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2007... 03

Ken Johnson
4306 Brandywine St., NW
Washington DC, 20016

February 18, 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 am taking the rare step of writing a letter on a public issue to urge you to allow development along Wisconsin Avenue. As a father of two young children, I number many positives of this neighborhood, including excellent Metro access, many young families, great schools and access to the Capital Crescent Trail. But one issue continually frustrates my ability to enjoy my own neighborhood: The total lack of neighborhood-serving retail.

My immediate neighborhood between the Tenley and Friendship Metro stops offers no amenities for a family to walk to. Sadly, our weekend walks usually entail driving to Georgetown or Cleveland Park, then assembling our strollers and walking from there, and though I consider myself a consumer of DC products and proponent of urbanity, most months we ride our bikes to Bethesda where we can walk, shop, bike and eat. Its painfully ironic that I must go from DC to Bethesda for walkable urbanity. The reason is clear; a small but vocal group has persistently fought the development that would provide shops, restaurants, parks, and attractive storefronts that make a city attractive. Without density and development we have no hope of attracting retailers or ridding Wisconsin Avenue of the unsightly architecture that defines one of the main entrances to DC. Instead, we have a dilapidated variation of a suburban strip mall.

I have spoken at length with neighbors about this issue, and can attest that not one has disagreed with this sentiment. A noisy few, however, have barraged us with emails and pamphlets, seeking to micromanage our community and impose their anti-development agenda. Please know that they do not speak for most residents of this ward. It is my hope that we allow development on a scale that fosters more of the services we would consume on a daily basis; the Akridge project is a good start.

Sincerely,



Ken Johnson

ZONING COMMISSION
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CASE NO. 06-31
EXHIBIT NO. 68

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