Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 75085, National Capitol Station, Washington, D.C. 20013-5085

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March 15, 2001

Chairperson Robert Sockwell
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth St., NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: BZA Application No. 16648
Hearing Date: March 20, 2001
Statement of Opposition

Dear Mr. Sockwell,

The Stanton Park Neighborhood Association (SPNA) is a long-established association representing the residential community in the area bounded by East Capitol, Second Street, H Street, and Tenth Street, NE. Representatives of SPNA have attended numerous meetings on the proposed expansion of BP Amoco's gas station in the 300 Block of H Street, NE.

On December 21, immediately after the initial BZA hearing on December 19, 2000, Mr. Pat Brown, Attorney for BP Amoco sent a letter to numerous parties requesting the "consolidated and coordinated input of various elements of the community" by January 8, 2001 (enclosed). In that letter, Mr. Brown stated that "BP Amoco is simply a gasoline company and not able or willing to consider other development options." Consistent with Mr. Brown's request for direction on how to develop a gas station on this site a joint letter was sent to BP Amoco on January 10, 2001 by nine organizations representing various interests within the community (enclosed). That response outlines in some detail how a gasoline service station could be developed on this site in a manner consistent with the H Street Commercial Corridor and the surrounding urban neighborhood. That letter also describes the reasons and the thought process which guided the comments. Further, the community's joint letter reflects comments made in numerous public meetings over the past several months, are consistent with the goals

BZA
Case No. 16648
Exhibit No. 125

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16648
EXHIBIT NO.125

of the Comprehensive Plan, the Ward 6 Plan, and the Office of Planning's evaluation of this project.

Two days before the ANC 6A meeting on March 1, 2001 BP Amoco released revised plans for their proposed expansion. The short time allowed for review not withstanding, BP Amoco chose to ignore virtually all of the comments which the community had provided, and presented the same design which the community and the Office of Planning had already rejected on numerous occasions. BP Amoco's description of the revised proposal as one which "incorporates substantial concessions to the community" is more than a little misleading. Rather, the revised proposal merely reflects BP Amoco's belated recognition of the practical and political impossibilities of closing a significant portion of the alleys on this block. The revised proposal continues to suffer from the same failings which the community has criticized from the very beginning of a process made overly long by BP Amoco's actions.

The community has repeatedly stressed to BP Amoco the need to design a project which reflects the urban character of the site; the need to reinforce the H Street commercial corridor with an appropriate, pedestrian-friendly building; and the need to develop as much of the site as possible with neighborhood-serving retail activities. Instead, BP Amoco continues to propose a site plan and a building design that is derived from suburban development models, and one which is inappropriate at this location. On March 1, 2001, ANC 6A voted overwhelmingly to reject the BP Amoco proposal. SPNA is pleased to join ANC 6A in opposition, and encourages the Board to deny the applicant's request.

Sincerely,

Drury Tallant

Drury Tallant, Co-Chair
Stanton Park Neighborhood Association

cc: Councilmember Sharon Ambrose
Andrew Altman, Director, Office of Planning
ANC 6A
Patrick Brown, Attorney for BP Amoco

Scenic America
DC Preservation League
Committee of 100 on the Federal City
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Residents of Square 776
Capitol Hill Restoration Society
Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
Near Northeast Citizens Against Crime and Drugs
H Street Association of Merchants and Professionals

January 10, 2001

Mr. John Patrick Brown
Greenstein DeLorme & Luchs, P.C.
1620 L Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20036

Re: BP Amoco Corporation
BZA Application 16648
S.O. Application 00-90

Dear Mr. Brown,

Pursuant to your request in a letter dated December 21, 2000 for specific comments that "represent the consolidated and coordinated input of various elements of the community", we have tried below to provide you with some guidance which we believe represents the majority view. It is unlikely that all elements of the community will ever be in full agreement; however, the community and the Office of Planning have given you a remarkably consistent set of comments. Those comments have been echoed by organizations with significant local and even national stature such as the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Scenic America. The Office of Planning prepared a 15 page report outlining in great detail the incompatibility of your proposal with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, good urban planning principles, and efforts to revitalize this commercial corridor.

Overwhelmingly, the comments you have received repeatedly stressed the need to: substantially improve the existing site in a manner consistent with the urban fabric; provide neighborhood-serving, pedestrian-friendly retail; and eliminate from your plan the need to close the existing system of alleys. These critical issues were identified very early in the review of your project, but are yet to be addressed. Summarized below are some of the goals which we believe to be generally agreed upon, together with suggested ways to accomplish each goal.

