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4319 Harrison St
Washington, DC 20015

January 16, 2007

Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: 5220 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Case No. 06-31

Dear Members of the Commission:

I attended a community meeting in late April regarding Akridge's condominium project at 5220 Wisconsin Avenue and, as one of the residents that lives closest to the site, I fully support the project. I believe this project would be a wonderful addition to the community, representing a perfect blend of future growth and neighborhood tradition.

The April meeting was the first I have ever attended and I found the dynamic of that meeting to be quite interesting. I quickly saw that there were two groups: those who were open-minded and approached the proposal from a logical point of view, and then there were others who were staunchly opposed to the project. These people seemed to oppose change regardless of form, their same few objections were repeated time and again, and their comments seemed to be emotionally charged rather than substantive in nature. It was also apparent that those in opposition consisted of the vocal minority, not the silent majority. These were my initial impressions; my perspective is that of an outsider of sorts who is ignorant of local politics and the particulars of this project.

I only see merit in one argument regarding precedent. Due to its location, this lot is rightly designated as a buffer between high density commercial and low density residential areas. If approved, the current proposal greatly exceeds current zoning and can serve as a dangerous precedent for future development in the community (such as the WMATA & Marten's sites). I do not believe, however, that this building is out-of-proportion with the surrounding environment.

I do not agree that this project will put excessive strain on infrastructure (parking, traffic, schools). These arguments were repeated time and again throughout the course of the meeting. It seems clear to me that the strain on parking and traffic is caused by the presence of destination retail in the area. I do not see that there will be an adverse impact on area schools because the likely residents of this building will be young professionals and empty-nesters, not families with young children.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
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CASE NO. 06-31
EXHIBIT NO. 51

I do believe that the alley along the 4300 block of Harrison would be heavily utilized by residents of this building and should be widened and paved in order to safely accommodate the traffic that will inevitably result from this project. I also believe that the main access driveway off of Harrison (between the bank and apartment building) would have to be paved and the 7 metered parking spots on Harrison would have to be eliminated to ensure traffic safety. Due to the additional traffic, this area would have to be converted into a no-parking zone to allow for ample visibility and maneuverability.

The opposition uses three examples for matter of right zoning: Dupont Circle, Glover Park, and Tenleytown. The first two are solely residential buildings that add no value to the community. Quite frankly, they would just be buildings I would have to walk past every day. The third example they use in Tenleytown includes destination retail which causes the traffic and parking problems they seem to oppose. This mixed-use proposal seems to be a common sense fusion of the two; a residential building with street level local-serving retail.

Just to give you some background, my family moved to this area in 1949. My father was raised here and this area was like a second home to me growing up. After college graduation and being moved around for a few years with my job, I moved into this community in 2001. I live in the apartments on Harrison Street (one door from the end) so I live closer to the proposed building than anyone else in the neighborhood.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew K. Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "M".

Matthew K. Ferguson