of my neighbors  
5 disagree with me. I happen to think they're  
6 wrong, including Mr. Graham who has all of his  
7 career been a real advocate for equality in the  
8 city.

9 If I were revising the revisions I'd  
10 go in the same direction you have. But I'd go  
11 even further. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

13 MS. McREYNOLDS: Good evening.  
14 Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My  
15 name is Mary McReynolds. I have lived in the  
16 District since 1968 and I've practiced law here  
17 since 1971. Since 1978 I have owned my  
18 apartment at 2101 Connecticut Avenue, a  
19 historic landmark building built in 1927  
20 located in the Kalorama Triangle Historic  
21 District part of Ward 1.

22 D.C. agencies charged with the

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1 responsibility of regulating land use in  
2 Washington, namely the Zoning Commission and  
3 the Historic Preservation Review Board, do not  
4 coordinate their lawmaking and review functions  
5 in order to effectively preserve and protect  
6 historic properties. Owners of historic  
7 properties do not receive adequate advanced  
8 notice of proposed construction affecting  
9 historic properties. As a result, these  
10 agencies will continue to lack key input from  
11 those most keenly committed to historic  
12 preservation.

13 In consequence, our Nation=s  
14 capital is experiencing the incremental  
15 destruction of historic neighborhoods as a  
16 result of in-fill development and pop-ups that  
17 are incompatible with historic districts, that  
18 destroy gardens, trees and open spaces and  
19 worsen the quality of life concerns such as  
20 density, noise, parking, trash and other  
21 sanitation problems.

22 `To arrest further destruction of

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1 historic properties and neighborhoods, I  
2 respectfully urge the adoption of modifications  
3 to the zoning and land use provisions that would  
4 embody the following mandatory protections for  
5 historic properties: (1) mandatory actual  
6 advanced notice to historic district and  
7 neighborhood property owners. One of my fellow  
8 2101 residents, Bart Leonard, will be  
9 testifying shortly. And he=s going to focus on  
10 mandatory notice. And I support what he will  
11 have to say;

12 (2) the immediate, automatic historic  
13 property down-zoning. In other words, for all  
14 historic properties that are on the National  
15 Register or D.C. Register of Historic Places or  
16 that are located in existing historic districts  
17 or future designated historic districts should  
18 be automatically down-zoned to their existing  
19 use and size. That would eliminate the  
20 headroom that developers have to come into  
21 existing historic districts to seek to expand  
22 the size, the destroy the back gardens, to go

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1 for pop-ups. If a developer wants to change a  
2 historic property in any way by making it  
3 larger, taller, eliminating the gardens, a  
4 variance should be then required and should only  
5 be granted if there=s no other way to save the  
6 historic property.

7 We have a beautiful historic city.  
8 There=s plenty of room in this city for new  
9 development that will not destroy the historic  
10 districts. And therefore I support zoning  
11 which protects the historic districts and  
12 properties and the changes that are being  
13 considered should not be made at the cost of the  
14 historic properties of historic districts.  
15 Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

17 MR. OLOWOFOYEKU: Good evening.  
18 My name is Toby Olowokoyeku. I will state that  
19 we=re at Lanier Heights and the needs of Lanier  
20 Heights is similar to the needs of Mount  
21 Pleasant and the historic districts that the  
22 lady spoke about.

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1 I know previously we left a request  
2 for historic designation. But we=re close  
3 enough to Mount -- We=re actually in Mount  
4 Pleasant almost. And Lanier Heights and Adams  
5 Morgan developed as a result of unique cultural  
6 diverse mix of local inhabitants and residents,  
7 immigrants. They created diverse artifacts,  
8 food, fabric stores and live entertainment.  
9 And a visitor who comes to our area thinks that  
10 they=re in a foreign country.

11 A melting pot was created which was  
12 a magnet for people who wished to move into our  
13 area. I believe now in the re-zoning we need  
14 to be aware of the needs of our type of area,  
15 the character of our neighborhood. Most of the  
16 streets have multi-occupation properties.  
17 There is no need to start breaking up the single  
18 family homes.

19 I myself come from a family of 14  
20 brothers and three sisters. Now we=re going to  
21 live in a two bedroom flat here if we move here.  
22 No. We came originally from Lagos. So I say

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1 the re-zoning must consider the needs of  
2 expanding family who have kids. We have two  
3 kids in my family. I need existing single  
4 family homes, not microunits that developers  
5 are promoting to you.

6 We propose that the re-zoning limits  
7 any future alterations of single family units  
8 in Mount Lanier to two units in one plot. The  
9 building should not occupy more than 60 percent  
10 of the land. It should be no higher than  
11 similar plots. No pop-ups should be allowed.

12 We are requesting parking even  
13 though people who want to live in microunits do  
14 not need parking. The needs of one place and  
15 one idea doesn=t suit everybody.

16 Speculators are creating a vultured  
17 (phonetic) development zone in Lanier Heights.  
18 Please take them out. They have deep pockets  
19 and they are driving us out.

20 The recommendations are this. Do  
21 not allow developers to break up existent single  
22 family homes to create multi-purpose units.

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1 Set proposition limited to two units. Don=t  
2 allow future developments to occupy more than  
3 60 percent of the land and space in a plot.

4 The rule will prevent developers  
5 from blocking direct access to sunlight for  
6 existing homes and their gardens. It=s great  
7 if I wake up in spring and look at the next  
8 garden. Oh, those are daffodils. Those are  
9 hyacinths. There will be nothing anymore like  
10 this when they build throughout. Insist that  
11 new homes provide minimum parking requirements,  
12 gardens, leisure areas and beauty areas  
13 necessary for exercise and well-being of D.C.  
14 dwellers, especially if you have children in the  
15 home. They are not going to be running around  
16 on concrete.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.  
18 Next.

19 MR. MARLIN: My name is David  
20 Marlin. And I and my wife have resided in the  
21 District since 1961 and since 2005 in 2101  
22 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., the co-op apartment

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1 that a previous witness talked about in the  
2 Kalorama Triangle Historic District.

3 And my testimony will follow Mary  
4 McReynolds and the gentleman who spoke from the  
5 Mount Pleasant Historic District. And it=s  
6 about the intrusion of developments into the  
7 historic districts to the detriment of the plan  
8 that the historic district is all about.

9 Let me say that I=ve served as a  
10 District Administrative Judge for 11 years, as  
11 an Appellant Judge with the Rental Housing  
12 Commission, a Trial Judge with the Contract  
13 Appeals Board and Chair of the D.C. Board of  
14 Appeals and Review.

15 Let me tell you something about our  
16 case at 2101. In 2012, Lock 7 developers  
17 contracted the purchase of two well-cared for  
18 colonial revival adjoining single family homes  
19 at 2012 and 2014 Kalorama Road adjacent to our  
20 property with the intent of converting them into  
21 17 condominium apartments. Lock 7 presented  
22 its concept plans to the Historic Preservation

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1 Review Board, but didn't provide notice to the  
2 adjoining property owners which was in  
3 violation of its legal obligation.

4 The concept plan was approved before  
5 we had ever heard about it. But when we did hear  
6 about it, we contested the plan. But what we  
7 were told by HPRB was that the developer had a  
8 right to do the construction, do the renovation,  
9 do the substantial enlargement of these  
10 properties and that their only function was to  
11 address the design of the program.

12 That last point is pretty critical  
13 because it left our building in a  
14 disadvantageous position. At substantial  
15 expense, we mobilized experts. Jim Graham,  
16 Ward 1, came forward in support. The Kalorama  
17 Citizens Association came forward in support.  
18 The ANC Commissioner also came forward in  
19 support. And we were able to successfully get  
20 some changes in the design that provided some  
21 protection for us. But the intrusion is  
22 substantial and is ongoing.

