5 December 2000

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

DEC -6 A 11:25

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

Dear Ms. Reid,

We would like to register our strong opposition to the proposed BP Amoco plan for an expanded gas station for the 300 block of H Street, NE. The current gas station operations on this corner already contribute negatively to the community development of the H Street corridor, encouraging nonresidential (transient) use and poorly maintained facilities. The new proposal is clearly targeted at commuters from outside the District and has virtually no support within the nearby community.

The BP Amoco plan resembles a "fast food strip development" in a location that should be an entryway to an urban commercial thoroughfare that is supported by the surrounding neighborhood and local workforce. 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. It is not right for the Amoco Corporation to now profit from the problems to which they contributed.

We support the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association's opposition to this proposed development, particularly for the following reasons:

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

BZA
Case No. 16648
Exhibit No. 57

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District of Columbia
CASE NO.16648
EXHIBIT NO.57

4) The alley closing represents a public contribution to the project. We should not reward landowners for having contributed to neighborhood deterioration.

5) 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
-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)

We believe that H Street is on the verge of experiencing significant development activity--development that we hope will be in the direction of neighborhood serving commercial activities. Projects such as the proposed BP Amoco are inconsistent with the community's 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,

Sam Marullo Susan Marullo

Sam and Susan Marullo
710 Third Street, NE

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