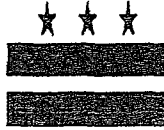


GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR



March 2, 2007

Mr. Bill Aiken, Associate Director
Office of Public Affairs
Soka Gakkai International – USA
2233 Wisconsin Avenue, NW Suite 306
Washington, DC 20007

Ms. Allison Prince
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman
2300 N St. NW
Washington, DC 20037.1122

Re: 3417 Massachusetts Ave. NW (Square 1939 Lot 42)
Building Permit Applications #4877-A-6 & #5263-A-6

Dear Mr. Aiken and Ms. Prince:

Soka Gakkai International – USA (SGI) has proposed a new building at 3417 Massachusetts Ave. NW, for use as a 'place of worship.' This property is within an R-1-B (Residential) District and the D (Mixed Use Diplomatic Overlay District) and the NO (Naval Observatory Precinct Overlay District).

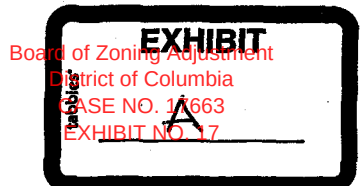
Use as a 'place of worship' is a matter of right use within the R-1-B District and is not prohibited by either Overlay District.

It is the responsibility of the Zoning Administrator to determine whether all uses of property, structures, or buildings comply with the Zoning Regulations of the District of Columbia, Title 11 of the DC Municipal Regulations. Without an objective, fact-based consideration of every use, the residents of the District of Columbia could be subject to spurious claims contrary to the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations.

In order to confirm SGI's claims that the building will be used predominately as a 'place of worship' this office requested, and you have submitted, additional information with respect to the intended use of the building. After careful consideration and reliance upon the attached information provided by SGI, it is clear to me that the principal use of the proposed building will

941 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 2000, Washington, D.C. 20002
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT District of Columbia Phone: (202) 442-4576 Fax: (202) 442-4871

CASE NO. 17663
EXHIBIT NO. 17



Re: 3417 Massachusetts Ave. NW (Square 1939 Lot 42)
Building Permit Applications #4877-A-6 & #5263-A-6
Page 2

be as a place of worship. You have explained how the space is used for the practice of your faith. The layout of the building with a large main room and smaller room for worship activities as well as classrooms, fellowship hall and a small amount of office space is very typical of churches and other places of worship. You have provided a typical schedule of activities which again mirrors other faiths' regular activities taking place in their churches or places of worship.

The issuance of a certificate of occupancy for use as a 'place of worship' requires maintaining worship as the principal use of the building.

Having determined the use as a matter of right, I have directed my staff to complete the zoning review of the submitted plans and provide approval or comments to you by close of business Monday, March 5, 2007.

I appreciate your willingness to detail the uses of the building in assisting my determination of the applicability of the zoning regulations.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Crews", with a stylized, flowing script.

Bill Crews
Zoning Administrator for the District of Columbia



Pillsbury
Winthrop
Shaw
Pittman LLP

2300 N Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1122

Tel 202.663.8000
Fax 202.663.8007
www.pillsburylaw.com

February 12, 2007

Allison C. Prince
Phone: 202.663.8853
allison.prince@pillsburylaw.com

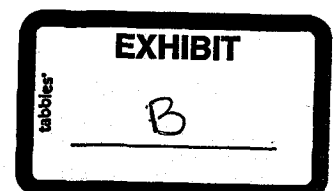
Mr. Bill Crews
Zoning Administrator
District of Columbia Consumer & Regulatory Affairs
941 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Re: Soka Gakkai International - USA (SGI-USA) Building Permit for 3417
Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Response to February 8, 2007 Inquiries

Dear Bill:

In order to facilitate the timely granting of the building permit application No. 5263A-6, attached within are the responses of Soka Gakkai International - USA ("SGI") to your February 8, 2007 inquiries ("inquiries").

As a preliminary matter, SGI objects to the scope of the inquiries. The inquiries infringe on SGI's Constitutional and statutory rights because they inquire into how SGI's exercise of its religion affects the design of the Project. DCRA is not legally permitted to make such assessments. Western Presbyterian Church v. Board of Zoning Adjustment, 862 F. Supp. 538, 547 (D.D.C. 1994)(finding that the Zoning Administrator's refusal to grant a church its building permit to construct a soup kitchen violated the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act because it substantially burdened the church's right to the free exercise of its religion and concluding that "Zoning boards have no role to play in telling a religious organization how it may practice its religion"); Martin v. Corp. of Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints, 747 N.E.2d 131 (Mass. 2001)(finding that it was not permissible for an adjudicator "to determine whether the inclusion of a particular architectural feature is 'necessary' for a particular religion"). Indeed, it is well settled that DCRA should defer to SGI's assertions that the Project is a "church", rather than capitulate to the opposition's prejudice-based claims. See Congregation Kol Ami v. Abington Twp., 2004 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 16397 (E.D. Pa. Aug. 17, 2004)(finding that when determining whether a specific religious exercise is central to a plaintiff's belief system and requires a certain place of worship, the adjudicator "must be careful not to question what is asserted by the plaintiff"); Marks v. Chesapeake, 883 F.2d 308 (4th Cir. 1989)(granting the applicant's