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1 I wanted to bring this case to your  
2 attention so that while you=re making some  
3 judgments about what to do with historic  
4 districts you could review the file in this  
5 case. You can come and visit our property if  
6 you=d like and see the enormous hole in the  
7 ground which will block off 25 percent of our  
8 residents= views.

9 It=s my belief that the Smart Growth  
10 Policy that the Office of Planning has been  
11 implementing in the city and I don=t oppose it  
12 at all except for its effect in historic  
13 districts. The desire to increase density  
14 around Metro transportation routes, subway and  
15 bus, is there even though in Kalorama Triangle  
16 it=s a fully built out neighborhood. The only  
17 way to increase density is by basically invading  
18 existing buildings.

19 That=s basically what I want to say  
20 and I=m available to answer any questions you  
21 have. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

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1 Next.

2 MR. VAN ESS: Hi, my name is Jeremy  
3 Van Ess. I live at 1465 Florida Avenue, N.W.  
4 I=d like to add my voice to those calling for  
5 the updates to D.C.=s parking requirements and  
6 I=ll also add my support for provisions  
7 regarding accessory apartments and corner  
8 stores.

9 I=m going to go ahead and spare you  
10 listening to me read my statement. I=d just  
11 like to address one thing that=s been raised  
12 tonight and that=s this idea that some of the  
13 young people who have moved to the city might  
14 all own cars. We might change your mind by  
15 changes and we need a code to protect us and  
16 protect the city for that time.

17 I think that debate is kind of a  
18 false debate. And I think we need the Code to  
19 work for us at all stages of life. I need it  
20 to work for me now when I=m a biker who needs  
21 affordable housing. And I may need it to work  
22 for me when my kid grows up and I do need to have

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1 parking.

2 I actually think you've found that  
3 flexibility in your provisions. And that's one  
4 reason I'm here to support them. I want to  
5 thank you for that and urge you to move forward  
6 without delay.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

8 MR. LYDEN: Can you hear me? I'm  
9 on. Peter Lyden, 1726 Euclid Street. Here  
10 since 1978. Members of the Commission, thank  
11 you very much for this opportunity to speak. I  
12 appear before you as --

13 COMMISSIONER MAY: Can you bring  
14 your microphone even closer to your mouth  
15 because we cannot hear you.

16 MR. LYDEN: How about that?

17 COMMISSIONER MAY: That's good.  
18 Thank you.

19 MR. LYDEN: Okay. Yes, I'm Peter  
20 Lyden. I represent the Reed Cooke Neighborhood  
21 Association. I'm the Treasurer. And I'm  
22 appearing here tonight to give you some of the

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1 concerns that we have with the proposed ZRR  
2 changes to the Reed Cooke neighborhood.

3 Having heard the testimony of the  
4 gentlemen from Mount Pleasant and Lanier  
5 Heights, we fully endorse those. Those are  
6 good outlines of our problems.

7 To mitigate and minimize conflict  
8 between residents and businesses that we saw in  
9 1984, we waged a six year fight for the adoption  
10 of the Reed Cooke Overlay District. The mix of  
11 daytime businesses and neighborhood  
12 residential uses followed the carefully crafted  
13 Reed Cooke Overlay District with much success.  
14 However, that=s not the case we have today.

15 We are a neighborhood organization  
16 wishing to deal with a number of issues in our  
17 neighborhood and not concentrate solely on one  
18 problem. But the way the ZRR has been  
19 introduced to us over a number of years by the  
20 Office of Planning has been chaotic, has had  
21 complete reversals of direction and has given  
22 us poor information about how ZRR with the

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1 effect would be implemented and affect our  
2 neighborhood.

3 This resolves in our loss of focus.  
4 We have a lot of other things to do and deal with.  
5 The Italian Embassy, the Church Hotel, liquor  
6 licenses and now we're back to deal with a  
7 document that's confusing to read, difficult to  
8 decipher, has internal contradictions, loses  
9 the intent of the zoning protection for  
10 residents that we have come to understand. In  
11 short, it's a mishmash to us.

12 An example of the streamlining of  
13 the Reed Cooke Overlay District has gone from  
14 a cohesive, understandable, clear, consecutive  
15 six pages to something that's 37 pages long.  
16 It's just defused and it's lost a lot of the  
17 power and intent of it. And it also requires  
18 the intervention of a person that majored in  
19 English to understand it.

20 There was a section I didn't  
21 understand. I talked to one of our members, our  
22 vice president. She said yeah. She read it

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1 180 degrees from the way I did. I gave it to  
2 my wife to read. She read it 180 degrees. She  
3 said I was wrong. So I=m wrong. But three  
4 people, two different interpretations. And my  
5 wife told me to have an English major text  
6 Oedipus up to the ZRR.

7 Last week at our monthly meeting I  
8 tried to present how the ZRR is organized and  
9 the issues we face. I was able to talk in terms  
10 of major subtopic headings. But trying to go  
11 deeper and explain how the overlay was treated  
12 was lengthy and not altogether clear to my  
13 audience. A map of the proposed changes would  
14 have ensured we were discussing the same areas  
15 which new zonings would be applied. I had an  
16 OP representative tell me that a map of the new  
17 zoning would follow, but it would have been nice  
18 to have that visual aid at my meeting.

19 We=ve heard talk about transit  
20 zones. Where are they in relation to Reed Cooke  
21 and what impact will they have on us? Again,  
22 a map would just assist in even focusing on what

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1 we=re looking for.

2 Second, the impetus for the ZRR to  
3 be updated is update the current regulations  
4 with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. One  
5 Comprehensive Plan element speaks specifically  
6 and positively about Reed Cooke. It=s City  
7 Policy 2.4.5, the Reed Cooke area. Protecting  
8 existing housing within the Reed Cooke  
9 neighborhood, maintain heights and densities at  
10 an appropriate level, encourage small scale  
11 business development does not adversely affect  
12 a residential community.

13 However, the ZRR is currently  
14 drafting to tax many of those safeguards that  
15 were in place to protect the residential  
16 character of our neighborhood. Why OP has  
17 moved residential housing that=s presently  
18 under R-5-B and has placed it into A Zone,  
19 apartment zones A is unknown to us. Apartment  
20 zones allow for commercial and other  
21 nonresidential uses to intrude into residential  
22 neighborhood.

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1           We feel the residential housing  
2 should at least be under a residential flat zone  
3 with the appropriate protections we have today.  
4 We have a clear, solid residential area and urge  
5 that the zoning designations be reexamined with  
6 an idea to prevent the intrusion of  
7 nonresidential uses, deleting the provisions  
8 allowing conversion of houses, condos and  
9 apartments and pop-ups.

10           By the way, I have a great view out  
11 my back window of a pop-up. I did not bring a  
12 picture of it though.

13           Third, representatives have assured  
14 us that we would not change a thing about the  
15 Reed Cooke Overlay District with probably some  
16 very minor changes to bring it up-to-date. OP  
17 has disassembled the overlay district, 11 DCMR  
18 Chapter 14, and applied parts of it to mixed use  
19 zone 33 and 34 and apartment zone 8A. The  
20 reorganization has created confusion,  
21 redundancy, has dropped substantive phrases,  
22 made additions that are not currently

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1 authorized by the overlay or worse do not under  
2 existence of the current code.

