The Downtown Cluster of Congregations

1313 New York Avenue, N.W. ■ Washington, D.C. 20005 ■ (202) 347-7015 ■ Fax (202) 393-3705

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Chairman Geoffrey Griffis & Members
DC Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Re: BZA Application No. 16865 - Mather Building Via fax & post

Dear Chairman Griffis and members,

I am writing to support the request for a variance to the residential recreation space requirements, and the allowance for modifying a non-conforming penthouse into a conforming penthouse addition on the roof.

As you are aware, the Mather Building was abandoned by the city for over a decade. At significant risk, the applicant is restoring this historic structure, providing the first new affordable and market rate housing on G Street in downtown in memory, and offering significant arts related uses on the site. These are all wonderful new assets in creating a "Living Downtown".

There are numerous surrounding areas for recreation. The site is adjacent to the first class YWCA on 9th Street. There are numerous art museums, the library, the mall, and other park and open spaces nearby. I believe there are sufficient recreational opportunities adjacent and nearby that the residential space requirement should be waived. This was an office / commercial building, being adapted for residential use. The site itself therefore never lent itself to recreational use. Those who will seek to live there will be well aware of its numerous amenities should you waive this requirement. I believe the mechanicals and space requirements to allow access by all to the roof will significantly hurt the economics of the project as well as limit the space provided for the other use amenities.

The developer is providing a number of parking spaces below grade. This will also be an asset.

In short, I believe the waiver request to be reasonable, and hope that you would support it. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Terrance Lynch
Executive Director

BZA
Case No. 16865
Exhibit No. 21

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16865
EXHIBIT NO.21