Mr. Bill Crews
February 12, 2007
Page 2

special use permit despite strong neighborhood opposition and finding that "Government officials simply cannot act solely in 'reliance on public distaste for certain activities, instead of on legislative determinations concerning public health and safety [or otherwise] dealing with zoning'").

Therefore, despite the fact that the inquiries infringe on its basic Constitutional and statutory rights, SGI hereby responds to the inquiries without prejudice to, or waiver of, any claims pertaining to this Project that it currently has or may have against DCRA in the future.

We must emphasize again that SGI will face damages claims from its contractor if the building permit is not issued by February 20, 2007. Thank you for your prompt consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely yours,



Allison C. Prince

cc: Ms. Lisa Marie Morgan, Interim Director, DCRA
Mary Cheh, Councilmember Ward 3
Harriet Tregoning, Director, Office of Planning
Hon. Adrian Fenty, Mayor of the District of Columbia
Dan Tangherlini, City Administrator

Proposed Soka Gakkai Buddhist Culture Center Usage

"Exert yourself in the two ways of practice and study. Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism. You must not only persevere yourself; you must also teach others. Both practice and study arise from faith. Teach others to the best of your ability, even if it is only a single sentence or phrase." Writings of Nichiren Daishonin Vol. I, p.386

Most uses fall into one of the following categories. They all derive from and are centered on the observance and transmission of Buddhist faith, practice and study as exemplified by the above passage from the 13th Century writings of Nichiren.

Chanting sessions

This includes the recitation of the Liturgy of Nichiren Daishonin (conducted each morning and evening) and the chanting of *Daimoku* (great invocation). While this is often conducted in members' homes, some members come to the center in the AM to recite the liturgy as a group. In addition one room ("Chanting Room") will be available whenever the center is open for members (and guests) to chant the *Daimoku*. These devotional recitations constitute one of the fundamental practices of Nichiren Buddhism. Nearly every scheduled activity begins with the recitation of the Liturgy.

Study Sessions

Buddhist study is another essential part of Buddhist practice and is conducted in many different formats according to language, age group, interests (men's women's groups), etc.

Discussion and Dialogue

Discussion and dialogue sessions whether in groups or one-on-one, enables practitioners to share their experiences in applying Buddhist practice to their daily lives, ask questions of senior leaders, or seek personal spiritual counseling. The dialogic method dates back to the days of Gautama Buddha (all of the Buddhist sutras are in the form of question and answer) and remain an essential element in all traditions.

Planning Meetings

Conducting effective worship and study events requires planning and preparation for those events.

Performance Groups

Our congregational services (like World Peace Prayer) and general meetings will often feature musical performances either from our Washington DC Chorus, or from our youth band. As with other traditions, music plays the role of uplifting peoples' hearts; and it also has a devotional characteristic rooted in Buddhist tradition.

Office Staff

The Culture Center will operate with three full-time and one part-time staff person. The full-time staff includes the director, the assistant director, the office manager; the part-time staff member assists the office manager.

Both the director and assistant director are senior level leaders and teachers in the Nichiren Buddhist tradition. Both are post-graduate level in the Soka Gakkai study Department; they are commissioned by the SGI-USA as Ministers of Ceremonies, and hold organizational responsibilities positions that center on providing both spiritual and organizational direction in the Soka Gakkai community, as well as conducting such pastoral duties as visiting the sick and aged, providing spiritual counseling, and conducting study lectures.

The office manager is primarily responsible for maintaining the membership rolls, managing the finances, the bookstore, any shipping and receiving of supplies and (together with the director and assistant director) the physical care and maintenance of the center.

In addition a volunteer receptionist comes for 4-6 hours per day to answer the phone and greet visitors.

Who can attend?

Most of the religious activities held at our center are open to our members and any interested guests. There are some activities (planning meetings, personnel meetings, etc.) which are only open to designated leaders of the Soka Gakkai community.

No fees are ever charged to attend our services. We do not rent our facilities out to the public, but may consider making the center available for certain civic functions like voting etc.