3 To use the term overlay makes sense  
4 to us. It takes an underlying code and lays it  
5 on top of certain restrictions. It's simple to  
6 understand. There is a crosswalk from the  
7 overlay to the ZRR. However, we know parts of  
8 the overlay have been deleted, terms have been  
9 changed, and it no longer reads with the force  
10 that was intended. The changes have degraded  
11 the intent and the application from what we have  
12 today.

13 In the last four years, we've had two  
14 explicit applications of the overlay. They  
15 were the Adams Morgan Church and a proposal to  
16 build an 85 foot building at 1711 Florida  
17 Avenue. In both cases, clear revisions of the  
18 overlay were applied and demonstrated that the  
19 overlay in its present form is as relevant today  
20 as it was when the Zoning Commission enacted  
21 that.

22 We ask that you maintain the

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1 integrity of the overlay district with other  
2 cities= overlays because I=m sure they=re  
3 having the same problem. We ask that you do  
4 this to allow the general user to understand  
5 what they can do and what they cannot do and  
6 please make the text and the code explicit to  
7 what is prohibited, thereby making it easier to  
8 understand and apply.

9 In closing, prior to the closing of  
10 this case, we will provide you comments and  
11 specific recommendations on the discrepancies  
12 we have found and propose solutions as well as  
13 our concerns and proposals to rectify  
14 neighborhood problems we=ve seen within the  
15 ZRR. With your consent, we look forward  
16 working with the OP staff to prepare alternative  
17 Reed Cooke text and approaches for your  
18 consideration. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you  
20 very much. We appreciate everyone=s  
21 testimony.

22 Commissioners, any questions? Mr.

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1       Turnbull.

2                       COMMISSIONER    TURNBULL:            Yes.

3       Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  I want to thank all  
4       of you for your comments tonight.

5                       But for Mr. Marlin, I just wanted to  
6       -- I think one of the issues is we all sit on  
7       the Board of Zoning Adjustments and we all get  
8       the HPRB reports.

9                       But I think the greater issue here  
10       is that it=s not really a zoning issue.  I think  
11       what is going to be needed is that there has to  
12       be legislation by the Council to reinforce  
13       historic neighborhoods.

14                      So I think Councilmember Graham in  
15       your case would have to intervene and introduce  
16       legislation to tighten that language.  I think  
17       if you=re really concerned that=s where it has  
18       to begin is at the Council level to create  
19       neighborhoods for the safeguards that you=re  
20       looking for.

21                      The Zoning Commission we=re dealing  
22       with land use.  And for historic preservation

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1 you really need the Council to weigh in on this.

2 MR. MARLIN: What is the -- When  
3 HPRB says that Zoning permits by right a  
4 development doesn't that affect your agency?

5 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Well, it  
6 depends. It depends what zone it=s in and  
7 depends what=s covered under it. And I think  
8 those are the confusing items. And I think in  
9 your particular case you would either need to  
10 sit down with the Office of Planning to  
11 understand what that neighborhood is and what=s  
12 going on.

13 And if there is some confusion, I  
14 think then it would be go to introduce language  
15 to strengthen that area. I mean if there is a  
16 significant change, then I think we need some  
17 assistance to help protect that.

18 MR. MARLIN: I=ll certainly take  
19 what you=re saying under advisement. And I  
20 believe that Mr. Graham or his successor,  
21 whichever it is --

22 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Right.

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1 MR. MARLIN: -- will be willing to  
2 work on that. But it=s been a frustrating  
3 experience not to be able to preserve the  
4 historic character of the neighborhood.

5 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Right. I  
6 think the first place would probably be to sit  
7 down with the Office of Planning, understand the  
8 zone, understand what=s required. And if that  
9 is not satisfying the neighborhood and what can  
10 be done, then I think you need to take the next  
11 step a little bit further.

12 MR. MARLIN: Could I assume that the  
13 Zoning Commission might be supportive of our  
14 effort?

15 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: I totally  
16 am supportive of historic preservation.  
17 Whatever we can do to support historic  
18 neighborhoods, I=m 100 percent for it.  
19 Absolutely.

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other -- I=m  
21 sorry. Are you finished?

22 (No verbal response.)

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1                   Okay. Commissioner.

2                   COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you,  
3 Mr. Chairman. I thank each of you for your  
4 testimony.

5                   Ms. Brown, it=s great to see you and  
6 thank you also for your advocacy on behalf of  
7 affordable housing for so many years. It=s  
8 very much appreciated by the City.

9                   And, Mr. Marlin, my former neighbor,  
10 it=s good to see you.

11                   I think you might want to, if you=re  
12 not already planning, attend the oversight  
13 hearing that Chairman Mendelson is having on the  
14 Office of Planning and the Office of Zoning.  
15 Historic preservation comes under his purview.  
16 When is that oversight hearing when you=re  
17 testifying, Mr. Chairman?

18                   CHAIRMAN HOOD: We=re on March 5th.  
19 Are you on March 5th? Are you all first or are  
20 we second?

21                   (Off the record comment.)

22                   You=re last. Okay. Good.

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1                   COMMISSIONER MILLER:    Anyway, you  
2                   might want to sign up to testify before Chairman  
3                   Mendelson and you might have a dialogue, an  
4                   interesting dialogue, there.  I think it might  
5                   be useful.

6                   I can see how down zoning if you --  
7                   That would be a pretty blunt instrument to use  
8                   to try to get at what=s supposed to happen which  
9                   is compatible development in historic  
10                  districts.  But if particular neighbors want to  
11                  come together and ask for a down zoning or an  
12                  ANC or a neighborhood association want to  
13                  petition for a re-zoning of their neighborhood,  
14                  that=s certainly their right to.  And they  
15                  should work with the Office of Zoning on that.  
16                  And I would encourage you to do so.

17                  MR. MARLIN:    What we offered, Ms.  
18                  McReynolds and I and Bart Leonard and others in  
19                  our building, was the thought that there might  
20                  be a variance required so that a developer who  
21                  wishes to make substantial changes in buildings  
22                  would have to seek approval by the Historic

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1 Preservation Review Board. But we thought by  
2 this Commission as well. Does that sound like  
3 a reasonable approach?

4 COMMISSIONER MILLER: We don=t  
5 usually answer the questions up here. That=s  
6 the beauty of being up here.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: We don=t answer  
8 questions.

9 COMMISSIONER MILLER: But I would  
10 encourage you to work with the Office of  
11 Planning on that.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: We don=t answer  
13 questions and we don=t bind ourselves and we  
14 don=t bind any future commissions. Okay. All  
15 right. So that will answer your question. I  
16 didn=t want to interfere with my colleagues.  
17 Okay.

18 MR. MARLIN: Very well.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think that=s fair  
20 enough though. Okay. Next.

21 MR. OLOWOFOYEKU: I had a question.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Can you turn your

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1 microphone?

2 MR. OLOWOFOYEKU: In the past there  
3 was a request for historic preservation for  
4 Lanier Heights. It didn=t go through. But we  
5 are right next to Mount Pleasant. And in our  
6 case that midway needs a treatment. We should  
7 not be a free for all. And that=s what our  
8 neighborhood is requesting in this re-zoning  
9 basically for us. That it protects what we  
10 already have, what is unique about our area and  
11 doesn=t destroy it.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think I  
13 understand you and I think you=ve spelled it out  
14 in your testimony what you=re asking for which  
15 is in the jurisdiction of the Zoning Commission.  
16 There are probably some other bodies that may  
17 need to get into play in this, but we=re going  
18 to do our part as we look into it.

19 Again, we=re not binding ourselves  
20 or we=re not -- We=re going to have to  
21 deliberate. Okay.

22 All right. Any other questions?

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1 (No verbal response.)

