DUPONT CIRCLE
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION (ANC 2B)
Government of the District of Columbia
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November 28, 2000

Ms. Sheila Cross Reid
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

BZA
Case No. 16618
Exhibit No. 49

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF ZONING

Dear Ms. Reid:

At a special meeting held on November 27, 2000, ANC 2B considered BZA Application #16618, an application by The Phillips Collection and Brian E. and Jennifer B. Giannattasio, for special exceptions under sections 411.11 and 2516.1 and for variances under sections 402.4 and 2001.3 to expand The Phillips Collection into an existing adjacent apartment house at 1618 21st Street, NW. With six of seven commissioners in attendance, a quorum at a properly noticed public meeting of the Commission, the following motion was passed unanimously:

> ANC 2B opposes the approval by the BZA of the special exception and variance requests, BZA Application #16618, in its current state for the purposes of creating The Phillips Collection Art Education Center with an underground auditorium and underground parking. It is ANC 2B's belief that, with additional time, a voluntary agreement could be reached to mitigate community concerns and, accordingly, ANC 2B requests consideration by the BZA of a further continuance in this matter.

ANC 2B is in opposition to the special exceptions and variance requests of the current plan due to the impact the expansion will have on the neighborhood, particularly on 21st Street, Hillyer Place, and Q Street. Residents testified before the ANC about the adverse traffic impact caused by buses, catering and delivery vehicles, and passenger vehicles with the already existing facility. The Commission believes that this expansion will bring additional vehicles to the neighborhood, particularly to 21st Street and Hillyer Place, which are primarily residential in nature. The traffic consultant hired by The Phillips Collection noted in his presentation before the ANC that the expansion will have "perhaps a significant increase" in traffic volume.

SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS AND OFFICERS

2B01	2B02	2B03	2B04	2B05	2B06	2B07
David King	Vince Micone Vice Chair	Martha Shannon	Don Jackson Secretary	Meredith DeHart Treasurer	Marilyn Newton	Kyle Bixler Chair

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#49

ANC 2B is concerned about the adverse impact on parking in the community. The expansion will allow The Phillips Collection to host additional and larger special events and programs in the newly expanded facility. Although The Phillips includes plans for an underground parking garage to address parking concerns, these facilities will increase the number of parking spaces only by 27. The proposed new facilities will allow The Phillips to host catered dinners serving 400 and a 250 person auditorium. Although laudable, the increased parking area of The Phillips will not meet the Collection's demand and the ANC is concerned that there is insufficient private parking in the neighborhood to absorb the vehicular traffic for events which will be possible in the expanded facility. Further, the ANC is concerned that they were first notified of significant changes in the design of the underground parking garage on November 27th.

ANC 2B is concerned about the loss of residential space by the conversion of 1618 21st Street, NW. This apartment building provides moderately priced housing to residents which will be lost as a result of the expansion. Further, encroachment of The Phillips Collection further northward will degrade the residential nature of the neighborhood. The proposed art storage and mechanical space will create an almost canyon-like feel with a height and institutional structure that is out-of-character with the residential neighborhood.

The Phillips Collection began when Duncan Phillips opened his home to art lovers so that, in his words, "visitors [would] feel at home in the midst of beautiful things and [be] subconsciously stimulated while consciously rested and refreshed." This expansion would make this "home" a complex of about a half block in length. The ANC acknowledges that The Phillips may expand by right into the apartment complex and The Phillips Collection has acknowledged that they have matter-of-right alternative plans. The applicant must prove that without the BZA's approval for the special exceptions and variances, they will suffer an undue burden. The ANC and neighbors do not believe this criteria is met with the current plans.

Notwithstanding these concerns, ANC 2B believes that with additional time and negotiation, an agreement could be crafted to allow The Phillips Collection to expand into 1618 21st Street with the ANC's support for some requests for variances and special exceptions. The Phillips Collection provided a first draft of a potential voluntary agreement on November 8th. A comprehensive traffic analysis was completed by The Phillips on November 20th. The ANC could not negotiate on terms of an agreement without the results of the traffic analysis. We are willing and eager to begin a dialogue which will address the many concerns of both the neighbors and The Phillips.

As those concerned have impressed upon the ANC, the nature of the changes that The Phillips Collection are proposing are consequential, permanent changes which will have a significant impact on the nature of the neighborhood. While we salute the Collection's interest in expanding its educational and research mission, we are concerned that the neighborhood may not feel "at home" by impact of the changes. We respectfully request that the BZA oppose the special exception and variance request at this time or issue a continuance to allow several months for substantial and meaningful negotiations to occur.

As this premises resides in my Single Member District, I will serve as the Commission's point-of-contact on this matter. Please feel free to reach me on (202) 305-1756.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION:

Very truly yours,

Vince Micone
Vice Chair, ANC 2B

cc: The Phillips Collection, Mr. Cain, Mr. Gell, Mr. Cochrane, The Cosmos Club