



District of Columbia Government  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A  
Box 75115  
Washington, DC 20013



April 24, 2006

Zoning Commission  
c/o Secretary of the Zoning Commission  
Office of Zoning  
441 4th St NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Text Amendment—Charter Schools (Case No. 06-06)

Dear Zoning Commissioners,

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting on March 9, 2006, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A voted 5-0-3 (with 5 Commissioners required for a quorum) to support the proposed text amendment to clarify the treatment of public charter schools under the zoning regulations and to require special exceptions for public schools that do not meet certain lot area, lot width, FAR, and lot occupancy requirements in Residence Zones.

The proposed text amendment addresses the concern that placing schools in small, non-traditional locations would expose residential areas to traffic, noise, and cumulative effects from similar facilities. In particular, sites with limited or no setback from nearby residential properties, limited street frontage for student drop-off and pick-up, and limited space for off-street parking could impose inappropriate and objectionable conditions on surrounding residential properties. In the past, similar concerns for private schools in Residence Zones have been addressed through the special exception process.

The proposed text amendment would support the Comprehensive Plan by maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods as well as enhancing public safety. Allowing public schools to be sited on any residential property as a matter of right would eliminate formal opportunities for public participation and community input to alleviate adverse impacts through the special exception process. The proposed text amendment provides a reasonable balance between the need for public schools and the potential for harm to the character of existing neighborhoods resulting from poor site selection. The special exception process is an effective tool balancing these interests and for involving the community in land use decisions.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Commissioner Cody Rice at 202-544-3734. Commissioner Rice has been authorized to present testimony on behalf of ANC 6A.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler  
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A