2 All right. Thank you all for your  
3 testimony. We appreciate it.

4 Come on up. Yes. Okay.  
5 Thirty-six is already at the table. Ms.  
6 Esposito. I'm sure you're --

7 MS. ESPOSITO: Esposito.

8 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Esposito, okay.  
9 Paul Alan Levy. Bart Leonard. Dennis Suski.  
10 And Matt McCarthy. Is there another person  
11 whose name I have called or whose name -- Is  
12 there another person in the audience who has  
13 signed up who has not testified yet? Sir, if  
14 you can come forward. Is there anyone else who  
15 signed up who has not testified yet?

16 Okay. Mr. Otten, I don't have your  
17 name on my list. Okay. That's six. And, Mr.  
18 Otten, you've testified before.

19 Is there anyone else who has not  
20 testified who lives in Wards 1 and 2 who would  
21 like to testify after this panel? Anyone else  
22 in the audience?

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1 (No verbal response.)

2 Okay. We=re going to start with  
3 this young lady to my left and your right. You  
4 may begin.

5 MS. ESPOSITO: Hi. I=m short. So  
6 this is hard. My name is Melissa Esposito. I  
7 live at 17th and R N.W. in Ward 2. I=m a  
8 business owner and a resident. And I=ve lived  
9 here for nine years now and plan to live here  
10 for many more decades.

11 I strongly support the proposed  
12 zoning update. In order to accommodate that  
13 will come in D.C.=s future, we need to modernize  
14 the Zoning Code.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Hold on one second.  
16 Let=s let that finish over there. You know  
17 what? Could you just finish that? Okay.  
18 I=ve already made the ruling on that.

19 (Off the record comment.)

20 Okay. There=s already a ruling.  
21 You know we=ve been around all the city. And  
22 we=ve dealt with this all over the city. I can

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1 tell you. Every time we get to the end it=s  
2 always the same. I was hoping Wards 1 and 2 we  
3 wouldn=t have to do this. It=s always been a  
4 very good hearing.

5 But it=s something about when we get  
6 to the end. There=s always an issue in every  
7 ward. And I was hoping that wouldn=t happen  
8 here. But I see that it=s getting ready to  
9 happen tonight.

10 (Off microphone comments.)

11 Okay. I want you to be respectful  
12 to the people who are here to testify. Mr.  
13 Otten, I=m going to ask you to be respectful.

14 (Off microphone comments.)

15 Well, let me just say this. Get  
16 somebody -- Mr. Otten, I=m not going to  
17 entertain you. Okay. I=m not going to -- I=m  
18 always sitting on the Zoning Commission. So  
19 I=m not going to entertain that.

20 (Off microphone comment.)

21 Okay. So I=m asking you. Get  
22 somebody else from --

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1 (Off microphone comments.)

2 Get somebody else from your area or  
3 from your organization to come up and testify.

4 (Off microphone comments.)

5 Nobody -- Mr. Otten, I=m going to ask  
6 you to either get someone else to come and  
7 provide testimony from your organization or  
8 have --

9 (Off microphone comments.)

10 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Please submit --  
11 Have him submit --

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Or have a seat.

13 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Mr. Otten,  
14 submit your testimony in writing.

15 (Off microphone comment.)

16 No one gets a response. We=re using  
17 it --

18 (Off microphone comment.)

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Let=s move  
20 on. Mr. Otten, if you want to see me after the  
21 hearing, you can see me. I=ll be right here to  
22 the left with the staff. If you want to see me,

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1 you can talk to me after the hearing.

2 Okay. I want to apologize to  
3 everyone. It seems to be going over and over  
4 again. It=s always the same people. So I want  
5 to apologize to you. We came to hear from the  
6 residents who we have not heard from. And we=re  
7 going to start again to you to the left.

8 MS. ESPOSITO: Sure. Just to where  
9 I left off we need to modernize the Zoning Code.  
10 I support doing away with parking minimums and  
11 allowing accessory dwelling units.

12 I=m personally trying to buy a home  
13 in the District and the number of people who want  
14 to live here drives the price up. When we allow  
15 for ADUs and when we disconnect parking from  
16 housing costs it makes more housing available  
17 at an affordable price.

18 I use Metro and bus and biking for  
19 nearly all of my transportation. I have no  
20 desire for a car in the City. I resent that a  
21 lot of condos and apartments come bundled with  
22 parking that I would have to pay for when I don=t

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1 even want it. So I approve of that  
2 modernization to the Code.

3 I also especially support the  
4 proposed Code that allows for an increase in  
5 retail on corners in the neighborhoods. We see  
6 many small retail shops closing because the rent  
7 for commercial spaces continually increase.  
8 And I can tell you as a business owner myself  
9 it is frankly ridiculous in the District.

10 Providing for more places for mom  
11 and pop shops to exist affordably will increase  
12 the vitality of retail in our city. We then  
13 have options other than big box stores. Thank  
14 you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

16 MR. LEVY: I'm Paul Levy. I live at  
17 1698 Lanier Place. I'm another one of that  
18 crowd of Lanier Heights people who want to  
19 preserve rowhouses for family housing.

20 Yes, I'm sorry. My wife and I have  
21 had the benefit of being able to raise a family  
22 while living close to downtown, being able to

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1 walk to work while sending our kids to the local  
2 public schools, to enjoy knowing our neighbors,  
3 many of whom have stayed around for years and  
4 years.

5 Our neighborhood has lots of  
6 apartment units for those who don=t need that  
7 much space. But family housing in our  
8 neighborhood is threatened because rowhouses  
9 can be more profitable if they=re cut up into  
10 small apartments.

11 What we want to do is preserve for  
12 future generations the benefits that our family  
13 has been able to enjoy of family housing close  
14 to downtown. We think that a custom zone is the  
15 way to preserve that.

16 D.C. has been spending hundreds of  
17 millions of dollars to rebuild the closing  
18 schools, Cardozo and H.D. Cooke, Bell  
19 Multicultural. There are plans afoot to spend  
20 more on Marie Reed and Bancroft. The  
21 investment in Ross was lesser. But where are  
22 the kids from those schools going to come from

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1 if all of the family housing has been cut up into  
2 small apartment units?

3 Enabling cut-ups and pop-ups is not  
4 a means to achieve affordable housing. My  
5 written testimony presents some data showing  
6 that the new condos being created out of  
7 rowhouses in our neighborhood are the most  
8 expensive living space in the neighborhood.

9 This is a proposal that enjoys wide  
10 support in our neighborhood. A number of the  
11 opponents of historic designation are part of  
12 our effort. I was witness to a very touching  
13 moment when one of the leaders of the opposition  
14 to historic designation in Lanier Heights came  
15 up to the leader of the effort to achieve  
16 historic designation and said, "You know. We  
17 screwed up. We should have supported historic  
18 designation. We wouldn't be where we are now,  
19 although it's not a perfect remedy."

20 You've received a communication  
21 from one member of our neighborhood, a Mr.  
22 Baker. He's entitled his view and he's made

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1 some great signs opposing our effort. But if  
2 you walk around our neighborhood, you=ll see his  
3 signs on a few light poles. If you walk around  
4 our neighborhood, you=ll see lots and lots of  
5 signs supporting zoning reform in yards and  
6 front areas of the houses.

