

Representing the vote and opinion of ANC 6D; Testimony of Ed Kaminski Vice-Chairman of ANC 6D regarding Square 700, One M Street

January 17, 2013

Jerrily R. Kress Memorial Hearing Room

441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 220 Washington, D.C. 20001

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Chairman Hood, Commissioners and staff, good evening, I am Ed Kaminski, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for ANC 6D02 and Vice-chairman of ANC 6D. My single-member district includes the area where the applicant is proposing developments at One M Street SE. I am testifying this evening for ANC6D.

At the ANC-6D business meeting 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. We respectfully ask that the Zoning Commission give great weight to the decision of ANC6D regarding Square 700, One M Street and not allow a zoning change at this time.

The One M Street building design was rejected because the building design is not sufficient to the unique setting and location of the site. One of the major purposes of the Capitol Gateway Overlay District is to establish South Capitol Street as a modern urban boulevard serving as a dramatic entrance to the Capitol area. Over the years ANC6D has had several conversations with the Office of Planning on the importance of the approach and building designs on South Capitol and the M Street intersection.

While the architect for One M Street has done a commendable job in breaking down the form of the building will multiple facade pieces, the use of similar materials on many facades hurts this design. The building location faces our nation's Capitol but the design does not respect the unique and pivotal nature of this prominent intersection with a distinctive building geometry. The design refinements give an only subtle but insufficient reference to the Anacostia River and this post-industrial neighborhood.

We believe that the best design solutions on South Capitol will enhance the performance of retail, residential, office, and other development, and connect the One M Street building to the surrounding neighborhoods. We recommend that the applicant design make a clear physical, social, and economic statement—making South Capitol Street relevant and desirable for the greater community. The communities on both sides of South Capitol Street want this corridor to be lined with exciting architecture that calls visitors to this southern gateway to our Nation's Capitol.

Our community is concerned that the applicant's design is only ordinary with moderate external statements and amenity quality; neither good nor bad but less than the standard appropriate for the location. The design is appropriate for a speculation building but not for a center community site in the Capitol Gateway. Our vision is a revitalized corridor with important building design indicators that pay attention to neighborhoods, businesses, proximity to the Capitol Building and overall ANC6D civic pride. This building design does not provide excitement or a civic statement.

We appreciate the use of colored glass in the ground floor as it adds interest. We support the extensive green roof as well as multiple areas for tenants and guests to gather on the roof terraces. We also appreciate the changes to the interior lobby to make it more natural rather than cold – the use of warm stones, woods, water feature (extending to the outside) and a green wall. But this is not a context-sensitive building design for this location and corridor

We respectfully ask the Zoning Commission to reject this applicant's design and urge the applicant to re-engage with ANC 6D to create a unique sense of place at One M Street that offers a memorable experience for residents and visitors and supports our vision for high quality urban design.