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January 28, 2021

Councilwoman Kendra Black, District 4
3540 S Poplar St., Suite 100
Denver, CO 80237

Re: January 7, 2021 Group Living Text Amendment

Dear Councilwoman Black:

On or about January 7, 2021, the City provided City Council with a document titled Group Living Text Amendment ("GLT Amendment") that the City Council will reportedly act upon on February 8, 2021. The Board of the Southmoor Park East HOA and RNO recently met and urges you to oppose the revisions proposed to be made to the Zoning Code.

Please consider the following information:

1. Organization Name: Southmoor Park East Homeowners Association ("SPEHA"). SPEHA is a Registered Neighborhood Organization and an HOA registered with the Secretary of State and DORA.
2. Boundaries: Hampden Ave, Monaco, Princeton, Poplar and Olive.
3. Number of households: 624
4. Membership: By ownership of homes in Filings 2,3,4 and 5 of Southmoor Park.
5. Nature of the Meeting: Special meeting of the SPEHA Board.
6. Number of persons present: There are 11 members on the SPEHA Board. 10 of the 11 members attended virtually.
7. Description of the process for reaching the decision: The special meeting was called to discuss what position the Board should take concerning the GLT Amendment. A motion was made to oppose the City's proposed text amendment. A second was received and the motion unanimously carried. In support of the motion, the following reasons were given:
 - a. The process and membership of the committee established to revise the Code was biased in favor of organizations and companies whose business interests would be improved by an increase in the use of residential properties in the City to more than 2 unrelated residents. Some of these members or their organizations expect to benefit financially if the GLT Amendment passes.



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- b. The process and committee did not adequately or fairly represent all of the City's neighborhoods, including but not limited to neighborhoods similar to Southmoor Park East.
- c. The text of the amendment is vague and ambiguous, foreshadowing ineffective and uneven enforcement of critical concepts like "not for profit" and "related persons."
- d. The GLT Amendment has been portrayed as a solution to zoning regulations that have allegedly perpetuated inequality by excluding members of some races, ethnicities or other groups from neighborhoods in Denver. Currently, without the GLT Amendment, it is absolutely clear that anyone of any race, creed or color can live anywhere they want to live in our City under the current Zoning Code. Any unlawful discrimination in housing is unrelated to the Zoning Code and can be more effectively and fairly remedied by individual complaints to the City's Anti-Discrimination Office than by the imaginary correction to be provided by the GLT Amendment.
- e. Further, according to the City's Planning Department, the GLT Amendment is an effort to reduce homelessness in Denver under the logic that allowing more people to live in a single dwelling unit would reduce homelessness by creating more places to live. That is poor logic and even worse economics. To the contrary, it is far more likely that, with more people allowed to live and share the cost of a single house or dwelling unit, properties in Denver will quickly become worth more to own or rent. It's the same reason why land that is zoned for 10 story apartment buildings is worth more per square foot than that zoned for single family residences. Thus, converting single-family communities into a mishmash of different and, most importantly, denser, uses will make the land and the homes more valuable. Opportunistic developers will buy up homes in residential neighborhoods and quickly convert them, at minimal cost, to much more profitable and valuable rooming houses. The net result will be ever increasing entry costs for new homeowners, which will trickle down into higher rents at all levels So the ill-conceived GLT Amendment will actually increase housing costs, which will correspondingly increase homelessness, making it even more difficult to bridge the gap between the homeless and adequate housing. Frankly, the GLT Amendment is well intentioned foolishness on the part of City planners and Council members that will help no one besides real estate developers and other self-interested proponents of this seriously flawed proposal.
- f. The text amendment fails to appreciate the underlying cause of our current housing crisis. People are moving to Denver from across the country because of our superior quality of life. Ironically, by creating more unnecessary density that adversely affects affordability, parking, crime



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and traffic in our residential neighborhoods, the GLT Amendment would diminish that quality of life and the character of those neighborhoods. By increasing the cost and lowering the livability of our housing, the GLT Amendment may eventually succeed in slowing migration to our City. That would, of course, be a hollow victory.

- g. Increasing the affordability of housing in a desirable place like Denver is an admirable and challenging goal. The City would do far better, however, to follow the example of other communities, including but not limited to Colorado's mountain communities, that have created new, sustainably affordable, housing. In Denver's case, such a community can be protected from gentrification by zoning regulations that limit the size of houses and require minimum lot sizes. If insufficient land is available within Denver for such a new development, the City should work with neighboring cities to create the communities elsewhere in metro Denver.

The SPEHA Board opposes the City's proposed text amendments set forth in the January 7 proposal and urges the City to reject this text amendment for the reasons stated above.

Sincerely,

SOUTHMOOR PARK EAST HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.

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