7 This isn=t in my statement. But I  
8 just want to make a brief point about parking.  
9 The pop-up developer who put in a pop-up next  
10 to our house said, AWell, people don=t really  
11 want parking anymore.@

12 Forgive me for being a little  
13 cynical. To the woman who spoke about how she  
14 didn=t need parking because even though she has  
15 a toddler, I would say wait until you have a five  
16 year old who wants to go to play dates or wants  
17 to go to soccer practice up at Stoddert School  
18 which is where Stoddert has soccer practice for  
19 five year olds. And wait until you have middle  
20 schoolers.

21 I expect people are going to need  
22 that parking later on. And we shouldn=t

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1 eliminate the requirement just because some  
2 people don=t need it now.

3 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

4 MR. SUSKI: Hello. Dennis Suski,  
5 1706 Lanier Place. I wanted to thank you for  
6 the opportunity to speak regarding the new  
7 zoning laws. My wife and I have been Adams  
8 Morgan residents for 15 years and we bought our  
9 home in Lanier Heights seven years ago in 2007.

10 Currently, aggressive developers  
11 have been continuously blanketing our street  
12 with mailings and phone calls to buy our homes  
13 to cut them into condos. They have the means  
14 to outbid perspective buyers who are looking for  
15 a home and they are inflating the market by going  
16 well beyond what a normal asking price would be.

17 They say they are creating density  
18 and affordable housing. But recently a 1400  
19 square foot condo unit from a cut-up rowhome  
20 sold for \$760,000. This equates to \$540 a  
21 square foot. This is \$100 to \$200 over the  
22 price per square foot of a full rowhome. This

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1 type of development is threatening the homes,  
2 parking and open air that makes our  
3 neighborhoods great places to live.

4 Because we are zoned R-5-B  
5 developers have the potential to do pretty much  
6 whatever they want. It states in the FAQ in the  
7 D.C. Zoning update, that org, that zoning does  
8 not control whether someone can demolish a  
9 building. So, yes, it=s true. Zoning does not  
10 control whether someone can demolish a  
11 building, but it does control what someone can  
12 do with that land after a building has been  
13 demolished or gutted.

14 It=s also mentioned that the best  
15 way to combat the pop-ups and teardowns is to  
16 re-zone or through historic preservation which  
17 recently even this has proven to not be a  
18 deterrent. On top of this these  
19 recommendations are not helpful in controlling  
20 build-back to the rear property line. This is  
21 detrimental to homeowners with trees and yards,  
22 not only reducing their quality of life by

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1 reducing privacy and blocking light and air, but  
2 by diminishing their property value as well.

3 In regard to the new Zoning laws, we  
4 certainly welcome the addition of the RF zones.  
5 However, there needs to be a more defined path  
6 towards them. The R-F-4 and R-F-5 zone  
7 proposals that are intended to preserve the  
8 character of residential neighborhoods that is  
9 stated in Section E seem contradictory in their  
10 statements.

11 First, I feel as though lot  
12 occupancy is far too permissive at 60 percent,  
13 especially considering that the setbacks for  
14 these zones have been deleted.

15 Regarding 100.3, it does not seem  
16 possible to retain the character in homes of  
17 these neighborhoods when you are allowed to  
18 convert the homes into three and four units in  
19 these zones. I can't see how this is supposed  
20 to help retain the character of the homes and  
21 green space of these communities. These homes  
22 and streets were built primarily to house one

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1 or two units and not three or four.

2 Additionally, regarding the R-F-5  
3 zone allowing a height restriction of 50 feet  
4 will do little to stop adding additional floors  
5 to rowhomes and disturbing the skyline. We  
6 need to do more to ensure that these  
7 neighborhoods remain intact.

8 Also in Section E 600.2 states that  
9 you can convert a building to an apartment if  
10 the building is on a lot in the R-F-1, 2 or 3  
11 zones. Maybe I'm reading this wrong, but it  
12 doesn't seem to make any statement about  
13 converting R-F-4 and 5 zones.

14 I personally believe that much of  
15 the new zoning leaves far too many holes for  
16 interpretation and over development. There  
17 are so many great things about this city that  
18 make it special. First and foremost are the  
19 people that live here and call it home. The  
20 Zoning Commission needs to understand that we  
21 should not have to live in fear of what a  
22 developer sees fit to do to ruin our

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1 communities, to make a quick dollar and to move  
2 on to the next.

3 I have no problems with increasing  
4 density when it=s done responsibly and with  
5 regard toward others and the future. But I am  
6 concerned that what=s happening in this city is  
7 very short-termed and very short-sighted.  
8 There should be room in this city for rowhouses  
9 in neighborhoods and they must be protected  
10 because once they are gone they will not be back.

11 Thank you for hearing me and I  
12 implore you to add additional provisions to save  
13 what=s left of D.C.=s neighborhoods and  
14 rowhomes. Thanks.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

16 MR. LEONARD: Good evening. My  
17 name is Bart Leonard. And I live at 2101  
18 Connecticut Avenue with my wife and two  
19 daughters and their cars.

20 I=m going to speak about an advanced  
21 notice. This is a mandatory advanced notice  
22 the historic district=s neighborhoods. The

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1 developer proposing constructional work on any  
2 historic property must give actual notice to  
3 each owner of any property located within 1,000  
4 feet of the front, side and rear entrances of  
5 such a historic property no fewer than 90 days  
6 prior to the initial appearance before the  
7 Advisory Neighborhood Commission and no fewer  
8 than 90 days before seeking approval of the  
9 construction by the Historic Preservation  
10 Review Board. Such actual notice must be  
11 confirmed in writing.

12 Here are a few points to consider:  
13 written notice of the proposed construction to  
14 each owner by certified mail, return receipt  
15 requested; written notice of the proposed  
16 construction posted prominently on each  
17 entrance to the historic property in question;  
18 written notice of the proposed construction by  
19 certified mail, return receipt requested to  
20 each citizen=s association representing each  
21 neighborhood located within the historic  
22 district where such an historic property is

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1 located; online posting in electronic format of  
2 the written notice of the proposed construction  
3 including copies of all architectural concepts  
4 and/or plans depicting such proposed  
5 construction on the website of each agency to  
6 consider any aspect of the proposed  
7 construction.

8 Written confirmation by each owner  
9 of the receipt of the required notice must be  
10 secured by the Advisory Neighborhood  
11 Commission, Historic Preservation Review Board  
12 and Zoning Commission before any proceedings  
13 before such an agency may commence. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Next.

15 MR. COUMARIS: My name is Tom  
16 Coumaris. I=ve lived at 1413 S Street, N.W.

17 VICE CHAIR COHEN: I don=t think  
18 you=re on.

19 MR. COUMARIS: I=m not on.

20 (Off microphone comments.)

21 Hello. Do you have me? Okay. I  
22 need this because I talk real low.

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1                   COMMISSIONER MAY:    Keep it very  
2 close because we still have trouble.

3                   MR. COUMARIS:   Yes.  I know I talk  
4 real -- I=m sorry.  My name is Tom Coumaris.  
5 I=ve lived at 1413 S Street, N.W. for 35-37  
6 years.  My family=s lived adjacent to my house  
7 since 1902 in what used to be called Greek Alley  
8 there.

9                   I used to be the ANC for a long time.  
10 I=ve been involved in a lot of the Zoning, a lot  
11 of the Historic Preservation cases, cases  
12 before you all.  I=m good friends with the bid  
13 developers.  A lot of them started in our  
14 neighborhood years ago and I talk to them all  
15 the time on these issues.

16                   I=m a second generation Smart  
17 Growther.  I=m a confirmed urbanist.  I ride my  
18 bicycle all the time.  Any time I have to drive  
19 a car I only drive a hybrid or electric.  I=m  
20 not an old fuddy-duddy in spite of the hair.

