



*Creating a Neighborhood
Masterpiece with
residents & businesses*

January 23, 2017

Dear Planning Board,

Upon careful consideration by the Uptown on the Hill board members, we respectfully and strongly urge City Council to keep the parking exemption for the “small lots” that are 6,250 square feet or fewer. There has been little to no development of these lots to the scale that is currently proposed in the 1500 block of Humboldt Street. Therefore, there is very little Denver area data to thoughtfully change to the current policy.

However, it is quite clear that changing the current policy will inhibit development, dramatically constricting the amount of housing that can be built which further exacerbates the housing shortage and does nothing to reduce the costly rental and home sale prices in the metro region. This is not the vision of the City of Denver, nor is it the vision of Uptown on the Hill registered neighborhood organization.

One plank of our Uptown on the Hill mission is “to consider the social, economic, and environmental well-being for current and future generations.” The housing shortage and resulting increased cost of home renting and buying drives people to live further from the urban core. The further from the urban core, the more people are reliant on driving a personal car. That increases vehicle miles traveled, less demand for public transit, greater risk to bicyclists and pedestrians, more pollution and greater carbon emissions that contribute to climate change.

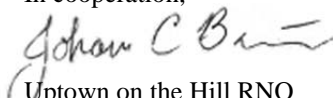
Such a decision is a “triple-lose.” We lose because fewer people live in our communities reducing the customer base for our local mom-and-pop businesses. We lose because the housing prices are increased to pay for parking. We lose because the environmental costs from automobile use negatively contributes to our collective impact on climate change.

Increasing housing costs and greenhouse gas emissions is not the kind of contribution Uptown on the Hill wants to make. It also goes counter to what the Mayor and City Council have worked so hard to build. Voting to increase parking requirements goes against the national trend to eliminate requirements. Voting to extend the moratorium delays housing construction at a time when we desperately need more housing. Choosing free parking on the public right of way prioritizes cars over people.

Choosing to do away with the parking exemption is premature. It eliminates our ability to test a market-based solution to increase our housing stock and incentivize public transit use. By prohibiting the development of these small lots, we lose the ability to see how they would work. We lose the ability to make future decision based on data and observed dynamics within the community. Rather, if we decide to require more parking, we are making decisions out of fear, not fact.

You will always have the opportunity to refine your decision in the future based upon real world information. In the meantime, Uptown on the Hill RNO respectfully and strongly urges City Council to keep the parking exemption for the “small lots” that are 6,250 square feet or fewer.

In cooperation,


Uptown on the Hill RNO
Johan Barrios, president