OPENING STATEMENT

Good afternoon, Mister Chair and members of the Board. I am Jamie Goodson of the law firm Arnold & Porter, appearing on behalf of the applicants, the Public Welfare Foundation and Manna, Inc. This application is for a special exception and variances necessary in connection with the development of a 12 unit subsidized residential townhouse complex. A special exception pursuant to § 3104.1 of the Zoning Regulations is necessary from the requirement that parking spaces be located on the same lot as the buildings they serve. In addition, variances pursuant to § 3103.2 are needed from zoning requirements regarding minimum lot area and width, maximum lot occupancy, minimum rear yard setback, minimum number of parking spaces, and single family dwellings abutting and accessed from an alley that is less than 30 feet wide.

The subject property is undeveloped land located in the center of Square 274 in Northwest D.C. The site is bounded by U Street to the north, T Street to the south, 12th Street to the east and 13th Street to the west. The property's owner, the Public Welfare Foundation, has its headquarters on the same block in the True Reformer Building, 1200 U Street. In keeping with its mission, the Public Welfare Foundation has selected Manna, Inc. to develop 12 affordable 2-story townhouses on the subject site.

Currently there are 22 small, narrow lots on the site, each approximately 11 or 12 feet wide. These lots face Temperance court, a 25-foot wide internal alley. A 10 foot alley is located behind each row of lots. The Public Welfare Foundation proposes to resubdivide the 22 existing lots into 12 larger lots. Nine of these lots would be located on the west side of Temperance Court. These 9 units would be served by 7 parking spaces

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grouped at the ends of the development. Three units would be would be located on the east side of Temperance Court, each with its own parking space.

The proposed lots would be smaller than required by the Zoning Regulations but greater in width and area than the existing lots. The 12 lots will be between 977 and 1,140 square feet in area. All 12 will require variances from the minimum lot area requirement of 1,800 square feet for row dwellings.

Small variances from the minimum lot width requirement are necessary for 2 lots—1 inch for Lot 9 and less than 1 inch for Lot 11. Eleven of the lots comply with maximum lot coverage requirements. The house proposed for Lot 9 occupies 41.4% of the lot, 1.4% more than the permitted 40% lot occupancy. Three of the lots have 22-foot rear yards, greater than the 20 foot rear yard requirement. Lots 1 through 9 require variances of 7.5 feet each.

A variance also is needed to permit the 12-unit development, which is located near the U Street/Cardozo Metro Station, to include 10 parking spaces rather than one parking space per unit. In addition, a variance is necessary to permit single family dwellings to abut and to be accessed from an alley that is less than 30 feet wide. Finally, the proposed development requires a special exception to allow off-street parking for lots 2 through 8 to be grouped at the end of the block rather than where the buildings they serve are located.

The 22 existing lots are unusually shallow and are bounded by alleys in the front and rear. These special constraints make it difficult to make every lot conform with the Zoning Regulations. The proposed subdivision will create lots that conform more closely to zoning requirements than do the current lots. In addition, the development would not

be of substantial detriment to the public good. The construction of affordable 2- and 3-bedroom starter homes on currently undeveloped land will meet a critical need for homeownership opportunities in the Shaw neighborhood in which the site is located. The attractive new townhouses would complement the existing housing in the area and will be affordable to moderate-income families – an important benefit in a neighborhood where housing rents and prices are escalating dramatically.

Requiring the development to conform to the requirements of the Zoning Regulations would unnecessarily burden the Public Welfare Foundation by cutting in half the number of lots that could be developed on the site. Were full conformity with the Zoning Regulations to be required, only 5 conforming lots could be developed on the west side of Temperance Court and 1 lot on the east side. The proposed site plan efficiently utilizes the space available in this challenging site, which is constrained between two alleys. The location of 7 parking spaces at the ends of the development rather than on the building lots themselves is a rational strategy for providing convenient access to parking while permitting well-planned, reasonably sized units to be developed.

The testimony of our witnesses will establish that the requested variances and special exception are necessary to bring this important affordable housing project to fruition. Larry Kressley, Executive Director of the Public Welfare Foundation, will discuss the public benefits of this affordable housing project to the neighborhood. By developing 12 townhouses on now-undeveloped land, the Foundation is responding to the desires expressed by community members. George Rothman, the President of Manna, Inc., the project's developer, will describe how the development provides

homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income households. Mr. Rothman also will discuss the anticipated financing and construction schedule for the project.

Carl Skoogland of Manna, Inc., the architect, will describe how the appealing proposed housing will enhance the buildings in the area surrounding the property and overcome the limitations inherent to the site. Nate Gross, a city planner and zoning consultant with Arnold & Porter, will discuss the consistency of the proposed development with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and housing and heritage objectives. Mr. Gross also will explain why the requested relief is necessary and appropriate, satisfying the legal standards set forth in Sections 3104.1 and 3103.2 of the Zoning Regulations for special exceptions and variances, respectively.