717 A Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
October 21, 2003

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: BZA Case No. 17043: Appeal of Stanton Park Neighborhood Association

To the Board:

This letter supports the appeal filed by the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association protesting a decision by the Zoning Administrator to drastically reduce the number of off-street parking spaces that MedLink must provide for its staff and visitors. I live about one block from MedLink's complex and frequently have to deal with the consequences of the existing overwhelming demand for on-street parking spaces.

I support the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association's request that the Board overturn the Zoning Administrator's decision, which was made without input either from the public or from the Board itself. In 1991, when MedLink sought permission to operate 130 beds with 250 employees, the Board required MedLink to provide 176 off-street parking spaces. In 1999, when MedLink expanded to 162 beds and 340 employees, the Board required it to provide 276 off-street parking spaces. Today MedLink has 177 beds and over 300 employees, yet the Zoning Administrator has reduced the number of required parking spaces to just 85. There is no evidence of any change in the scale of operations at MedLink. MedLink appears to have gone to the Zoning Administrator for the sole purpose of reducing the Board's parking requirements.

MedLink has a long history of disobeying the Board's parking requirements. MedLink is staffed 24 hours a day, and its employees park on the street during hours not covered by the residential parking program, making it hard for residents to park on evenings and weekends. MedLink's underground garage has up to 176 parking spaces. There is no reason for MedLink not to use all available on-site parking spaces to reduce parking pressure on the neighborhood streets.

Although I don't really mind the inconvenience of searching for a legal parking space when I come from work in the evening, as a middle-aged woman of small stature, I dread the long walks in the dark that I generally must endure to get from my car to my home. (There is no public transportation to my job site, and I rarely can arrive home before dark.) On one occasion when I happened to find a space almost directly in front of my house, a strapping fellow about half my age tried to intimidate me into giving the space to him! In sum, the parking situation in the vicinity of MedLink is currently stretched beyond its limits and has created terrifying risks for residents of the neighborhood.

BZA
Case No. 17043
Exhibit No. 42

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17043
EXHIBIT NO. 42

The Board should require MedLink to provide the same number of off-street parking spaces as in the Board's prior decisions, which establish how much parking is adequate for the facility. If any reduction in the parking requirements should ever be warranted, the Board should provide a public process with opportunity for discussion of the adverse impact that reducing the required parking spaces will have on the surrounding residential area.

I request that the Board grant the appeal of the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association.

Sincerely yours,

Marta Wagner

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