21                   But as a Smart Growth person, I=m 100  
22 percent opposed to this update.  The first time

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1 I heard about this update was when someone came  
2 by my house about three years ago. And I asked  
3 her what she was doing. And she said she was  
4 from OP and they were doing an update just to  
5 update everything so that it was current with  
6 the way our zoning was.

7 Well, over the last couple of years,  
8 I've heard these different things coming up.  
9 And it's become apparent that what they're  
10 trying to do is not just cement and codify what  
11 is there. What they're trying to do is actually  
12 change things.

13 Now I'm all for change for the  
14 better. But don't lie to me when you're doing  
15 it. Be honest and let's talk about the issues  
16 about what needs to be changed and how it should  
17 be changed.

18 People in my neighborhood are  
19 getting very suspicious about what all is going  
20 on. The most suspicion is coming from this  
21 party line that we keep hearing from the  
22 developers= front groups, from OP, that this is

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1 mostly about opening little corner stores where  
2 you can go there and you can get a warm baguette  
3 down on the corner in the morning. That=s all  
4 this is about.

5 Now we hear -- No, it=s not.  
6 There=s a lot of other things that can come in.  
7 This has nothing to do with corner stores.  
8 These are businesses that can come in into the  
9 R-4 residential rowhouses. And we haven=t been  
10 told what it is that these businesses can be.  
11 I think it=s only fair that we have an honest  
12 discussion about what type of businesses can  
13 come into an R-4 zone and not just call them  
14 corner stores or baguette shops.

15 We=ve tried to reach out to OP.  
16 There=s a lot of issues that on both sides for  
17 the developers and I=ve worked with developers  
18 plenty too. There=s a lot of important issues  
19 on both sides. They have been totally  
20 uninterested.

21 We tried to talk to them about the  
22 wraparound zoning problem where new nightclubs

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1 are opening up next to single family R-4 houses  
2 because of the oddity of the way the zoning wraps  
3 around. They are totally uninterested.

4 We=ve tried to talk to them about  
5 increasing density by changing the number of  
6 units allowed in an R-4. You could double the  
7 number of units allowed in R-4 and double the  
8 density in the city immediately. They=re not  
9 interested in talking about those things  
10 either.

11 They have a certain agenda that was  
12 set up by certain people that they=re going  
13 forward with. The parking is --

14 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Sir, I=m going to  
15 interrupt you for a second because you may not  
16 have been here earlier to hear the announcement  
17 that OP is going to have every Friday in March  
18 office hours to discuss these things.

19 MR. COUMARIS: Well, we brought it  
20 to their attention already.

21 VICE CHAIR COHEN: So I think that  
22 you should take advantage of their offer.

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1                   MR. COUMARIS:       But with the  
2 parking, the parking is my big issue. I=ve been  
3 involved with the residential parking here in  
4 the neighborhood.

5                   CHAIRMAN HOOD:   Move up closer to  
6 your mike so we can hear you. Move up closer  
7 to your mike.

8                   MR. COUMARIS:   Okay. The parking  
9 situation, this parking proposal unilaterally  
10 went away with the parking requirement. That=s  
11 not smart growth. That=s really stupid.  
12 We=re getting nothing in return. We=re asking  
13 nothing in return from the developers for giving  
14 that up.

15                               Arlington does that successfully.  
16 And you know that Arlington has a policy where  
17 the building owner can sign an agreement that  
18 that building is not eligible for RPP. And in  
19 return they don=t have to build a garage.

20                               Why can=t we do that here? Tommy  
21 Wells has a bill in before the D.C. Council right  
22 now to accomplish the same thing here so that

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1 we could have that.

2 We know that 60 to 70 percent of the  
3 people who are coming into D.C. are registering  
4 new automobiles in D.C. If it=s only 60 percent  
5 that=s still 6,000 new automobiles coming into  
6 the District a year. Who=s going to  
7 foot the bill for taking care of those cars and  
8 parking them? Is it going to be the taxpayers?  
9 Are we going to say those cars can be parked on  
10 the street? You don=t have to pay for your own  
11 car.

12 We can=t keep assuming this new  
13 responsibility for more and more cars coming in  
14 and the taxpayer taking the bill for it. The  
15 only smart way to do this would be an arrangement  
16 where the developer signs for that building not  
17 to have RPP rights in return for that developer  
18 not having to build parking. The  
19 developers I know they don=t like to build  
20 parking because they don=t make as big a profit  
21 on it as they do with housing. They=re lucky  
22 if they meet cost of the building parking. So,

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1 of course, they want to get out of that.

2 It=s a big financial benefit to  
3 them. It=s like writing a check out to them  
4 for \$1 million on a \$30 million project.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I=m going to ask you  
6 -- I make it a practice when we go out to the  
7 wards not to cut anybody off even when they go  
8 over time. But I think --

9 MR. COUMARIS: I would rather hear  
10 from you all to be honest.

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: You=re going to  
12 hear -- I tell you what. When we deliberate  
13 you=re going to hear from us. You=re  
14 definitely going to hear. So stay tuned and  
15 stay engaged.

16 MR. COUMARIS: That=s the whole  
17 thing. There needs to be more engagement  
18 between the citizens and the people who really  
19 know what the issues are and the wards.

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: When we deliberate  
21 if we ever get to deliberating you will hear a  
22 lot of issues. And I think most people in this

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1 city will be surprised of how we=re going to dig  
2 into this. I really do. We=re going to do our  
3 best to get a code that works for the city.  
4 Okay.

5 Just at some point we=ve got to get  
6 a chance to get to it. But we want to hear from  
7 you all. That=s what we=re doing now.

8 Okay. Are you closed out? Are you  
9 straight?

10 MR. COUMARIS: Yes. Unless you  
11 have something else to say.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: No. Great. Next.

13 MR. McCARTHY: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Chairman. My name is Matt McCarthy. I own a  
15 townhouse. I reside in that townhouse on the  
16 1900 block of 19th Street, N.W., 1931 19th  
17 Street, N.W. at the bottom of Adams Morgan.

18 I=ve given different testimony than  
19 I came intending to give to try to address  
20 different issues than have already been  
21 addressed tonight except one and that is  
22 parking. Parking minimums should be

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1 maintained unchanged because Adams Morgan is  
2 already stressed. I mean it=s notoriously  
3 stressed across the city with the existing  
4 residential parking demands only exacerbated by  
5 the parking demands from patrons from the  
6 restaurants and bars which crowd the very few  
7 blocks of Columbia and 18th Street.

8 Just those restaurants in those very  
9 few blocks have over 7,000 seats of occupancy.  
10 And the crowding requires that residents  
11 regularly drive around and around and around for  
12 a half hour, 45 minutes and end up parking five  
13 blocks away. Keeping the parking minimums in  
14 place would mean that for the various in-fill  
15 projects or major apartment/condo  
16 redevelopments at least those projects wouldn=t  
17 exacerbate our problems because enough parking  
18 would be built within them.

19 I am a bike rider. I am bike rider  
20 because Metro was so unreliable, so bad, that  
21 I finally eight years ago just gave up and  
22 started riding my bike. I am a member of Zip

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1 Car. I am a member of Car-To-Go. I'm a member  
2 of Bike Share. And I can tell you that no one  
3 I have spoken to, no one I know, thinks that  
4 those somehow replace the need for parking in  
5 the city.

