THE NAVIGATORS

Rick and Debbie Yorgey
Area Representatives

February 28, 2002

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Geoffrey H. Griffis, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Suite 210
441 4th St NW
Washington, DC 20001

16826

Chairman Griffis:

Enclosed is the testimony that I gave on February 19, 2002, during the hearing regarding City Gate's request. Thank you for including this in the materials that you consider in reaching your decision.

Sincerely,

Richard Yorgey

BZA
Case No. 16826
Exhibit No. 41

1330 Longfellow St., NW, Washington, DC 20011, 202/723-8017

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16826
EXHIBIT NO.41

Board of Zoning Adjustment
February 19, 2002

Testimony by Rick Yorgey
In favor of request by City Gate

Good afternoon, I am Rick Yorgey and live at 1330 Longfellow Street, NW, just a few blocks from the City Gate property being considered. My wife and I moved to Longfellow Street in 1990 with our 3 children and have since added 2 children from the neighborhood to our family. Our children have all gone to Brightwood Elementary which serves the neighborhood that includes 5917 16th Street – I have held every position on the PTA Executive Council at Brightwood (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary) and I served for 6 years on the Local School Restructuring Team.

I also should point out that I am on the Board of City Gate, even though I do not attend Calvary Baptist and, in fact, I am not even a Baptist. Rather I am on the Board because I have known Rev Bergfalk for 13 years – I am familiar not only with the types of ministries that he has conducted at Calvary Baptist over the years but even more importantly I know his heart for urban people, for neighborhoods, and for meeting needs.

When we moved into the neighborhood in 1990, Brightwood Elementary was less than 10% ESL students – today it is 50%. In 1990 there were 3 ESL teachers – the last time I heard the number was up to 9. These students who are struggling to learn English are from families headed by adults who don't speak English either. There is a tremendous need for ESL instruction in the neighborhood.

I also know that the teachers at Brightwood will tell you that there is PLENTY of work to be done with the children – that they can't BEGIN to do it all. Anyone with some experience in DC Public Schools knows that teachers spend quite a bit of time "parenting" the children which necessarily takes time away from instruction. The teachers at Brightwood welcome the kind of services and programs that City Gate would bring to the neighborhood.

The ministries of City Gate are needed in the neighborhood. Rev. Bergfalk will provide these needed programs and services in a way that is not disruptive to the community.