



CNHED

Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development

Testimony of Robert Pohlman, Executive Director
Coalition for Nonprofit Housing & Economic Development
Public hearing
Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
Case No. 05-39
Monday, January 29, 2007
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200-South

Good evening. My name is Robert Pohlman and I am the executive director of the Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development. I am here to testify in favor of the application from the Archdiocese of Washington and Catholic Communities Services for a consolidated PUD and related map amendment at Square 3531, Lots 114 & 115.

I served on the District's Comprehensive Housing Strategy Task Force, co-chaired by Dr. Alice Rivlin and Adrian Washington, that published a report last January of findings and conclusions about the state of housing in the District of Columbia. In that report we recommended that the city build at least 19,000 new units of affordable housing over the next 15 years for low and moderate income residents. St. Martin's Apartments is the kind of housing we had in mind, serving moderate income working families as well as some lower income residents who need housing.

Who are the people who will live in St. Martin's Apartments? They are day care workers who take care of our children, bus drivers who transport us, retail clerks who work in our local stores, government employees, hotel workers and others. These are the people who are the backbone of our economy and who make the city work. Who better to have as a neighbor? Families of four, making 60 percent of area median income (AMI) who will live at St. Martin's, will actually be earning 100 percent of DC's median income. This means that the incomes of most of the residents of these apartments will fall squarely in the middle of the income range of all DC residents.

The Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development is a membership association of organizations that work to revitalize neighborhoods and build affordable housing. We are very pleased to see affordable workforce housing being built in this neighborhood, because too often, affordable housing is provided only in distressed neighborhoods where there is a high concentration of lower income residents. We believe it is vitally important to the future of our city for affordable housing to be built in every neighborhood, and particularly in neighborhoods that are undergoing transition

CASE NO. 05-39

EXHIBIT NO. 55

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO.05-39
EXHIBIT NO.55

with home prices rising rapidly, as is true for the Edgewood and Eckington neighborhoods. We ask the Zoning Commission to consider the need for affordable housing in all neighborhoods and to support this worthy effort to provide affordability in a rapidly changing neighborhood. We hope that the Zoning Commission supports making it possible for working class families to remain in their neighborhood and for the children of those families to be able to continue to live in the neighborhood in which they grew up. Increasingly, this is not possible in many neighborhoods throughout the city.

You have the opportunity to support the preservation of affordability and mixed income neighborhoods by approving the St. Martin's housing proposal. We urge you to do so.