Which SGI members will use it?

We currently have (and will continue to operate) Buddhist centers in Hyattsville, MD, Baltimore MD and Springfield VA to accommodate the regular worship and study needs of members in the suburban areas. In addition we are actively pursuing a new location in Montgomery County near Gaithersburg, MD

Therefore, the principal users of this center will be the 400 members that make up the "Washington Area" organization made up mostly of members who live within DC. This will be their center for day-to-day worship and activity use. The center will also host *occasional* events open to the membership in the wider Washington DC Region which includes the surrounding Maryland counties.

Large general meetings and lectures as well as any regional conferences are held in rented halls/ballrooms or on high school or university campuses or in our Florida Nature

and Culture Center located on 125 acres in Weston Florida. These kinds of events often involve more than 1,000 participants and clearly will NOT be held in this modest facility.

**Pantry
(158 sf)**

Containing a sink, refrigerator, microwave, coffeemaker and small table, this will be the place for staff to eat their lunch or members to eat before-meeting snacks. No meal preparation here.

**Fellowship Lounge
(434 sf)**

This space will be used as a setting for informal dialogue essential to Buddhist practice, and may also be a place to enjoy some refreshments after a meeting

**Chanting Room
(286 sf)**

This room is set aside for members to come at any time during open hours to recite the Daimoku. There may be anywhere from 2-20 people in here at a time.

**Classroom
(375 sf)**

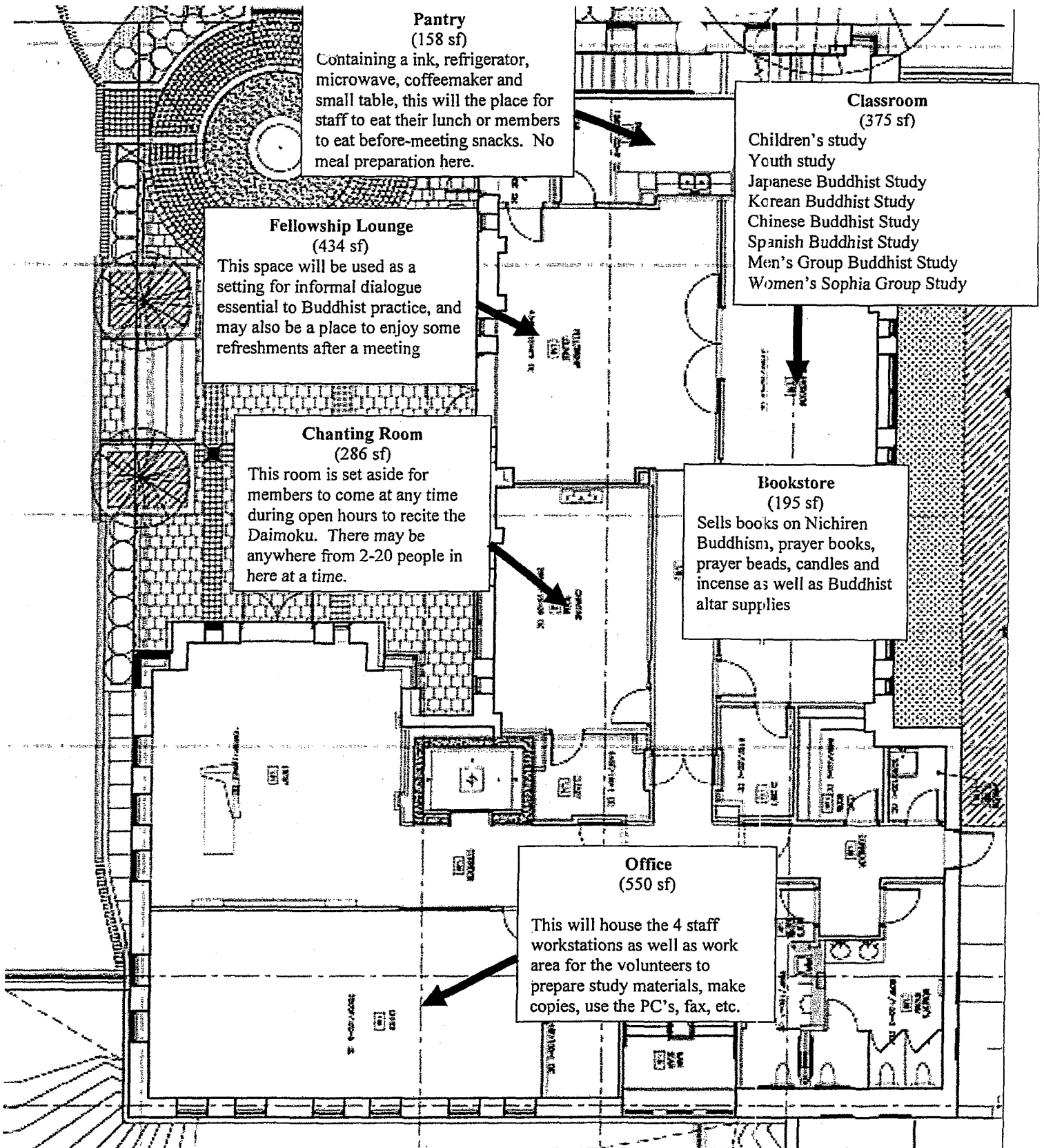
Children's study
Youth study
Japanese Buddhist Study
Korean Buddhist Study
Chinese Buddhist Study
Spanish Buddhist Study
Men's Group Buddhist Study
Women's Sophia Group Study

