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Washington, D.C 20015 D.C OFFI ZONING
ANC Commissioner (4G02)
2010 NOV 27 PM 12:33

November 24, 2009

Mr. Marc B Loud, Chairman
D C. Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St N W
Suite 200 South
Washington, D.C 20001

**Re: Emory United Methodist Beacon of Light Church,
6100-20 Georgia Ave. N.W., BZA # 17964**

Dear Chairman Loud and Honorable Board Members:

I am a long-time resident of D.C and Ward 4, not far from Fort Stevens (near Fort DeRussy) I am also an ANC Commissioner and Chair of the Chevy Chase ANC (3/4G). I write in both my personal capacity and as an individual ANC Commissioner

Fort Stevens is the one of the most historic sites in all of Washington, D.C. It was here that Union forces, observed by President Lincoln himself, repelled a Confederate attack in July 1864. Union forces arrived just in the nick of time to defend our city. In an arch from Fort Totten over to Fort DeRussy, with Fort Stevens stalwart in the middle, the Confederate Attack could not succeed. Had that attack succeeded, D.C. would have burned, many of its African-American residents would have been seized as slaves, and possibly our Union would have been split in two forever. Fort Stevens may well be the most under-appreciated historical site in D.C., and easily makes a list of the top ten most underappreciated historical sites in the country.

Moreover, the Brightwood neighborhood grew out of the African-American community which lived and worked around Ft Stevens (originally drawn to the location to receive the protection of federal troops).

Unfortunately, over the years, development interests have trumped historical interests, as they all too frequently do. Here again, that balance is presented between development and historic preservation. While here we are talking about a Church's proposed development, and that commands our respect, it is simply a fact that the proposed five-story new housing "wall," especially along its northwestern and western property lines, will greatly and adversely impact the visitor experience at next-door Ft Stevens.

I am sad to report that the proposed development would, if allowed, partly ruin what is left of the experience at Fort Stevens. The high wall would turn its back on the thousands of visitors to Ft Stevens and substantially detract from the solemn experience of witnessing a

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District of Columbia

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historic 19th Century battlefield where hundreds died to protect our city and nation As the visitor looks northwards over the emplaced cannon and to the east to see the route of the 7th Street turnpike (now Georgia Avenue) used by Jubal Early, all that will be seen will be a high, heavy, solid wall of modern housing.

With the utmost respect for the Church, I very respectfully ask that the BZA please disallow the proposed development to the extent it interferes physically or aesthetically with Ft Stevens At the very least, it is critical that the wall be significantly reduced in height and set back from Ft Stevens, especially on the northwest portion of the Church's property

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Thompson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Thompson
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Washington, D C. 20015
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