GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lt. Gruffey
Fire And Medical Services Department

FROM: John Moore, Development Review Specialist

DATE: September 5, 2002

SUBJECT: Fire Marshal Review – BZA Application No. 16910

At the September 2002 Hearing of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the Board requested that the Office of Planning refer BZA Application No. 16910 to the D.C. Fire Marshal's Office for review and comments. The Family Place, a community service center located at 3309 16th Street, N.W, filed this case. The applicant requested a special exception under Section 334 **(Community Service Center (R-4))** of the Zoning Regulations, to continue operating the referenced community center. The Board had approved the center on three previous occasions. The most recent approval was in 1991 and was for ten years. The Board voted to approve the present application, but requested OP to refer it to the Fire Marshal for review and comment. The Board was interested in certain aspects of the property, including a railing along the front walkway, if the rear door exit should be considered a "fire exit" and should the upper two floors require a fire escape.

You will find attached to this memo the following documents:

- The Office of Planning Report – BZA Case No. 16910
- BZA Application No. 16910
- Office of surveyor Plat
- BZA Order 14327
- BZA Order 15530

I would appreciate your expeditious response to this request. If you need additional information, feel free to contact me at (202) 442-8804.

BZA
Case No. 16910
Exhibit No. 38

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16910
EXHIBIT NO.38

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Kenneth B. Ellerbe**
Deputy Fire Chief

FROM: **William F. Guffey**
Lieutenant

DATE: **September 11, 2002**

SUBJECT: **Review of BZA Application No. 16910**

On September 10, 2002, I inspected 3309 16th Street, N.W. (The Family Place, Inc.). The applicant is renewing a zoning variance to continue its present use. This building is three stories with a basement and of ordinary construction. The building is being used as a community service center for pregnant mothers. There is no childcare or residential use in the building.

The Board of Zoning adjustment has asked this office to comment on three specific issues:

1. **Railing along front walk.** A fence approximately three feet high was installed next to the sidewalk that goes from the front porch to the street. It is my opinion that this causes no hindrance nor obstructs egress from the building.
2. **Should the rear door be considered a fire exit**? The rear door from the first floor has been designated a fire exit and it is properly identified with an illuminated exit sign.
3. **Should the upper two floors require a fire escape?** The second and third floors only have one exit. This exit is an open stair located in the center of the building. The windows have bars that are openable, but kept locked with a key type lock. This occupancy has been in use since 1985 with these conditions. The Fire and EMS Department has no authority to order additional exits in an existing building. This is a matter of concern and should be evaluated by a building inspector or structural engineer from the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.

Subject: Review of BZA Application No. 16910

Lieutenant William F. Guffey

I recommend approval of this request with the stipulation that the issue regarding the exits be referred to DCRA for evaluation and recommendation prior to the Board issuing a zoning variance.