

DC PRESERVATION LEAGUE

1971 **35** years 2006

The mission of the DC Preservation League is to preserve, protect, and enhance the historic and built environment of Washington, DC, through advocacy and education.

Edwin L. Fountain, Esq.
President

Colden Florance, FAIA
Vice President

Loretta Neumann
Vice President

James A. Smailes, P.E.
Secretary

John D. Bellingham, FCIQB, AIC
Treasurer

James Abdo
Shalom Baranes, FAIA
Lisa M. Burcham
John F. Clark, Esq.
Edward D. Dunson, AIA
Constance W. Maffin, GRI
Susan Neumann
Andrew S. Potts, Esq.
Francine Raizes
John Sandor
D. Peter Sefton
Chuck Wagner

Rebecca A. Miller
Executive Director

Paige Wojcik
Administrative Assistant

January 29, 2007

Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210S
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Zoning Commission Case 05-39
St. Martins Residential Development and Map Amendment

Dear Commissioners:

The DC Preservation League ("DCPL") supports the preservation component of the proposed residential development on the site of the former St. Martin's School and Convent. Formed in 1971, DCPL is a non-profit organization chartered to act in the public interest to preserve, protect and enhance the historic and built environment of Washington, DC. Our organization is responsible for the vast majority of landmark applications filed in the city, many for buildings slated for demolition.

Last Spring, DCPL filed a landmark application for the convent and school to protect their historical and architectural attributes in light of the proposed planned unit development. However, after numerous discussions with Catholic Community Services, the Office of Planning and the Historic Preservation Office, DCPL agreed that a private preservation agreement could achieve the same goals while also allowing Catholic Community Services (CCS) the greatest flexibility to fulfill its affordable housing objectives for the site.

As a result of the agreement, CCS will move the convent building about 50 feet to the corner of T and Summit streets and incorporate it into the new PUD. The convent will continue to read as a separate structure with the significant architectural features retained and restored. While moving historic buildings even on the same lot is not a preferred means of preservation, it can be necessary in certain cases to balance the benefits of competing public interests. Like Almas Temple, Adas Israel Synagogue and other buildings in the District, St. Martin's convent will be successfully moved so it can continue to convey the architectural and historical significance we believe it possesses. We support CCS in its preservation efforts.

Very truly yours,



Rebecca A. Miller
Executive Director
DC Preservation League

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 05-39

EXHIBIT NO. 53