

	<p align="center">ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA <i>CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS • CLEVELAND PARK</i> <i>MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE HEIGHTS</i> <i>MCLEAN GARDENS • WOODLEY PARK</i></p>
<p>Single Member District Commissioners 01-Lee Brian Reba; 02- Gwendolyn Bole; 03-David Valdez 04- Vacant; 05- Margaret Siegel; 06-Carl Roller 07- Victor Silveira; 08-Catherine May; 09-Nancy MacWood</p>	<p align="right">P.O. Box 4966 Washington, DC 20008 Website http://www.anc3c.org Email all@anc3c.org</p>

ANC 3C Resolution No. 2015-022
Regarding DDOT Proposal to Expand and Consolidate Sign Regulations in Title 13

Whereas, construction of new outdoor advertising billboards was banned in Washington, DC in the early 1930’s; and

Whereas, the billboard industry has responded to nationwide prohibitions and restrictions on billboards by attempting to redefine them as “signs” rather than “billboards” in order to circumvent legislation prohibiting billboards (outdoor advertising of goods and services not sold on the premises); and

Whereas, the billboard industry has developed even larger and more intrusive advertising that utilizes video and other digital technologies; and

Whereas, the billboard industry found entre into Washington, DC in 2000 when the Council permitted 64 “special sign” billboards as large as 10,000sf to be installed on sides of DC buildings, and subsequently reduced that number to 32 billboards restricted to the downtown in response to citizen outrage; and

Whereas, the billboard industry made further inroads into Washington, DC in 2004 when the Council relaxed restrictions to permit huge, full motion video and other forms of electronic billboards in Gallery Place; and

Whereas, the billboard industry attempted in 2010 to fight enforcement of removal of illegal billboards in Washington, DC by proposing to swap the removal of five (5) illegal billboards for an increase in the 32 sign limit, which the Council rejected after hearing strong citizen opposition to the deal; and

Whereas, the billboard industry was successful in convincing Council to extend the Gallery Place permitted billboards to even larger and more numerous ones on the Verizon Center in 2011; and

Whereas, the billboard industry renewed its previously rejected attempts to overturn the citywide billboard prohibition in 2012 and the mayor agreed to propose sweeping regulation changes that would give him authority to approve “special sign” billboards as large as 10,000sf and video billboards as large as 1,200 sf in any area he deemed to be an entertainment district; and

Whereas, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has been writing and revising regulations to implement the mayor’s directive and to open up DC to largely unregulated advertising in the form of super-sized billboards, including digital billboards, as well as rooftop signs and migration of massive wall signs throughout the city; and

Whereas, the Supreme Court has upheld the right of local governments to regulate the size, lighting and placement of signs as a land use issue and the Home Rule Act authorizes only the Zoning Commission to write land use laws; and

Whereas, cities nationwide (386 communities in Texas, 287 cities and counties in Florida, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, San Jose, Denver) have stopped the construction of new billboards to stem the blight of visual pollution that will erode revitalization of their cities; and

Whereas, Washington, DC, the nation's capital, has been a national leader in rejecting the overt commercialization of Washington, DC:

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C opposes any weakening of billboard or sign regulations and that the ANC makes no distinction between digital advertising signs and print advertising signs that advertise goods and services not sold on the premises as they are all billboards;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C opposes rooftop signs that would alter the skyline and detract from the beauty of the city (Sec. 712). This proposal is the antithesis of findings in the Height Act master study that found that habitation of rooftop penthouses would improve aesthetics by fostering better design - no one suggested that illuminated billboards would improve rooftop aesthetics or the iconic horizontal DC skyline;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C strongly opposes Chapter 9: Designated Entertainment Area Signs. This chapter would give the mayor unilateral authority to authorize massive variable message signs, including full motion video screens, with only "consultation" as any check on the mayor's implementation of this vast authority. The mayor could designate any area that provides events, performances or activities designed to entertain as a DEA with permission for 200 sf illuminated rooftop signs displayed up to 90 ft above ground and within 500 ft (one block) of the White House, US Capital, Mall or any national monument. The proposal would immediately create DEAs at Gallery Place, Verizon Center, the Ballpark area, and the SW waterfront and provide no public process to prevent this flashy branding of our waterfront or the emerging residential and retail/office complexes near the ballpark;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C opposes variable message signs (signs with changing images or messages) that could be 40 sf and 20 ft above ground on any building in any commercial or mixed use zones. The condition that these signs cannot be within 200 ft (less than ½ a block) of a residential zone (Sec. 714) does not render the potential visual sign pollution in DC commercial or mixed zones reasonable or supportable;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C opposes freestanding signs as permitted in Sec. 713. The proposals are confusing and appear to allow 15 ft billboards, including variable message signs, on any commercial property and distinguishes them only regarding the location of attachment;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C urges Mayor Bowser and the DC Council to rigorously enforce existing regulations and to prevent billboard and "special sign" creep;

Be It Resolved the ANC 3C urges the Council to transfer policies governing regulation of signs and billboards to the Zoning Commission while continuing to maintain DDOT's and DCRA's roles in permitting and enforcing the regulations;

Be It Resolved that ANC 3C encourages Mayor Bowser to conduct a multi-disciplinary study of the effects of existing digital and variable message signs at Gallery Place and the Verizon

Center on residents and office tenants focused on the impact of these billboards on quality of life, safety, noise and light pollution, and property values;

Be It Resolved that the Chair and Commissioner 3C09, or their designee are authorized to represent the ANC on this matter.

Attested by



Carl Roller

Chair, on June 15, 2015

This resolution was approved by a voice vote, on June 15, 2015 at a scheduled and noticed public meeting of ANC 3C at which a quorum (a minimum of 5 of 9 commissioners) was present.