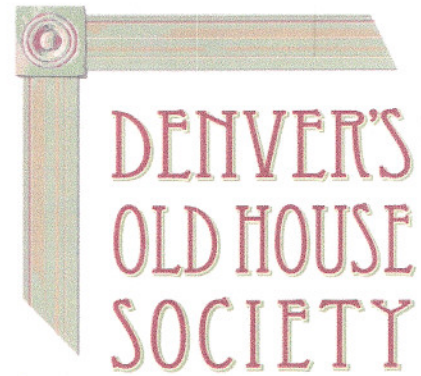


November 27, 2009

Honorable Mayor John Hickenlooper  
Denver City Council Members  
Mr. Peter Park  
Mr. Tyler Gibbs



Sent via E-mail and U.S. Postal Service

Dear Mayor Hickenlooper, Members of Denver City Council, Mr. Park and Mr. Gibbs,

Denver's Old House Society supports the original vision of Blueprint Denver which directed growth in the designated areas of change, and promoted the existing character in the areas of stability. Character encompasses a number of attributes including density of living units and of open space, prominent lot size, height of buildings, form and material of buildings, and allowed uses. The new code should require traditional neighborhood developments in stable neighborhoods.

Of particular concern is the preservation of designated historic districts city wide and how the zoning code update will encourage or discourage the stability and character of these areas. We urge the City Planners and City Council to be mindful of the need to protect these unique neighborhoods which have been designated by making sure the new zoning reflects the current housing patterns in these areas.

An example of a new zoning category which appears to be inappropriate as it is uncharacteristic for the area is the "two unit" designation, U-TU-C, in the Witter Cofield Historic District (Northwest Denver Council District 1). This change could lead to the destabilization and destruction of the neighborhood. Below are the reasons this area should remain as single family, the designation it was originally given under Blueprint and had remained until the second and third zoning update maps.


The Witter Cofield Historic District is located in Council District 1, in Northwest Denver. Of the 216 buildings in the Witter Cofield Historic District, the majority are predominantly single-family 1880 residences.. The Denver City Council unanimously approved the designation of Witter Cofield as a Denver Historic District in 1993. The new zoning code update is designed to implement Blueprint Denver. Blueprint Denver designates all of the area within the Witter Cofield Historic District as "Single Family Residential" except for the area on the west side of Federal Boulevard. The most recent zoning map "DRAFT Zoning Map #3" shows most of this area as "U-TU-C" which is a "Two Unit District". The book Side by Side - A History of Denver's Witter Cofield Historic District documents all of the buildings within the Historic District. This chapter lists 160 single family residential units, 43 multi-unit buildings (mostly duplex), 5 commercial buildings and one church. The designation of this area as a "Two-Unit District" is inappropriate. The designation as a two-unit area would put the existing inventory of single family units in peril. The existing multi-unit zone lots are protected by the Language Amendment allowing owners to develop their property to its current use density.

To preserve the integrity of the Historic District, zoning for the Witter Cofield Historic District should be designated single family, U-SU-C excluding the Federal frontage strip. Any new zoning on this strip (located on the west side of Federal) in the historic Whitter Cofield area, should reflect the nature of the historic district and integrate the residential area with a bulk plane transition.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Suzanne Dupée Minear, AIA  
Board Chair

Respectfully submitted,

  
Elizabeth J. Wheeler  
Executive Director

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