

Coalition of EOR Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners
Disparate Treatment with regards to the Zoning Regulations Rewrite (ZRR)

November 13, 2015

Dear Councilmembers Alexander and May,

We are ANC Commissioners in your wards and we seek your help regarding one of the biggest planning policy changes in the District in recent history, the Zoning Regulations Rewrite (ZRR).

In letters and official resolutions, we have reported to the DC Zoning Commission that only a select-few of DC's Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC's) have received additional direct support and information in engaging the massive ZRR (see <http://www.dcfeedback.com/fit2print/citywide/109>).

Some of this additional assistance from the DC Office of Planning came in the form of an ANC-specific zoning comparison matrix, like that received by ANC-1C (see attached).

ANC's located East-of-the-River did not receive this special matrix.

We understand this special matrix takes 20 hours of research using high-resource computer time crawling across large paginated PDF files, and shrinks that to a manageable half-hour of side-by-side review on less than 10 pages. For ANC's with very limited time, you can see how this matrix would enhance engagement on something this important.

Upon examining the public record, Office of Planning staffers (Jennifer Steingasser, Joel Lawson, and Elisa Vitale) have submitted responses stating that their office already has provided all ZRR matrices on their website (see Exhibit #1097 in Zoning Commission Case No. 08-06a).

The fact of the matter is the special ANC-targeted matrix received by only a select-few ANC's are not to our knowledge available on any public website, and certainly have not been made available to any ANC located East-of-the-River, either online or in print by mail. And, we have an email from OP staff saying they do not have a matrix for our ANC's like the one given to ANC-1C attached.

We have asked Zoning Commissioners to require the Office of Planning to prepare the same ANC-specific matrix for all ANC's. In addition, we have requested an extension of time to review this information not yet provided to our ANC, so that we can comment meaningfully and as equally as other ANC's.

The Zoning Commission has taken up our resolutions asking for more time and equal participation but, based upon misleading feedback from the Office of Planning, have so far denied our requests. This must be reversed.

Put simply, our right to even treatment in the ZRR is being significantly reduced in comparison to how DC's Office of Planning treated other ANC's in other wards. This is especially true when comparing our treatment to that of the Georgetown-area ANC which received direct hand-holding from OP to customize their district during the ZRR process.

We would like to see a letter be sent to the Zoning Commission by you, our Councilmembers, as well as the Chairman, Phil Mendelson who has oversight of the Office of Planning, to ensure we receive the same treatment in the ZRR process and to lift this process up to a closer level of equal participatory administrative review.

Although there has been many gaps in the outreach from OP on the ZRR that should be remedied, receiving this special ANC matrix and getting an extension of time for review will help us acutely now.

We ask for prompt assistance, if at all possible, as we have been informed the Zoning Commission is meeting next Monday, November 16, 2015, for further deliberations on the ZRR.

Please inform.

Thank you.

ANC Commissioner Kay Armstead (SMD 8E-06)
*ANC Commissioner Sheila Carson-Carr (SMD 7F-03) **
ANC Commissioner Dorothy Douglas (SMD 7D-03)
ANC Commissioner Linda Green (SMD 7E-02)
ANC Commissioner Patricia Howard-Chittams (SMD 7B-01)
ANC Commissioner Karen Settles (SMD 7F-05)
*ANC Commissioner Anthony Muhammad (SMD 8E-02) **
ANC Commissioner Khadija Watson (SMD 8B-01)

Sent by email to Council offices on Nov. 13, 2015, using this unified email address:
dcplanningaccess@gmail.com

** signatures updated on November 20, 2015*