



April 28, 2008

Members of Denver City Council

RE: C.B. 160, Series of 2008, A bill for an ordinance changing the zoning classification for an area in the West Highland neighborhood bounded by approximately Lowell, Tennyson, 29th and 32nd. And C.B. 161, Series of 2008, A bill for an ordinance changing the zoning classification for the area near Sloan's Lake bounded by approximately Lowell, Quitman, 20th and 32nd.

Dear Council Member:

This letter is written on behalf the West Washington Park Neighborhood Association ("WWPNA"). WWPNA is a registered neighborhood organization, bounded physically by Broadway to the west, Downing to the east, I-25 to the south, and Speer Boulevard to the north.

We are writing to you regarding Council Bills 160 and 161, Series of 2008 – Change in zoning classification for West Highland and Sloan's Lake.

The West Washington Park Neighborhood Association (WWPNA) urges you to uphold the tenets of Blueprint Denver and vote in favor of these bills. In doing so, you will be undertaking an important step in the successful implementation of Blueprint Denver. When considering our position, and the decision before Council on the captioned bills, WWPNA asks that you consider the following.

Blueprint Denver was created as the Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan to implement the Comprehensive Plan of 2000. Each of the Comprehensive Plan of 2000 and Blueprint Denver recognize there are instances where current zoning does not reflect existing predominant land use patterns in many stable Denver neighborhoods. Moreover, Blueprint Denver also wisely provides that "[t]he concept of Areas of Stability will not be successful without addressing the areas where zoning is incompatible with the current neighborhood, the areas that should remain stable, and where growth is not needed or actually harmful to the fulfillment of Plan 2000 goals. Zoning should be adopted that makes relatively few current uses non-conforming but resolves the incompatibility of parts of the current zoning map with Plan 2000's vision." (See, Blueprint Denver, p. 87, emphasis added).

Not only does Blueprint Denver address conceptually the issue of zoning mismatches, it also contemplates that "it may be appropriate to change the zoning in Areas of Stability to create a better match between existing land uses and the zoning." (See, Blueprint Denver, pp. 75; 124). In such instances, Blueprint Denver acknowledges there are tools available to correct discrepancies between land use and zoning in Areas of Stability, which tools include changes in the language of a zone district, replacement of zone districts and the adoption of map amendments (See, Blueprint Denver, p. 124; 163-164). While Blueprint Denver suggests it may be possible to address minor mismatches as part of the zoning code update, it provides that in dramatic instances the mismatches should be

corrected. (See, Blueprint Denver, p. 163). Failure to take immediate action to correct zoning mismatches in Areas of Stability where development that conflicts with the predominant existing use is rapidly occurring would irreparably harm the stable neighborhoods that such tools were designed to protect.

Importantly, both the Comprehensive Plan of 2000 and Blueprint Denver recognize that the character of Denver's neighborhoods is why people live here. Nowhere is this sentiment more strongly evidenced than in Blueprint Denver's express acknowledgement that it is "important to enhance what has drawn people to live in and be loyal to Denver over the years." In recognition of how strongly Denver's citizens feel about their neighborhoods, Blueprint Denver include tools that focus on keeping valued community characteristics in many of Denver's older and stable neighborhoods. These new measures provide tools that help shape where and how redevelopment occurs." (See, Blueprint Denver p. 120, emphasis added). Downzoning where the current zoning does not match the existing predominant development pattern in Areas of Stability is nothing more than utilizing the tools prescribed in Blueprint Denver. It is an appropriate step in the implementation of Blueprint Denver's vision.

Please note that WWPNA's position as stated in this letter is reflective of the views of residents in West Washington Park. WWPNA's annual meeting was held on April 16, 2008 and, notwithstanding a snowstorm that evening, was attended by approximately 90 people. Our topics of discussion for this meeting were an update on the work of the Zoning Code Task Force, Downzoning and Scrapeoffs. A straw poll was taken at the conclusion of a discussion of the West Highlands/Sloan's Lake downzoning. When asked if our audience supported this type of downzoning, the response was overwhelmingly in favor. Of all participants, 7 were undecided, and only 2 people were not in favor.

Respectfully,

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West Washington Park Neighborhood Association

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