April 13, 2004.

To: Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 - 4th St. NW
Washington DC 20001

From: Rose Marie Regan
Member, Gray Panthers of Metropolitan Washington
1426 - 9th Street NW
Washington DC 20001

Re: #17145; Application of the Government of the District of Columbia (Washington Convention Center Authority)

On April 1, the Gale School Shelter was closed - more than 50 women and over 100 men were summarily displaced. In the fall, the Randall School Shelter will be closed - more than 100 men will be displaced, and the training program for 75 men will be discontinued. This follows the pattern in Washington - a shelter was closed to provide land for the new Convention Center. The new shelter on New York Ave. NE, for men only, does not adequately serve the large displacement caused by the closing of shelters, nor is the location on New York Ave. one that well serves the needs and desires of "homeless".

Therefore, we ask that #17145 be denied.

(Rev.)

BZA
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And that the old Correction Center be used as a "homeless" shelter. Its location and the large amount of space available, while not ideal, makes this appropriate. There would be rooms available for needed services, also. The shelter system leaves much to be desired. There should be daytime space, also — but the "homeless" must be recognized as fellow human beings who are entitled to decent shelter and food, rather than as "undesirables" who should be removed from the downtown area, put "out of sight". About 1/3 of the homeless are the working poor who cannot find affordable housing, and there are a large number of children among the group."