

Introduced by: Councilmember Smith

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2015-29

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT 15-04 TO SECTION 3.4.5
OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE DEALING WITH
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION (PRIVATE) USES**

WHEREAS, Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 was introduced at the Montgomery County Council meeting on March 3, 2015 and concerns Section 3.4.5 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance dealing with Educational Institution (Private) uses; and

WHEREAS, the Council understands Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 originated from the Washington Adventist University to accommodate a proposed building for the Health Professions and Wellness Center on Maplewood Avenue in Takoma Park that would be taller than the permitted height of 35 feet in the underlying R-60 single family residential zone; and

WHEREAS, the Council adopted Resolution 2015-20 in opposition to Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 on April 13, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 was proposed to be modified by Montgomery County Planning staff in response to opposition from the City, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the modified text amendment would permit a height of up to 55 feet for Educational Institution (Private) uses, limited to degree-granting colleges and universities approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission, in all applicable zones (unless the height limit of the zone is higher than 55 feet) upon Site Plan approval by the Montgomery County Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, modified Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 would allow properties on the Washington Adventist University campus in Takoma Park to have heights that could cause significant negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Council upholds the importance of neighborhood compatibility with all new buildings, which entails appropriate height and setback, and stepback requirements, in spite of their use or ownership; and

WHEREAS, there is ample opportunity for Washington Adventist University to redevelop its campus within existing zoning; and

WHEREAS, the Council acknowledges the long-standing and positive role of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park and recognizes its ongoing need to redevelop; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 the Washington Adventist University constructed the Leroy and Lois Peters Music Center on its campus within the constraints of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance without requiring a Zoning Text Amendment or Local Map Amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council cannot envision any revision or amendment to height limits, applicability, or coverage that it could support because it would provide the potential to permit future development that is incompatible with adjacent uses and inconsistent with neighborhood character in other areas of the community.

WHEREAS, the Council encourages Washington Adventist University to include members of the community and the City administration in its ongoing redevelopment initiatives at an earlier stage in planning and design.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND is strongly opposed to Zoning Text Amendment 15-04 on the grounds that increasing the height beyond the limit in the existing zone is incompatible with adjacent uses and inconsistent with the neighborhood character, especially where there is ample opportunity for Washington Adventist University to redevelop its campus within existing zoning.

Adopted this 1st day of June, 2015

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk