MÖBIUS
DESIGN

15 June 2001

Sheri Pruitt
DC Board of Zoning
441 4th St., NW
Washington, DC 20001

16762

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2001 JUN 27 AM 10:19

Re; 1460-62 Columbia Rd., NW (Square 2670, Lots 841, 842)

Sheri Pruitt
DC Board of Zoning:

On behalf of the Central American Resource Center, (CARECEN) we are requesting an expedited hearing based on the Organizations need to occupy their building by the end of 2001. Their lease in their current space expires at the end of 2001, and the Owner has indicated that they will not renew CARECEN's lease due to the Owner's need for program space. Additionally, I respectfully urge the Board of Zoning Adjustments to issue a Bench Decision, and subsequently a Summary Order for the above referenced project.

CARECEN is a non-profit organization that has been providing an invaluable service in the District of Columbia to Adams Morgan, Columbia Heights, and Mount Pleasant residents for over two decades. The Organization has been operating out of the property located at 1459 Columbia Rd., NW, across the street from (the property in question Square 2670, Lots 841 and 842), providing much needed legal, housing counseling, and advocacy to approximately 40 community residents each day. CARECEN provides critical social services to a community with an ever-increasing number of social needs.

As stated CARECEN has functioned out of the Calvary Baptist Church, 1459 Columbia Rd., NW, located directly across the street from the property in question, a leased space which expires at year end, the space is inadequate for the current program, and it also has accessibility problems. 1460-64 Columbia Rd., NW has been abandoned for approximately 11 years. CARECEN purchased the properties from DHCD under the Homestead Program with the intent to restore the properties to its original use, Residential, while providing itself with needed offices in approximately one third of the total square footage of the properties.

The main objective of the renovation is threefold; first, making the buildings usable despite the significant deterioration that has occurred during the 11-year abandonment. Second, continue providing much needed legal, counseling services and advocacy within the community that it has, operated in for over 20 years. Finally, maintain a degree of affordable housing within the community, a much needed depleting resource in the Columbia Heights area.

The project, strongly supported by the City and Community, is much needed, for the incalculable benefits and services that it provides to the community. The ANC 1C is unofficially supporting this project. We are meeting with members of the ANC 1C to acquire their official support of the project. In addition DHCD, has supported the project with the sale of

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BZA
Case No. 16762
Exhibit No. 17

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO.17

the property to CARECEN for a nominal dollar amount under the Homestead Program. We believe that this project allows this non-profit organization to develop a longtime eyesore in the community while keeping its own function within the same community that it has and continues to serve for 20 years.

We believe that this project is important to both the District of Columbia, and the community of Columbia Heights, Adams Morgan and Mount Pleasant. CARECEN provides a priceless service to our community; we respectfully request that you expedite the process for a decision before the Board of Zoning Appeals, during one of their earliest scheduled hearings in September.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Fonseca, AIA
President
Möbius Design

cc; CARECEN,
File

encls. Application
Zoning Self Certification Form
Photographs (3 elevations, 3 pages)
Exhibit A Statement of Use
Exhibit B Plat
Exhibit C Drawings, C1, A1-A16
Exhibit D List of Owners within 200 feet from property boundaries & (Address Labels)

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