

Prepared Testimony for Public Hearing to consider Subdivision Regulation Amendment (SRA) 25-02 — Workforce Housing Lot Consolidation (September 16, 2025)

Good afternoon — thank you President Stewart and other Council Members for this opportunity to speak. I am Sarah Efird Stephens, a village council member and resident of Section 3 of Chevy Chase. We are an R-60 municipality of 282 generally small houses and narrow 16 foot streets, which is why there is considerable concern about much larger structures replacing our Connecticut Avenue homes. We agree with a limit on eligible lot consolidation but believe SRA 25-02, as proposed, is inadequate. A limit based on square footage rather than number of lots would give homeowners and builders alike a more consistent understanding of the potential for new development.

We strongly support a consolidation limit based on three times the 6000 square foot R-60 minimum lot size. This aligns with the planning staff images in the June 18 Planning, Housing and Parks committee staff memorandum explaining typical density if lots were consolidated. An 18,000 square foot lot size template was shown in the R-60 zone.

Larger lots in our community range from 11,000 to over 20,000 square feet. As proposed, a per-lot limit by itself would allow a whopping 55,000 square foot lot if 3 of our largest contiguous eligible lots are joined. In another instance, 3 contiguous eligible lots could be assembled into a 36,000 square foot lot. Consolidation at this scale would allow building size and massing out of context with existing homes and far exceeds the impact shown in the staff memo explaining the SRA.

I also want to note that the Planning Board's proposed amendment allowing certain flag and interior lots is a new concept. The drawings submitted by planning staff in the August 28 Technical Review show configurations of buildings and driveways that substantially change ingress, egress and driving patterns from those shown when the ZTA was under discussion and adopted. The proposed amendment is highly confusing, materially changes the scope of ZTA 25-02 as adopted, and could adversely impact the surrounding community.

To conclude, please adopt a consolidation limit based on lot size, not the number of lots, capped at 3 times the minimum lot size. In addition, we

ask that you thoroughly consider whether the proposed amendment permitting some flag and interior lots can be introduced at this late date without creating unanticipated harm to adjacent homeowners. Thank you!