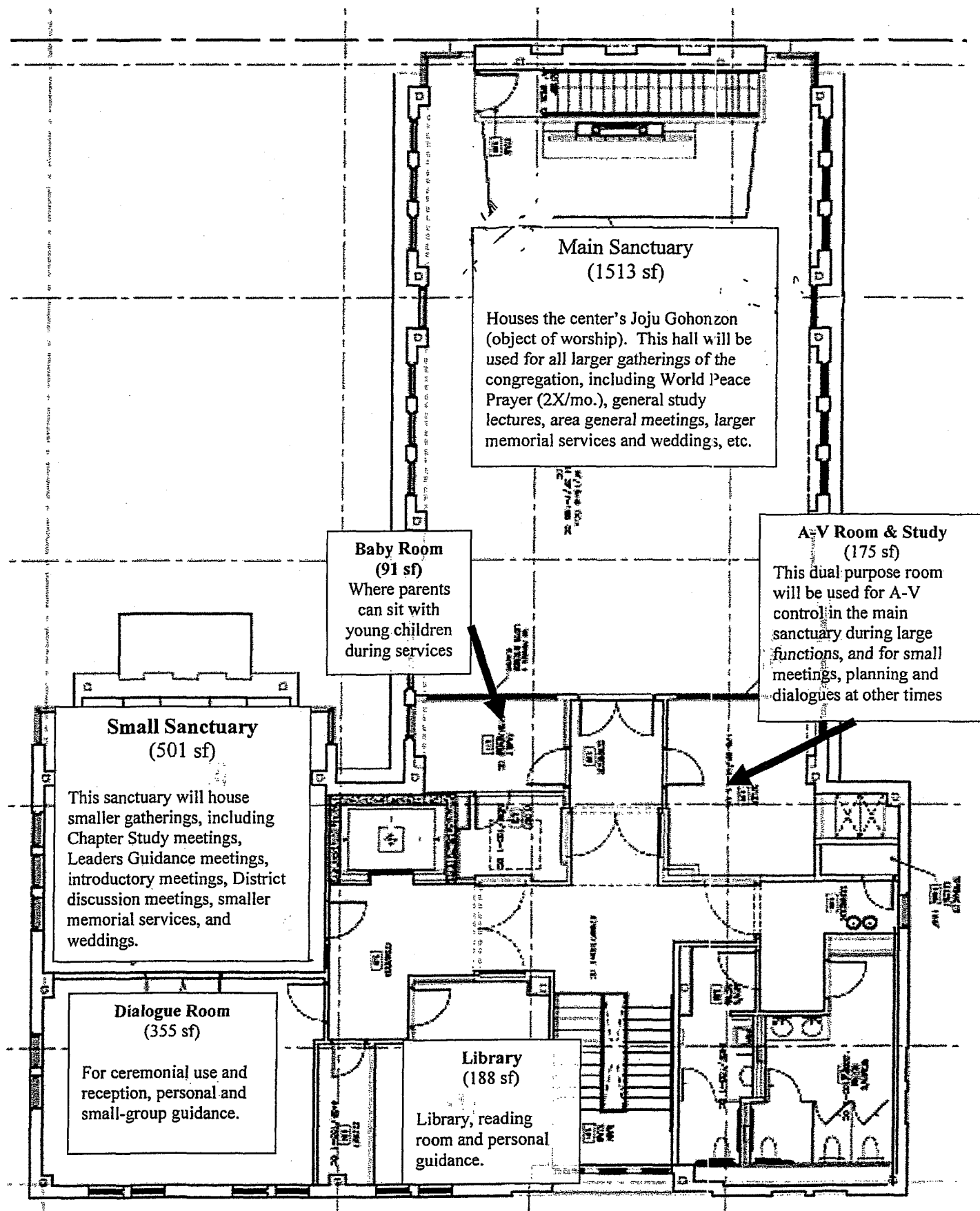
**Bookstore
(195 sf)**

Sells books on Nichiren Buddhism, prayer books, prayer beads, candles and incense as well as Buddhist altar supplies

**Office
(550 sf)**

This will house the 4 staff workstations as well as work area for the volunteers to prepare study materials, make copies, use the PC's, fax, etc.





