The Downtown Cluster of Congregations

1313 New York Avenue, N.W. ■ Washington, D.C. 20005 ■ (202) 347-7015 ■ Fax (202) 347- 4630

August 29, 2000

Chairperson Sheila Cross Reid & Members
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210-S
Washington, DC 20001

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF ZONING
00 SEP -1 P2:17

Re: Application # 16596; Avalon Bay at Gallery Place

Dear Chairperson Reid & Members,

I am writing to share with you my strong support for BZA Application #16596, which will facilitate a privately developed, residential project of 209 units. I have previously testified in person before the City Council on this matter with regards to the Council's closing of an alley. As you may know, over the last 15 years, I have served on numerous panels that have helped to re-shape the zoning for the downtown, and assisted in the realization of numerous preferred uses for the area. This proposal certainly falls into that category of uses.

The current demand for housing in the city is at record levels. In both the East and West Ends of downtown, residential demand is fully reflective of this pattern. A broad array of people - young professionals, government workers, retirees, empty-nesters, students, and others - want to live in downtown due to all the conveniences. People can walk to work, partake of museums, theaters, sporting events and restaurants, while having easy access to all metro lines. Naturally, many people prefer in-town living to the tedious nature of suburban commuting. This proposal precisely helps to meet the current demand for in-town housing stock.

This project will provide a privately financed housing development at a downtown location - a first in many, many years, and I firmly believe the first of many more to come. These residents will provide new revenues for the city, enhance safety and civic involvement in the area, and provide an impetus for surrounding residential developments. The spin-off activity and energy from this development will be quite significant.

The zoning relief requested by the applicant is relatively minor and a reasonable deviation from the preferred retail requirements on the ground floor of the building. The requested variance from the residential recreation space requirement also has merit. There are numerous recreation activities available in close proximity; the relief will allow for a much more enhanced and viable

BZA
Case No. 16596
Exhibit No. 27

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16596
EXHIBIT NO.27

project which will contribute to the well-being of the whole neighborhood.

In short, I cannot urge you strongly enough to assist in this project's realization. Your affirmative action on this application will continue the strong wave of revitalization that is occurring in downtown Washington. I greatly appreciate your consideration and on-going efforts. Thank you.

Most respectfully,

Terrance Lynch
Executive Director