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**Report of ANC 6D
Zoning Commission Case No. 09-22
ML Ballpark 4 LLC located at One M Street, SE
January 17, 2013**

At a regularly scheduled business meeting of ANC-6D held on January 14, 2013, with all members present and voting, ANC-6D voted unanimously (7-0-0) NOT to support the design of the building proposed to be erected at One M Street, SE.

Were this any other building, at any other corner, on virtually any other block in our entire ANC, we would not have as much objection to it as we do. But it is *not* any other corner. This building is proposed to sit on the most prominent corner in our entire ANC.

It is a corner that joins together Southwest and Near Southeast. It is a corner that is the gateway from the West to Capitol Riverfront neighborhood. And it is a corner that holds a most prominent position along South Capitol Street leading to the Capitol itself. Clearly, it is at the very heart of our community. Indeed, it is also at the midpoint of this city's two great riverfronts.

We view this corner with the same level importance as Georgetown does Wisconsin and M. While we didn't hold out for a gold dome, this is a site cries out for, if not an iconic building, certainly a linchpin. And this is where it fails.

We had expected a building that understood its sense of place and its sense of purpose. We had expected a building that gave proper deference to its siting along what will soon become an at-grade grand boulevard leading into the Capital of the United States from a brand new \$680 million bridge from the South.

Instead, when we were presented with plans to review just a few short weeks ago, the applicant included renderings of their building that demonstrated a serious lack of understanding about how the building would and *should* relate to the streetscape. Incredibly, on this site, they depicted South Capitol Street not as a redesigned grand boulevard -- not at grade -- but with an underpass.

When questioned about this, the applicant firmly stated that the revised plans for South Capitol Street were by far, not a “done deal,” and that they chose to depict what exists now over what we know will clearly exist in the very near future.

To us, this spoke to a larger question: What level of planning and forethought did the applicant invest in moving this plan forward besides significant FAR? Perhaps it would be different were there a tenant in place to provide a greater level of expectation – more insistence on embellishment and design excellence. But this is not the case.

Quite simply, this is a spec office building. Moreover, this is a spec office building in a neighborhood where some spec office buildings have sat vacant for years. Yes, let’s face it -- that’s the elephant in the room. What we don’t want to encourage at this corner is a big old white elephant.

That said, the applicant has taken some of our criticisms and attempted to incorporate positive elements into what we, in any event, have unanimously concluded is an uninspired plan. We applaud that they have improved the retail aspects. We appreciate the use of colored glass in the ground floor as it adds interest -- although that same level of detail is not found throughout the rest of the building. We heartily approve the water feature along South Capitol Street, incorporated only after we'd criticized that the building showed no sense of place as a gateway to the Capitol Riverfront uniting East and West. We support the use of extensive green roof, as well as multiple areas for tenants to gather on terraces. And we also appreciate the changes made to warm the lobby by incorporating elements of stone, wood and a green wall.

But these elements were not enough, in the end, to warrant any level of support for this plan. ANC-6D urges the Commission to reject this design and request that you provide the comments of our ANC with great weight.

Thank you for your consideration.