THE NATIONAL HISPANIC COUNCIL ON AGING (NHCoA)
2713 Ontario Rd., NW
Washington, D.C. 20009

RE: Application for a variance from the floor area ratio requirements under section 771 to allow office space and a community service center in a C-2-B District at the above address. Square 2581, Lot 287

- **Approval of the application will allow the NHCoA to continue its efforts in *community building* by *promoting* self-sufficiency and empowering midlife and older immigrant Latinos, a population that is growing exponentially in the District of Columbia.**

- **Denial of this application will create a serious hardship to the NHCoA in carrying out the mission for which it was created.**

- **It will deprive local senior citizens from employment, much needed health, income and housing related information and referrals.**

- **It will diminish the efforts and resources of agencies and organizations in the immediate community from the support, partnerships and coalitions developed throughout the years.**

- **The Building:**

- This location was zoned as commercial property at the time of the building's purchase. A plumbing company was located on the street floor. Prior owners lived on the second and third floors and rented rooms on the first floor.

- At present, the second and third floors of the building cannot be used for residential purposes as these floors cannot be accessed without going through the first floor.

- The building has three parking spaces of its own located in the back alley that are used by the NHCoA's three senior employees.

- The neighbor to the immediate right, Mr. Yepez, regularly uses the spaces during the evening hours and on weekends and the tenant at the left uses the spaces when needed. This is done with our approval and as an indication of cooperation and collaboration among neighbors.

- **Employees and Working Hours:**

- Working hours are 7:00 am – 4:30 pm. Bazaar San Antonio is opened in the evenings to about 8:30 pm and four hours on Saturday.

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Board of Zoning Adjustment
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CASE NO.16814
EXHIBIT NO.44

- The building houses four full time employees, two part time students, and 4 part time senior citizens. Only two of the full time employees drive to work. One student, one full time employee and three senior citizens take public transportation to work.

- The D.C.'s Older Workers Program pays the four part time senior citizens.

- Of the four full time employees, three are over 55 years of age.

- Only the employees use the building and no increase in vehicular traffic is expected.

- **The NHCoA:**

- The building houses the national headquarters of a network of community based organizations located in several states of the U.S.

- The NHCoA's national headquarters have been at this location since 1987.

- With the exception of Bazaar San Antonio located on the street floor, the premises at Ontario Road are not used to provide direct services. The above services are provided by members of its network in communities located throughout the country.

- The elderly health promoters meet at Bazaar San Antonio once per month to coordinate their work and receive supervision. Otherwise they work from their own homes.

- The mission of the NHCoA is to improve the well being of older Latinos, their families and communities. It is primarily an advocacy organization that carries out is functions through the development of educational materials, training, technical assistance, development of demonstration projects and research.

- The NHCoA is a **community building organization** that focuses on providing the resources and the skills necessary to midlife and older immigrants and their families to improve their access to health care, develops housing, support micro enterprises, and promote economic independence.

- Bazaar San Antonio is a place where older individuals, the homeless, new immigrants, and those with very low income can drop by to pick used clothes, dishes and books. Our community partners donate these items for this purpose.

- These are local residents who use the services of the senior center across the street, Christ House, Clinica del Pueblo, and other agencies in the area. This project enhances the services provided by these other agencies in the immediate community.

- Bazaar San Antonio is designed as a non-traditional outreach facility where walk-ins can receive information about the importance of early screening for diabetes, breast cancer, nutrition services, and other health promotion and disease prevention services available in the immediate community. Coming to the Bazaar is an opportunity for socialization and to find respite from cultural and language isolation.

- Donations are accepted and we hope that approval of the variance will allow the NHCoA to develop a micro economic project where older immigrants can have the opportunity to find alternative approaches for economic well-being. The NHCoA sponsors two more similar projects in Texas with considerable success.

- **NHCoA's Track Record in D.C.'s surrounding community :**

- The NHCoA was the first Latino organization to build housing for seniors: *Casa Iris* located at 12th and W. The National Black Center and Caucus on Aging (NCBA) manages it.

- *Casa Iris* houses a multicultural group of 40 senior citizens. This project spearheaded the development of the immediate area, from a dilapidated neighborhood to the building of luxury townhouses.

- Senior citizens associated with the NHCoA developed and implemented an environmental justice program that allowed them to join other community efforts geared to promoting local resident to use trash cans and promoted the D.C. government to install more trash cans in the area.

- The NHCoA took an active role in the clean up of the near-by park *Las Palomas* through the use of the local Spanish language media.

- The NHCoA was instrumental in organizing the Latino national coalition of breast cancer survivors through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and is now an independent and effective advocacy group.

- The NHCoA sponsor a Family Friends Program, supported by the Administration on Aging and SAMHSA, whereby older Latinos provide respite to Latino immigrant families with children with disabilities.

- The D.C. Escheated Estates Fund reimburses seniors who work with families for public transportation.

- The donations (and future income to be received) to Bazaar San Antonio are used to provide economic assistance, pay for recreational activities such as birthday celebrations, outings, and holidays for families in the project.