United States Department of State

Office of Foreign Missions
Washington, D.C. 20520

September 22, 2005

Ms. Jerrily R. Kress
Director
Office of Zoning
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street, N.W., 2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: BZA Application No. 17382
Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman
2535 Belmont Road, N.W.

Dear Ms. Kress:

The Department of State hereby provides its comments concerning the application submitted to the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment ("FMBZA") by the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman on June 13, regarding the Embassy's desire to expand its chancery by constructing an addition to its current chancery property located at 2535 Belmont Road, N.W. The application was submitted pursuant to Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act (22 U.S.C. §4306.) and D.C. Code 5-1206 and the case is scheduled to be heard on October 11, 2005.

On behalf of the Secretary of State, and pursuant to the Foreign Missions Act, 22 U.S.C. §4301, *et seq*., particularly sections 4303 and 4306, I hereby convey to the FMBZA the following comments and determinations concerning the subject application. These comments and determinations relate to the statutory criteria governing FMBZA determinations that lie within the purview of the Federal Government, namely 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(1), (4), and (6), as well as the pertinent portion of (d)(3).

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17382
EXHIBIT NO. 31

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First, with respect to the criterion set forth in 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(1), I have determined that favorable FMBZA action on the present application would fulfill the international obligation of the United States to facilitate the acquisition of adequate and secure premises by the Government of Oman for its diplomatic mission in Washington.

Second, after consultation with Federal agencies authorized to perform protective services, I have determined, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(6), that there exist no special security requirements relating to parking requirements in this case. I have also, after similar consultation, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(4), determined that the subject site and area are capable of being adequately protected.

Third, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. §4306(d)(6), I have determined that a favorable decision on this application would serve the federal interest. The United States Embassy in Muscat owns its chancery and several residential properties in Oman and the Government of Oman has consistently been supportive of the United States Embassy in its diplomatic property needs.

For the above reasons, the Department of State supports the application of the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman and respectfully urges the FMBZA to act favorably on it.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Griffin
Ambassador