October 21, 2003

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington DC 20001

D.C. ZONING COMMISSION
2003 OCT 23 PM 3:53

Dear sir:

In re: BZA case 17043

I am writing to protest the recent decision by the Zoning Administrator concerning parking at the MedLink facility on Capitol Hill, and to support the appeal filed by the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association of that decision.

My husband and I have lived across from the MedLink facility for the past 31 years. Over the years, we have watched on-street parking availability diminish, even as the facility went from being a full-scale hospital to its current level of occupancy. Many is the time I return home late at night, and must park several blocks from my house (unlike MedLink, we have no off-street parking options). The neighborhood doesn't even get relief in the evenings and weekends as it would with regular commercial establishments, because the facility operates on a 24-hour basis. We in the surrounding neighborhood are 24-hour residents of the city, and deserve equal consideration as commercial interests in decisions affecting our historic neighborhood.

The Holladay Corporation proposes to develop the Medlink facility into a higher density residential use. If this decision stands, the BZA will have established an adverse and unacceptable baseline for future parking requirements without also providing a forum for future reconsideration by the BZA or the community.

The most recent reduction, made by the Zoning Administrator without any input from the neighborhood or the BZA itself, cuts in half the number of spaces required to be provided from 177 to 85. This decision appears to have been made without any particular justification, since the facility has more employees now that it used to have, and has an underground parking facility that has never been used to capacity.

I respectfully request that the BZA reverse the decision of the Zoning Administrator for the following reasons:

- There was no input from the surrounding community in the decision. The neighborhood, through the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association and the Capitol Hill

BZA
Case No. 17043
Exhibit No. 49

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17043
EXHIBIT NO. 49

Coalition for Sensible Development, has expressed a high level of concern about the future of the MedLink facility and its potential impact on the community. Parking is the principal issue surrounding the future development proposed by Holladay Corporation. In light of this, any decision affecting the parking situation at MedLink should be aired fully through a public process, not made in secret.

- This is no justification for requesting or granting reduced parking requirements. The MedLink operation continues to occupy and use the facility at the same level as it has in the past–there is no reduction in employees or beds proposed that would warrant consideration of a change in the parking requirements or the Certificate of Occupancy. In the face of longstanding community issues with parking, MedLink's request to reduce required parking must be considered highly suspect.

- The community has found that MedLink has little regard for existing BZA parking requirements. Our experience is that MedLink consistently attempts to gain its ends by means that avoid community involvement or public scrutiny.

- The existing underground parking garage should be used to full capacity, as required by existing BZA orders, to reduce pressure on on-street parking. The issue of reducing parking requirements should not even be ripe for consideration until MedLink provides a satisfactory explanation of why it is unable to use this space.

- Finally, I request that the BZA not only reverse this order on appeal, but that it further order that any future development of the facility or the site for any other use provide for full reconsideration of parking requirements through a BZA hearing and public participation process. Only by establishing a formal process for community input will the community be assured that its concerns are heard and taken into account.

Thank you.

Jean M. Frane

Jean M. Frane
713 Massachusetts Ave., NE
Washington DC 20002
202-544-5726

cc: Drury Tallent, SPNA
Nancy Simpson, CHCSD
Sharon Ambrose, Ward 6