GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Stanley Jackson
Director

DATE: June 6, 2003

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 17023 – Request from Chadwick LLC for a Special Exceptions for Construction of a New Residential Development (3104.1 Sub-Section 353), Special Exception for Consideration of Multiple Buildings as a Single Building (3104.1 Sub-Section 410.12), a Variance from Floor Area Ratio Requirements (3103.2 Sub-Section 402.4) and a Variance from the Minimum Lot Area Requirements (3103.2 Sub-Section 401.5) to Allow Construction of 119 new Single Family Row Dwellings in the R-5-A District at Premises 4214-4216 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. SW, 5-165 Danbury Street SW, 4021 South Capitol Street SW and 132-152 Danbury Street SW

Pursuant to the Board of Zoning Adjustment request of April 22, 2003, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed the above referenced BZA Application, supports approval of the two requested Special Exceptions and two requested Variances, and offers the following reasons in support based upon the specific information presented in the application:

1. DHCD is working with the Applicant (Chadwick LLC) to demolish eleven vacant apartment buildings with 169 units and redevelop the site with 119 fee simple single-family row houses. DHCD and Chadwick LLC are working together to assure that a percentage of the row houses are maintained as affordable homeownership units. Increasing homeownership in the Bellevue Neighborhood is one of the strategic planning goals for this neighborhood.

BZA
Case No. 17023
Exhibit No. 33

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2. The organization of the 119 row house units into twelve multiple buildings on the two sites assures that all 119 units either face the street or mews-like front courts facing Danbury Street SW. The rear entrances to all 119 units are garage entrances at the ground floor or basement that are serviced by twenty foot wide driveways accessed from Danbury Street or for the southern site from a public alley. The rear entrances always face the access driveways and never face the street, front yards or front court mews.

3. All required parking spaces for the units are provided in the ground floor parking garages in each unit. The exterior parking spaces provided on the two sites are above the number of parking spaces required and are provided as an amenity to provide guest parking spaces and help in the marketing of the project.

4. The front yards, front courts, driveways, exterior site parking spaces and all other exterior landscaped areas will be owned and maintained by a homeowners association. Although there are playground areas at two nearby public school sites and the front court mews for many of the units will serve as outdoor passive play spaces for the resident's children, consideration should be given to strategically removing some of the exterior site parking spaces to provide two or three on site play areas for the residents' children. Designated on site play areas for residents' children should also be considered an amenity for prospective homebuyers, equal in importance to the additional on site parking spaces amenity provided, above the required number of spaces.

5. The building of the row house units as twelve multiple buildings has resulted in a site plan that ensures that all dwelling units are spaced a minimum of 25 feet apart from other units. All the units are three stories with the height not exceeding the 40 feet permitted by the R-5-A Zone. The townhouse scale of the proposed project will blend in with the existing single family residential character of the rest of the neighborhood.

6. The site has unusual conditions that make its redevelopment more difficult consisting of: 1) the site is very long (1,300 feet) and narrow (100 to 150 feet), 2) has a substantial drop in grade east to west along Danbury Street, and 3) has a 15 foot building restriction line along Danbury Street that further limits the buildable depth of the site.