6 So I urge you to keep the parking  
7 minimums. It=s already just deadly. It=s  
8 outrageous in our neighborhood.

9 In addition, the proposal to allow  
10 additional density, FAR floor area ratio, in  
11 C-2-A and C-2-B zones jumping from 1.5 to 2.0  
12 FAR by rights would mean increases in size and  
13 the number of occupants permitted inside  
14 numerous ABC establishments of which we have 70  
15 something in a few block area. They are the  
16 dominant commercial use in Adams Morgan.

17 This is inconsistent with the  
18 Comprehensive Plan at Option MC 1.1.B which  
19 seeks to address the concentrations of liquor  
20 license establishments which are in the  
21 neighborhoods= commercial districts,  
22 particularly on 18th Street and Columbia Road

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1 and at Policy MC 1.1.6 which seeks preservation  
2 housing located in commercial areas and at  
3 Policy MC 2.4.2 which encourages businesses  
4 that serve the needs of local residents.

5 The proposal to allow corner stores  
6 which -- May I go on?

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

8 MR. McCARTHY: Thank you, Mr.  
9 Chairman.

10 -- which includes many types of  
11 businesses to intrude into otherwise entirely  
12 residential zones should be rejected  
13 particularly for Adams Morgan where we are  
14 already well served with many, many bars, far  
15 too many bars, restaurants, groceries and  
16 stores generally within not more than two blocks  
17 from where almost any of us live. We have a  
18 serious rat problem. We have a serious litter  
19 problem. That would only exacerbate it.

20 Moreover, seeking additional  
21 density it seems to be they=re going to allow  
22 or suggesting -- the OP is suggesting to allow

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1 outdoor speakers. It just adds to the crush  
2 that we=re already suffering in that  
3 neighborhood.

4 If I may as a point of order address  
5 the question that you raised earlier about do  
6 people know that this is happening and what=s  
7 in it. My response to you is absolutely not.  
8 I am much more active in my community than most  
9 people, not as active as some. But I didn=t  
10 really -- I wasn=t really aware of what was going  
11 on until quite recently. And I=ve talked to my  
12 neighbors about it and very few people are aware  
13 of the fact of the ZRR, certainly unaware that  
14 it=s a complete rewrite. People have been  
15 stunned.

16 Indeed I attended an open meeting,  
17 a briefing, sponsored by Councilman Graham just  
18 a couple of weeks ago that other people have  
19 referred to here. And the room was filled with  
20 far more people than this who were stunned, had  
21 not been aware of what was going on and did not  
22 like, uniformly did not like. I mean people

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1 were upset. Did not like what they were hearing  
2 about some of the stuff I=ve addressed, parking  
3 and other things, many other things.

4 So I believe and I think almost the  
5 vast majority of people at that conference, my  
6 neighbors to whom I=ve spoken, believes that  
7 this needs to be slowed down. I know that  
8 you=ve been working on it for five years. But  
9 people aren=t ready for this. They don=t  
10 understand it and they don=t understand how much  
11 of a top to bottom rewrite this is.

12 So I beg you to slow it down. This  
13 doesn=t have to happen right away. And there  
14 are many reasons that it should not happen right  
15 away.

16 Finally, we would like to thank you  
17 for the two new rowhouse zones, R-F-4 and R-F-5,  
18 that were specifically designed to permit down  
19 zoning in R-5 areas to solve our problems of over  
20 development. And in the same vein there is no  
21 reason that the 10 foot limit on the roof  
22 structure height already proposed for some

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1 rowhouse areas should not apply to all rowhouse  
2 areas including Adams Morgan.

3 Thank you. I appreciate you giving  
4 me extra time. And I appreciate your listening  
5 and the opportunity to come and speak to you.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I want to thank each  
7 and every one of you for your testimony. But,  
8 Mr. McCarthy, let=s walk through the scenario.

9 Just recently, probably last month,  
10 I did not run for reelection on my civic  
11 association after 20 years. I was the  
12 president of Woodridge Civic Association and  
13 now would you not believe that -- You know if  
14 I was on the Zoning Commission which I was in  
15 2007 and I mentioned to my civic association  
16 about the zoning rewrite, the revision that we  
17 called it at first and then it was rewrite and  
18 then revision. I don=t know what we call it now  
19 or whatever it is. That=s what it is.

20 And I asked a question just before  
21 we had the election last month. No, I take that  
22 back. It was this month. And I asked everyone

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1       AAre you familiar with the zoning revision  
2       that=s going on in the city?@

3               And I will tell you that my own civic  
4       association three people raised their hands.  
5       And do you know what they said? They said, AWe  
6       heard you talking about it.@

7               Now you know my own civic  
8       association I=ve been trying to get them  
9       engaged. I mean I didn=t get into these  
10      particulars. So what is it? Is it that I  
11      didn=t come to someone=s front door? They=re  
12      not interested? Because we hear this argument  
13      and I=m using my own civic association.  
14      They=re not in here and this is not -- They might  
15      read the transcript and get mad with me later.  
16      But I=m now resigned. I=m gone being a  
17      president even though they did give me emeritus.

18              But my point is when I hear this and  
19      I look at a group who I know that I live with  
20      and I told them about this and I mentioned this  
21      at every meeting. Believe me, there=s not a  
22      meeting that went by AGet involved with the

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1 Office of Planning. The Office of Planning is  
2 coming. We'll be here. We'll be at Dunbar  
3 High School on a Saturday.@

4 And I mentioned that. And I think  
5 we might have had three people from our  
6 association come. I guess to hear AWe didn't  
7 know what was going on@ and I=m using them for  
8 an example. I know they can=t tell me they  
9 didn't know what was going on, but they did.

10 MR. McCARTHY: They did or did not?

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh yes. They did  
12 tell me they didn't know this was going on and  
13 I know they know it was going because I told them  
14 and not just them. There are other people  
15 across the city. I go to a lot of community  
16 meetings.

17 So help me understand. Is it  
18 because they just weren't paying me any  
19 attention? There goes Anthony Hood again. Or  
20 was it because they didn't think it was going  
21 to affect them. Or what was it? What is it?

22 MR. McCARTHY: Well, I can=t say for

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1 sure. But I can certainly appreciate the  
2 frustration that you must have and that many who  
3 have been working on this for five years must  
4 have.

5 But the fact is they don=t. They  
6 don=t. And when Councilman Graham just sends  
7 out a notice, a grassroots notice, that I just  
8 happened to stumble across because I happened  
9 to be attending the relevant committee of my ANC  
10 that night. I was like one of five people that  
11 were. People were stunned. People were  
12 stunned.

13 Now I think there=s a lot of blame  
14 to go around. One, I think that our elected  
15 representatives didn=t really bring this to  
16 people=s attention in the way it needed to be  
17 because it is so large. It is so technical. It  
18 is so detailed that it=s going to take a long  
19 time for people to understand it, to understand  
20 the stuff that affects them. They do not now.

21 Our press I think deserves blame. I  
22 mean this is the kind of thing that The Post

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1 should have been running many more articles.  
2 It has done you a terrible disservice by simply  
3 ignoring it apparently for the most part. This  
4 is a big story. This should be a big story.  
5 This should be the front of the Metro page.

6 The other local presses, the Current  
7 and others, didn=t really address it. People  
8 just don=t know.

9 The Office of Planning I think  
10 deserves some blame here because they did I know  
11 come to local citizens associations. But as  
12 was described to me, they mostly just stood  
13 there to answer people=s questions. People  
14 didn=t know what to ask about it and were stunned  
15 at that meeting to hear from the few people that  
16 were up on it some of the ins and outs and some  
17 of the risks and threats.