1) reflect and contribute to the urban environment
- promote neighborhood-serving, pedestrian access
- maximize retail activity on the street frontage
- provide a density of development consistent with this urban neighborhood

2) respect the surrounding neighborhood
- provide goods and services targeted at the residential community
- develop a project design which is compatible with surrounding uses
- create a project design which increases the value of nearby property

3) encourage additional investment
- demonstrate the potential for redevelopment of existing buildings

On a site this large, there are numerous alternative design possibilities, and we do not want to preclude other, more creative site development solutions. The overwhelming consensus in the community is for BP Amoco to focus its redevelopment efforts on improving the existing gas station, and facilitate a more positive outcome for the H Street frontage to the east and west of the alley. We believe the following suggested site organization could be designed to make a substantial positive contribution to the H Street Corridor:

a) Locate the convenience store - preferably a 2-3 story structure -at the corner of Third and H Street with a pedestrian entrance from the H Street sidewalk. Buildings at corners are especially important and effective in reinforcing the urban streetscape.

b) Retain and re-use any existing historic structures in the redevelopment proposal, especially 316 H Street, NE.

c) Install the pumps and canopy behind the building, parallel to Third Street, with appropriate screening from adjacent residential properties.

d) Maintain and improve the existing system of alleys to facilitate vehicular circulation to the gas station and residential structures. Reduce to a minimum any curb cuts.

e) Ensure that if there is a car wash - it is oriented and designed to significantly minimize disruption to adjacent residential properties.

f) Develop commercial retail or office uses on that portion of the site between the alley and Fourth St. or facilitate appropriate commercial development of the site.

As currently proposed, the project adversely affects the dominant scale and pattern of the H Street Commercial Corridor. It will not provide net benefits to either the Corridor or the surrounding residential community. Please understand it is not the community which bears the responsibility to design an acceptable project, and the above comments should not be construed as the only acceptable solution. It is the responsibility of BP Amoco to design a project which meets the broad general requirements of the District's zoning and planning guidelines; is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and is an architectural statement of sufficiently high quality to win community support.

The BP Amoco Corporation has the breadth of the guidance contained in the Planning Office's 15 page report, has heard a consistent set of comments from the community and other organizations, and has ample time to respond with a design that provides a positive model for corporate responsibility.

The Board of Zoning Adjustment has provided an opportunity to redesign this project. We strongly recommend that BP Amoco begin to take seriously the comments which the Office of Planning and the community has provided, and engage in a meaningful process to design an appropriate project.

Meg Maguire, President
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Drury J. Tallant, Co-Chair
Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
730 Third St., NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 543-8773

Mr. Anwar Saleem President
H Street Association of Merchants and Professionals
1017 H Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

cc: Mayor Anthony Williams
Councilmember Sharon Ambrose
Eric Price, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development
Andrew Altman, Director, DC Office of Planning
Ellen McCarthy, Deputy Director, DC Office of Planning
Chairperson Sheila Cross Reid, Board of Zoning Adjustment
Office of DC Surveyor
ANC 6A
H Street CDC

Best wishes to each of you for a safe Holidays and successful New Year.

Very truly yours,

GREENSTEIN DELORME & LUCHS, P.C.

By: _____
John Patrick Brown, Jr.

JPB/sp
cc: The Honorable Sharon Ambrose
Ms. Ellen McCarthy, Office of Planning
Mr. David McGettigan, Office of Planning
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December 21, 2000

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Re: BP Amoco Corporation
BZA Application No. 16648

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

Following the Board of Zoning Adjustment's ("BZA") hearing on December 19, 2000, BP Amoco has requested that I contact the various persons and organizations who have expressed concerns and/or opposition to this project. Over the last three months, BP Amoco has met with a great many persons and organizations, both in support and opposition, in more than a dozen different meetings. The current plan incorporates many, but not all, comments and suggestions which have been offered

from a variety of sources and at different times. In order to attempt to move this consultation process forward, BP Amoco wants to solicit and receive specific comments which represent the consolidated and coordinated input of the various elements of the community.

Accordingly, on behalf of BP Amoco, I am requesting that the community elements, working together, provide us with specific and detailed written input on this proposed project. As a starting point, consideration should be given to the project as it has evolved and is currently proposed, including the gasoline station, convenience store/foodmart, and car wash. Please note that BP Amoco is simply a gasoline company and not able or willing to consider other development options (e.g. office, retail, housing). In order for BP Amoco to effectively review and respond to the community's input, the information must be specific. For instance, "scaled back" without any specificity as to details of what, where or how much will not be helpful.

Given the impending holidays and the number of community participants, BP Amoco wants to allow sufficient time for the group to meet and formulate its unified views. Hopefully this can be accomplished not later than Monday, January 8, 2001. If this schedule proves difficult, please let me know.

I have attempted to make this letter inclusive (without regard to the limits of party status before the BZA) as it relates to the various community participants. If I have failed to include anyone or any group, it was not intentional and your guidance on who should be added to the list would be greatly appreciated.