MÖBIUS
DESIGN

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
441 4TH ST., NW
SUITE 210 S.
WASHINGTON, DC 20001

RE: BZA APPLICATION FOR 1460-62 COLUMBIA RD., NW (Square 2670, Lots 841, 842)

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT,
WE ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS ISSUE A BENCH DECISION AND SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUE A SUMMARY ORDER IN FAVOR OF THE FOLLOWING APPLICATION. THE FOLLOWING IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT.

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER (CARECEN), A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IS REQUESTING A VARIANCE FOR A USE CHANGE IN AN R-5-B DISTRICT FOR THEIR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1460 COLUMBIA RD., NW, (LOTS 841, 842, SQUARE 2670). THE REQUEST FOR THE VARIANCE IS TO ALLOW NON-PROFIT OFFICE OCCUPY 50% OF THE NOTED PROPERTY, AND THE BALANCE OF 50% REMAIN MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE RENOVATION IS THREEFOLD; FIRST, MAKING THE BUILDING USABLE DESPITE ITS ABANDONMENT FOR APPROXIMATELY 11 YEARS. SECOND, CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED LEGAL, COUNSELING SERVICES AND ADVOCACY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY IT HAS OPERATED IN FOR 20 YEARS. FINALLY, MAINTAIN A DEGREE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, A MUCH NEEDED DEPLETING RESOURCE IN THE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS AREA.

THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION, PRIOR TO ITS ABANDONMENT, APPROXIMATELY 11 YEARS AGO WAS A MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING. UNDER DCMR 11, SECTION 217 A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IS ALLOWED IN AN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING WITH BZA APPROVAL IN AN R-1 DISTRICT PROVIDED THAT IT MEETS TWO REQUIREMENTS: A. IF THE BUILDING IS HISTORIC OR THE BUILDING IS IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT. B. BUILDING IS 10,000 SQ FT OR GREATER. THE PROJECT MEETS 50% OF THE REQUIRED TEST NOTED IN B. UNDER SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS ZONING REGULATIONS TYPICALLY ALLOW FOR A WAIVER WHEN A PORTION OF REQUIREMENTS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED. THERE ARE NO PROVISIONS FOR SUCH A WAIVER UNDER THE NOTED SECTION. ADDITIONALLY, ACCORDING TO DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION, THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN, WHICH THE PROPERTY IDENTIFIED, IS LOCATED, WAS DEEMED ELIGIBLE IN THE 1980'S AS A POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT. THIS DESIGNATION WOULD POTENTIALLY MAKE THE PROPERTY ELIGIBLE FOR USE BY A NON-PROFIT WITH BZA APPROVAL UNDER SECTION 217.1 OF DCMR 11. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION FALLS INTO A UNIQUE CATEGORY CONCERNING THE PROPOSED USE.

AS STATED THE INTENT OF THE RENOVATION OF THE LISTED PROPERTY IS TO ACCOMMODATE APPROXIMATELY 50% OF THE FACILITY AS MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL. THE OTHER 50% OF THE BUILDING IS TO BE OFFICES FOR A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION. CARECEN WILL ALSO DEVELOP AN ADJACENT

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BZA
Case No. 16762
Exhibit No. 7

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16762
EXHIBIT NO.7

ABANDONED THREE STORY BUILDING INTO MULTIFAMILY HOUSING. THIS PROPERTY WILL ADD AN ADDITIONAL THREE TWO BED ROOM UNITS AND TWO, ONE BED ROOM UNITS. WE HAVE CONTACTED THE ANC 1C TO GAIN THEIR ENDORSEMENTS OF THE PROJECT AND HAVE RECEIVED THEIR UNOFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF TRYING TO SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH THE ANC 1C TO GAIN THEIR FULL SUPPORT.

