ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 2C
Shaw Terrell Community Center
First & Pierce Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002

October 22, 2002

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Calvary Baptist Church, 711-725 8th Street, NW
Board of Zoning Adjustment Application No. 16945

Dear Members of the Board:

This letter is to advise that Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C, at its regularly scheduled public meeting, held October 2, 2002, at which a quorum was present, unanimously voted (5-0) to support the Application for zoning relief made to the Board of Zoning Adjustment by Calvary Baptist Church and Congregation, Inc. and Calvary Baptist Church Extension Association ("Calvary").

Calvary is pursuing restoration of the facades of the Church sanctuary, including a historically accurate re-creation of the Church's spire and lantern, pursuant to approvals of the Historic Preservation Review Board and the Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation. This restoration and renovation work at the Church is being made possible by the sale of transferable development rights (TDRs), which will provide for construction of a 90-foot tall mixed use building along the southern portion of the property.

Because the Church is located within the Downtown Development District ("DD") and is improved with historic buildings, it is subject to the Zoning Regulations applicable to historic properties located in the DD. These Regulations include the ability to generate and transfer TDRs as a result of HPRB-approved preservation work undertaken within the DD. Specifically, §1707.5(i) of the Zoning Regulations permits up to 25 percent of eligible TDRs to be transferred and fully vest in a receiving site without any relationship to the sending site. Calvary, in its current financial situation and owing to its non-profit status, simply cannot undertake the restoration work on the Church until it has obtained funding from the sale of the entire amount of TDRs the preservation project will generate. Because Calvary cannot move forward with its Project until it has sold the TDRs it expects to generate, §1707.5 of the Regulations works a practical difficulty upon Calvary.

The Commission has determined that the application meets the test for variance relief under the Zoning Regulations. The site is unique with regard to the improvements

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on the site and as to the important historic preservation benefits this project entails. In addition to the exceptional significance of Calvary's property, the Commission notes the practical difficulty Calvary is experiencing in restoring and renovating the Church and the ability for relief to be granted without harm to the public good or to the zone plan.

The redevelopment of this property is critical to the continued rejuvenation of the old downtown. Furthermore, Calvary has had an important presence in the downtown area for nearly 150 years, both architecturally and in terms of the important services it provides to its urban neighborhood.

For all these reasons, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C supports the Applicant's requests for variance relief from Section 1707.5(i) of the Zoning Regulations, which will allow the Applicant to complete this rehabilitation project that is critical to the Church and to Downtown. The Commission urges the approval by the Board of this vital project so that it may proceed forward to the benefit of the community.

Sincerely,

Leroy J. Thorpe, Jr.
Chairman, ANC 2C