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

December 3, 2000

Chairperson Sheila Cross Reid
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth St., NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

BZA
Case No. 16648
Exhibit No. 34

Re: BZA Application No. 16648
Hearing Date: December 19, 2000

Dear Ms. Reid,

In recent weeks BP Amoco has held public meetings regarding a proposed gasoline station expansion in the 300 Block of H Street, NE.. This proposal is clearly targeted at commuters from outside the District and has virtually no support within the nearby community. BP Amoco is proposing a "suburban inspired" block-long gas station, mini-mart, and car wash on a critical block of an important commercial thoroughfare. The proposed project will diminish opportunities for the type of commercial redevelopment that has long been hoped for in this commercial corridor. Many of us believe that one of the principal reasons that redevelopment of the north and south sides of the 300 block of H Street has not already occurred is due in large measure to the exceedingly poor operation of the current Amoco Station at the corner of Third and H, NE. BP Amoco has recognized in public meetings that the current operation has been a source of problems for the neighborhood. Amoco Corporation would now like to profit from the problems they contributed to by an expansion of their gas station operations from 7000 to over 50,000 square feet.

There are many reasons why SPNA opposes the BP Amoco proposal, including the following:

1) a block-long gas station is an inappropriate use for an urban commercial property with excellent access to public transit, Union Station, and the office space rapidly being developed from Union Station to Eckington.

2) The open, suburban plan diminishes the urban feel of the corridor, and will discourage other, more desirable uses on nearby commercial properties.

3) The project is essentially anti-pedestrian in nature and the proposed layout in particular would discourage pedestrian activity along H Street. Development of this

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block should include a building along H Street to help reinforce the urban corridor and encourage pedestrian activity.

4) The requested alley closing and reconfiguration will diminish emergency access to the rear of several residences. In addition the alley closing represents a public contribution to the project, and should not be supported.

5) The proposal includes demolition of H Street's last remaining wood frame structure - a structure that most probably dates from just prior to the Civil War. (There is a pending Landmark Application due for consideration in December.)

6) There is inadequate separation from the gas station operation and nearby residences, and the proposal fails to provide the required separation from 829 Third St., NE.

7) There are numerous environmental concerns, including:

- traffic implications of vehicles entering and leaving
- increased vehicular activity (including air quality concerns)
- large impervious surface runs counter to ongoing efforts to protect the Anacostia River water quality and CSO overflow
- odors, fumes and health risks to an already overburdened population
- lighting will disturb neighbors at night
- late night hours (stereos and car noises at night)

H Street is on the verge of experiencing significant development activity. Development which we hope to guide in the direction of neighborhood serving commercial activities. Projects such as the proposed BP Amoco are inconsistent with shared visions of how the corridor should be developed, and inconsistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for this area. Projects such as the current proposal will contribute to H Street becoming just another sad commercial commuter corridor reminiscent of New York Avenue, NE. This will ultimately contribute to a decline in the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The Stanton Park Neighborhood Association is actively working with individuals and organizations on a positive plan for this corridor that will contribute to strengthening this corridor and the adjacent residential neighborhood by promoting appropriate commercial development. Again, we urge you to reject the BP Amoco proposal.

Sincerely,

Drury Tallant, Co-Chair
Stanton Park Neighborhood Association

cc: Mayor Anthony Williams
Councilwoman Sharon Ambrose
Mr. Andrew Altman, Director, Office of Planning