THE RENOVATION WILL ALLOW THE ORGANIZATION TO OPERATE FROM THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION, DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREEET FROM ITS PRESENT LOCATION @ 1459 COLUMBIA RD., NW WHERE IT HAS BEEN OPERATING FROM FOR 6 YEARS. AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE ORGANIZATIONS CLIENTELE ACCESSES THE ORGANIZATION ON FOOT. MOST OF CARECEN'S CLIENTS LIVE IN THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS. THEIR RELOCATION ACROSS THE STREET WILL NOT NEGATIVELY IMPACT THE NEIGHBORHOOD DUE TO AN INCREASE IN VEHICULAR TRAFFIC. FIRST, CARECEN HAVE BEEN OPERATING OUT OF A BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET. SECONDLY, MOST OF THEIR CLIENTS LIVE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND GENERALLY WALK TO THE CURRENT OFFICES OF CARECEN.

AS MENTIONED, THE PROPERTY HAS BEEN ABANDONED FOR APPROXIMATELY 11 YEARS. THE BUILDINGS HAVE NOT ONLY BEEN AN EYESORE, BUT A HAVEN FOR RODENTS AND VAGRANCY. CARECEN WILL BE INVESTING A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF CAPITAL TO REHABILITATE THE DILAPIDATED AND ABANDONED BUILDINGS. THIS WILL CLEARLY SERVE TO IMPROVE NOT ONLY THE AESTHETICS BUT ALSO THE VALUE OF NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CHANGE IN USE OF 50% OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE PRESENT OR FUTURE CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA. WE ALSO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CHANGE IN USE WILL CAUSE SUBSTANTIAL DETRIMENT TO THE PUBLIC GOOD NOR WILL IT CREATE ANY DELETERIOUS EXTERNAL EFFECTS. NOTE THAT THERE ARE OTHER MORE INTENSE USES IN AN R-5-B DISTRICT AS A MATTER OF RIGHT, THE INTENT AND USE OF THIS PROPERTY REMAINS IS IT WAS FOR HALF OF THE PROPERTY IN QUESTION.

PRECEDENTS: ADDITIONALLY, NOTE THAT COLUMBIA RD., NW BETWEEN 14TH AND 15TH STREET'S IS HOME TO THREE OTHER WELL KNOWN NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS. THE CALVARY BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL LEARNING CENTER OCCUPIES 1420 COLUMBIA RD., NW A FORMER C&P SWITCHING STATION. THE LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER, OCCUPIES 1419 COLUMBIA RD., NW A FORMER MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING. YOUTH BUILD, OCCUPIES SPACE IN, 1476 COLUMBIA RD., NW, A MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING. CARECEN CURRENTLY LEASES SPACE FROM THE CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH LOCATED @ 1459 COLUMBIA RD., NW. AS LISTED THERE ARE A NUMBER OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS LOCATED ON THE BLOCK IN QUESTION THAT HELP STABILIZE THE RESIDENTIAL AREA AND PROMOTE A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR FAMILY LIFE, WHICH IS THE INTENT OF THE R DISTRICTS.

RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR, AND THE INTENT OF PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL USES IN AN R-5-B DISTRICT, THE REGULATIONS PROVIDE FOR SUPPORTING COMMUNITY TYPE USES. GIVEN THAT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IS ON A BLOCK WITH MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES, AS STATED THERE ARE A VARIETY OF SUPPORTING COMMUNITY, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN 300 FEET OF THIS PROPERTY INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO; CARECEN, LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER, YOUTH BUILD, AND MULTICULTURAL LEARNING CENTER. ADDITIONALLY, THE OWNER CURRENTLY AND HAS FOR THE LAST 6 YEARS OPERATED OUT OF LEASED SPACE LOCATED @ 1459 COLUMBIA RD., NW DIRECLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. WE BELIEVE THAT BASED ON THE ABOVE STATED FACTS OUR REQUEST TO ALLOW 50% OF 1460-62 COLUMBIA RD., NW BE USED FOR A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AREA AND ITS NEIGHBORS. ACCORDINGLY WE BELIEVE THAT THIS CHANGE IN USE WILL NOT RESULT IN ANY SUBSTANTIAL DETRIMENT TO THE PUBLIC GOOD, NOR WILL THE INTENT, PURPOSE, AND INTEGRITY OF THE ZONING PLAN, AS EMBODIED IN THE ZONING REGULATIONS MAP, BE IMPAIRED.

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CARECEN, RESPECTFULLY REQUESTS A VARIANCE AS STATED ABOVE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION.

SINCERELY,

GREGORY J. FONSECA, AIA
PRESIDENT

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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