



PRESS RELEASE

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C100 Says Office of Planning’s Assessment of Verizon Billboards Should be Withdrawn and Redone

In a letter to the DC Office of Planning (OP), the Committee of 100 says that OP’s “assessment” of the electronic billboards at the Verizon Center “perfunctory and inadequate.” It calls for OP to withdraw its assessment and replace it with proper professional research. ([http://committeeof100.net/download/zoning/billboards, special, and digital signs/OP-Verizon-Graphics-11-09-16.pdf](http://committeeof100.net/download/zoning/billboards,_special,_and_digital_signs/OP-Verizon-Graphics-11-09-16.pdf))

OP’s assessment is required prior to re-permitting the billboards at the Verizon Center. However, the agency failed to acknowledge any continuing citizen complaints that the massive digital billboard machines at the Verizon Center have adversely affected the office workers and residents of the Gallery Place mixed-use neighborhood. ([http://committeeof100.net/download/zoning/billboards, special, and digital signs/2017-01-16-C100-Letter-Assessment-of-Verizon-Signs-Memorandum.pdf](http://committeeof100.net/download/zoning/billboards,_special,_and_digital_signs/2017-01-16-C100-Letter-Assessment-of-Verizon-Signs-Memorandum.pdf))

“We call on OP to withdraw this document and conduct a credible and objective study so that the Mayor, the Council and the citizens of DC can understand the effects of opening up our beautiful, livable mixed use neighborhoods to the unwelcome incursion of digital billboards,” said Stephen Hansen, Chair of C100.

“Why does our city government refuse to look at the impacts of these ad-spewing, light polluting machines before reauthorizing them? *In DC, mixed use is rapidly becoming mixed abuse.* When officials bow to private profits over the public interest, it feeds public cynicism about planning in our city,” said Meg Maguire, Vice Chair of C100.

Other deficiencies pinpointed in C100’s letter include the absence of photographs or videos showing how the light and full motion video affect work and living conditions; opinion surveys of residents and businesses; analysis of changes in property values and other hard data that would be part of a serious professional review; and digital billboards’ effects on nearby buildings and institutions, such as the MLK Library (southeast corner), the National Portrait Gallery and American Art Museum as well as businesses along 7th Street.