GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 5C
680 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, N.E., SUITE H-4
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

TELEPHONE: 832-1965/1966 - FAX: 832-1969

September 24, 2001

Chairperson
Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20001

Attention: Paul Hart, Secretary

RE: Application No. 16758 – of BP Amoco Corporation, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 for a special exception to construct a gasoline station under section 726 in a C-2-A District at premises 1300 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. (Square 3956, Lot 801).

Dear Chairperson:

I write on this occasion to inform you that the officers and members of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5C (ANC 5C) met on September 18, 2001 to consider, among other important issues, the above-referenced application. In this regard, it is important to note that timely and proper notice was given to the public concerning this regularly scheduled monthly meeting, held at the Franklin P. Nash United Methodist Church, 2001 Lincoln Road, N.E., and it should also be indicated that a quorum of our membership was present at the time that this issue was discussed with the Mr. John Lombardo et al. and subsequently voted upon by the body.

In brief, the officers and members of ANC 5C voted unanimously to oppose the application of BP Amoco Corporation for a special exception to construct a gasoline station at premises1300 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W. Indeed, we join our colleagues from Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5A in opposing this application, as well as the members of the Brookland Civic Association, Inc. in this regard.

Our reasons for opposing the applicant's request for special relief from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) are many. Of primary importance is our concern about the issue of adverse traffic impacts that are certain to stem from the proposed development at an already awkwardly designed, often dangerous and, under usual circumstances, a heavily congested intersection, i.e., 13th Street and Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. Indeed, to construct a gasoline station, complete with car wash and convenience store of the scale that is proposed for this location, will substantially exacerbate pre-existing traffic problems and concerns that make this portion of Rhode Island Avenue, N.E., already, very difficult to negotiate by automobile, in the

BZA
Case No. 16758
Exhibit No. 33

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16758
EXHIBIT NO.33

considered opinion of ANC 5C. Perhaps needless to say, the traffic analysis provided by an agent of the applicant, did not satisfy our significant concerns in this area.

From the standpoint of environmental impacts, we find it interesting to note that no environmental impact statement was developed in this case. And, of course, we are majorly concerned about potential negative impacts in this area, particularly when horror stories abound about a fuel company which concealed from residents in another part of our city, the fact that some of their underground gasoline tanks were leaking toxic fumes. Indeed, these types of situations lend credence to our need to exercise an abundance of caution when dealing with such companies.

With specific regard to the scale of the proposed project, we believe that it is grossly out of line with the current architectural design and integrity of the homes and other establishments that are presently located on this corridor. In fact, it would appear that a project of this size and scope would be more appropriately considered for a "Truck Stop" in a suburban location. Indeed, we anticipate the creation of a traffic nightmare at this location, the residual impact of which the residents of our community will have to live with for many years, should the BZA grant the applicant the special consideration which it is seeking.

From the perspective of public safety, our experience with the location of large multi-purpose service stations in our neighborhoods has shown us that these facilities often become magnets for panhandlers, petty thieves and other undesirables. At the time of this writing, neighborhood residents and MPD officials are in the midst of an intense struggle in our effort to manage the open-air drug activity as well as the acts of prostitution that are routinely taking place at or about this location on the Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. corridor. Ironically, the Amoco service station on the other end of the corridor, i.e., located in the 400 block of Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., has been the subject of numerous complaints to their parent corporation by residents of the Bloomingdale, LeDroit Park and Truxton Circle communities. Indeed, residents who have stopped by this service station to purchase gas have been harassed and intimidated by panhandlers, have been the subject of pocketbook snatches, and on more than a few occasions, have been the victims of robberies. Hence, if the operations and troubles associated with Amoco service station in the 400 block of Rhode Island Avenue, N.W. gives us any indication of how we can expect BP Amoco Corporation to manage (or allow to be managed) the station they propose for the 1300 block of Rhode Island Avenue, N.E., then we believe that we can predict with great certainty the enormous drag on our community that this project will likely become.

In the nearly 10+ years that the writer has been a member of ANC 5C, he has never witnessed more universal objection to any project that has been brought before us for our consideration. That is, from every corner of Ward Five, residents have raised objections to the type of use proposed by BP Amoco Corporation for the subject site and I write to let you know that ANC 5C concurs with this view. For many years, we residents of Ward Five have yearned for the return of badly needed housing at this location and, in the light of the incredible upturn in the economy of the District of Columbia in recent years, we are convinced that the circumstances are more ripe now, than any time in recent memory, to attract the interest of a developer who could readily see the potential as well as the profit to be made via the development of housing opportunities on this parcel.

As the members of the BZA are aware, economic development opportunities in this portion of Ward Five are exploding at this point in time. In addition to the gravitation of major corporations, such as XM Satellite Communications, to our community, the Mayor of the District of Columbia has pledged to locate a state of the art high technology center at the former McKinley Technical High School. Just a stone's throw from the proposed site for this service station, is a large development project that is underway and involves the Kmart Corporation as well as Home Depot as anchor tenants of a brand new mall in the Brentwood community. Again, given the ever-increasing number of development projects that are radically altering and improving the landscape of this part of Ward Five, it would be premature for the BZA to allow a use for this property that, as far as we can tell, is universally unwanted by residents throughout the ward.

In light of the preceding, ANC 5C strongly opposes the application of BP Amoco Corporation to construct a gasoline station at premises 1300 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. Indeed, we intend to share these and other reasons for our objection to this application at the time of the BZA hearing of the matter.

Sincerely,

James D. Berry, Jr.
Chairperson

cc: Members, ANC 5C
Norma Broadnax, Chairperson, ANC 5A
Regina James, President, Brookland Civic Association

JDB

Fax Transmission

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TO: Paul Hart, Secretary
Board of Zoning Adjustment

Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment

DATE: 9/25/2001

FAX NO.: (202) 727-6072

PAGES: 4, including this cover sheet.

FROM: James D. Berry, Jr.
Chairperson

SUBJECT: Application No. 16758 – of BP Amoco Corporation, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 for a special exception to construct a gasoline station under section 726 in a C-2-A District at premises 1300 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. (Square 3956, Lot 801).

COMMENTS:

This case is scheduled to be heard by the Board of Zoning Adjustment on Tuesday, October 2, 2001, between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Importantly, the applicant has petitioned the BZA to postpone the matter for a date uncertain at the time of this writing. We submit our report to you today in order to meet the seven day filing requirement for ANC's. However, we assume that we may send additional comments to the Board, if the case is continued until a later date.

JDB