18 You=ve heard from a lot of  
19 neighborhoods tonight about them and about how  
20 AOh my God, what=s going on here? This is  
21 scary.@

22 So I appreciate your frustration.

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1 But the facts are the facts and the facts are  
2 people don=t know. And they don=t like what  
3 they=re hearing. And they don=t like  
4 especially the proposition that this is a  
5 top-to-bottom rewrite, completely new terms,  
6 throw out the old ones. I mean this huge thing  
7 that could very, very affect their daily life,  
8 their property values, all kinds of things.

9 They don=t know. And more time is  
10 needed to allow them to know. The Office of  
11 Planning. I think a big part of it also -- I  
12 mean a part of it also that deserves mention here  
13 is that we=ve had two mayors now that I think  
14 have very much queered the process by putting  
15 the Office of Planning and the Historic  
16 Preservation Office underneath the deputy mayor  
17 for economic development.

18 Now it doesn=t take a rocket  
19 scientist to know that that deputy mayor=s  
20 primary interest is to garner support from the  
21 major contributors, potential contributors,  
22 for his boss. And those contributors everyone

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1 who=s lived in the city for any length of time  
2 knows are development interests.

3 Now I have had personal experience  
4 and others here I know have had different  
5 experiences with the same people to know that  
6 those offices -- the planning group and the  
7 historic preservation group -- have been  
8 carrying water that they shouldn=t be carrying.  
9 The process of natural tensions where the  
10 development interest has its interest and has  
11 a right to press them. And Historic  
12 Preservation has its interests and the right to  
13 press them freely without conflicts of  
14 interests. And the same for the Office of  
15 Planning.

16 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

17 MR. McCARTHY: And that didn=t  
18 happen here.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think you=ve  
20 answered my question. But I just wanted to make  
21 sure that everyone leaves away. First of all,  
22 I=m not frustrated. Second of all, I think the

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1 Commission, Office of Planning and Office of  
2 Zoning and most citizens want it done right and  
3 even our elected officials. I heard you  
4 mention our mayors and elected officials.

5 I think at the end of the day the way  
6 I see it we want to get as much input as possible.  
7 We want it done right. Nobody is rushing.  
8 Nobody is going fast. Nobody is going slow.

9 But I think from the way I see it and  
10 I=m just talking about me at the end of the day  
11 I want it done right. When I come off the  
12 Commission, guess what? I live here, too.  
13 I=ve got to endure what we do and going to the  
14 grocery store and either get a handshake or get  
15 hit, either one. So that=s why we want to make  
16 sure we do it right. That=s the way we are.

17 MR. McCARTHY: I draw much comfort  
18 from that.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. That=s  
20 where I am.

21 Vice Chair.

22 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Thank you, Mr.

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1 Chairman. I have a question. Mr. McCarthy,  
2 you're very articulate. So I'll direct it to  
3 you.

4 Can you tell me? About 1200 people  
5 come into our city on a monthly basis. And we  
6 don't have enough housing to house them. And  
7 we don't have enough parking available if they  
8 bring a car.

9 So one of the objectives of the  
10 rewrite is to attempt to encourage alternative  
11 parking options. My question would be because  
12 there isn't much land available to build a  
13 parking garage let's say in Adams Morgan or in  
14 Dupont Circle and they're not really quite  
15 attractive anyway. They built one in Adams  
16 Morgan on 18th Street not too long ago. Maybe  
17 five years. Six years. What would you suggest  
18 to do with all these cars that are coming in and  
19 displacing residents because they're going to  
20 the restaurants that you had mentioned earlier?

21 MR. McCARTHY: I'm not sure I  
22 understand the question.

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1                   VICE CHAIR COHEN:   What should we do  
2                   with all the cars that may be part of households  
3                   moving into our city?   Does that help?

4                   MR. McCARTHY:   Yes.   I think we  
5                   require minimum parking arrangements for  
6                   developers of new buildings for these in-fills  
7                   and whatnot.

8                   Just to give you an example.   At the  
9                   house next door, a single family house, has just  
10                  been converted to five units.   And the cars are  
11                  parking on the sidewalks, all over the  
12                  sidewalks.   And I cannot get Public Space to  
13                  even return phone calls.

14                  VICE CHAIR COHEN:   Sounds like  
15                  Rome.

16                  MR. McCARTHY:   Yes.   And just 180  
17                  feet up the other direction another single  
18                  family house is being converted to five units,  
19                  more cars.   So I ride my bike.   I just donated  
20                  my car.

21                  So I am striving to be that smart  
22                  growth person.   But I do know that I=m probably

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1 the only person on my block that really does  
2 that. And the demand for parking is already so  
3 far outpacing the available supply that you  
4 really screw the voters, the existing  
5 residents, by just saying AWe=ll just make it  
6 even harder and we=ll take away the parking  
7 minimums.@

8 Am I answering your question?

9 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Yes. I mean I  
10 just wanted to elicit some feedback on that  
11 issue.

12 MR. McCARTHY: I get something  
13 through my mailbox, you know, handwritten  
14 notes, probably at least once a month from  
15 people desperately seeking out garage spaces  
16 already. And then the suggestion to delete  
17 minimum parking provision, that just makes no  
18 sense to me.

19 Let the people that came here  
20 tonight encourage their neighbors to bike more,  
21 to get rid of their cars, if that suits them.  
22 But it sure doesn=t suit a whole lot of people

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1 especially families.

2 VICE CHAIR COHEN: Let me just kind  
3 of give the other argument about parking. It  
4 costs at least \$40,000 to provide a parking  
5 space in a building. So there are 60,000  
6 households who live in D.C. now who cannot  
7 afford their housing costs. And there are  
8 7,000 homeless people.

9 So I just wanted to share with you  
10 the other side.

11 MR. McCARTHY: You know I=m aware.  
12 I=m aware. I appreciate that there=s going to  
13 have to be increased density. I appreciate  
14 that this is a growing city. I understand that.

15 But we=ve got a lot of different  
16 tensions here. And we already have a crisis in  
17 my neighborhood, maybe not in others. But in  
18 my neighborhood, we=ve had a crisis for as long  
19 as I=ve lived there.

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions  
21 of this panel, Commissioners?

22 (No verbal response.)

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1 I will tell you that it will be very  
2 helpful if you continue to help us to make sure  
3 you pass the word on what=s going on. That  
4 would help us a lot.

5 MR. McCARTHY: I have been. And I  
6 know many of us are.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I would just  
8 implore all of us and I say this at all the ward  
9 meetings that if you continue to help us. We=re  
10 going to have a last hearing to hear from  
11 everybody at the end that we haven=t heard from.  
12 And also if you could look at the websites or  
13 call either the Office of Zoning or the Office  
14 of Planning and find out what our next steps are  
15 and see when those office hours are going to be  
16 with the Office of Planning.

17 I made the announcements earlier.  
18 But look at the websites. Stay engaged. Stay  
19 informed. Let your neighbors know what=s going  
20 on.

21 MR. McCARTHY: I will do that and I  
22 beg you to just slow this down a little bit so

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1 that that can happen.

2 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Thank  
3 this panel. We appreciate it.

4 (Chorus of thank yous.)

5 Okay. I think that=s all we have.  
6 I want to thank our Staff. I want to thank the  
7 Office of Planning. I want to thank my  
8 colleagues and also again the Housing Finance  
9 Agency for allowing us to be able to have this  
10 meeting. And with that this meeting --  
11 Anything else, Ms. Schellin?

12 MS. SCHELLIN: No.

13 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. This  
14 meeting is adjourned.

15 (Whereupon, at 6:52 p.m., the above  
16 entitled matter was concluded.)

17

18

19

20

21