16144

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Kevin P. Chavous
Councilmember-Ward 7

March 18, 1996

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OFFICE OF ZONING DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BZA
CASE No. 16144
EXHIBIT No. 17

Laura Richards, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Ms. Richards:

I am writing in support of the application to the Board of Zoning Adjustment which is being submitted by Telesis Corporation, Project Coordinator of the Parkside Townhomes development. The continued development of the Parkside site, which is located along Ward 7's Kenilworth Avenue corridor, is key to completing the revitalization of the Kenilworth/Parkside community. To the best of my knowledge, Parkside Phases I and II represent the largest new residential construction projects (232 homes) currently underway in our ward.

I am also requesting an expedited hearing date for the purpose of the BZA's consideration of the special exception and variances associated with the application. This is essential in order to maintain the current construction schedule for Parkside II.

Both the federal and District governments have made significant investments in the Parkside community. In addition to providing the capital for infrastructure construction to the entire 26 acre site, the District provided homebuying assistance of up to $20,000 to all eligible Phase I homebuyers through its Home Purchase Assistance Program (HPAP). Also, Phase I received, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), assistance through a $2 million Housing Development Grant (HDG).

Parkside II has been awarded a $2 million Nehemiah Housing Opportunity Grant from HUD. These funds will provide $15,000 in home purchase assistance to every eligible Parkside II homebuyer, thereby promoting one of this government's primary objectives--offering citizens of the District of Columbia the opportunity to become owners of safe, affordable and attractive housing.

In order to avoid rescission of the Nehemiah Grant by HUD, construction of Parkside II must begin this Spring. This is one of the most compelling reasons for an expedited hearing. Neither the District nor the Parkside development can afford to lose the funds, particularly in these times of devastating government cutbacks at all levels.

It is my understanding that Parkside Phase I has added 100 new home owners (and new property tax payers) - 96 of whom are first time homebuyers - to the District government's homeownership rolls. Parkside II will offer ownership opportunities to an additional 132 households and will serve to stabilize further the entire Kenilworth/Parkside community, which over the past eight years, has undergone a monumental transformation.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
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3/20/96

Finally, I want to reiterate my full support for the continued development of the Parkside site, as well as the application submitted by Telesis Corporation, in furtherance of this goal.

Your consideration in this matter is most gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Chavous
Councilmember, Ward 7