**Soka Gakkai Buddhist Culture Center
3417 Massachusetts Avenue, NW**

	total sf	% total room space
Main Sanctuary	1513	31%
Small Sanctuary	501	10%
A-V Room/Study	175	4%
Family Room	91	2%
Dialogue Room	355	7%
Library	188	4%
Chanting Room	288	6%
Classroom	375	8%
Fellowship Lounge	434	9%
Bookstore	195	4%
Office	550	11%
Pantry	158	3%
TOTAL ACTIVITY ROOM SPACE	4821	100%

Soka Gakkai Buddhist Culture Center
3417 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Available Activity Rooms and Sample Schedule

Room	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Center Hours:	9 AM - 3 PM	9 AM - 5 PM	9 AM - 5 PM / 7-9 PM	9 AM - 5 PM / 7-9 PM	9 AM - 5 PM / 7-9 PM	9 AM - 5 PM / 7-9 PM	9 AM - 3 PM
Main Sanctuary 1513 sf	10AM - World Peace Prayer Svc (150 PAX)			7PM Memorial Service (60 pax)		7PM Study Session (English) (40 pax)	9AM Chorus Rehearsal (50 PAX) 2PM Wedding (80 PAX)
Small Sanctuary 501 sf	9AM Byakuren Grp Prayer (5 pax) 1PM Healing Arts Group (15 pax)	7AM Morning Liturgy (5-20 pax)	7AM Morning Liturgy (5-20 pax) 7PM Mens Prayer Mtg	7AM Morning Liturgy (5-20 pax)	7AM Morning Liturgy (5-20 pax) 7PM District Discussion Mtg	7AM Morning Liturgy (5-20 pax)	11AM Introductory Mtg (10-15 pax)
AV Rm/Study 175 sf	1PM - Young Mens Planning (10-15 pax)				7PM Chapter Planning Meeting (15 pax)		
Dialogue Room 355 sf	Personal Guidance	Personal Guidance	Personal Guidance	Personal Guidance			
			average 3-5 pax per day				
Library 188 sf	1PM Study Session (French) (5-7 pax)			7PM Study session (Spanish) (10-15 pax)			9AM Study preparation (12 pax)
Chanting Room 288 sf	Chanting (day only)	Chanting (day only)	Chanting (day & eve)	Chanting (day & eve)	Chanting (day & eve)	Chanting (day & eve)	Chanting (day only)
	Available whenever the center is open and usually occupied by 5-10 pax						
Classroom 375 sf	10AM Childrens Grp (15-20 pax) 1PM Study Session (Japanese) (20-25 pax)		7PM Study Session (Women) (35 pax)	7PM Area Planning Meeting (25 pax)			9AM Study Session (Korean) (35 pax)
Fellowship Lounge 434 sf	12PM Post-meeting fellowship (40-60 pax flowing through)						10AM Youth Band Rehearsal (15 pax)
Bookstore Hours:	10AM - 1PM			12 - 2:30 PM			

The above is a sample schedule and reflects typical usage based on the existing DC Community Center schedule.



Soka Gakkai International - USA
Office of Public Affairs

March 27, 2006

Mr. Bill Crews
Zoning Administrator
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
941 North Capitol Street
Suite 2000
Washington, DC 20002

Re: SGI-USA DC Culture Center, Massachusetts Ave
Zoning Hold by Admin

Dear Mr. Crews,

I am responding to your request for information as expressed to our agent, David Fontana at your office on Tuesday, March 8th, 2006. The intended use for the referenced project will be exclusively as a Buddhist church or place of worship, which clearly falls under the acceptable uses as defined in the zoning for the site.

Attached is a briefing paper that should address any of the questions you may have regarding the use of this proposed building.

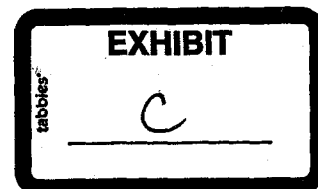
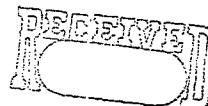
Assuming that this information addresses the concerns that have been raised, I ask that you continue with the processing our pending permits.

Sincerely,


William Aiken
Director of Public Affairs

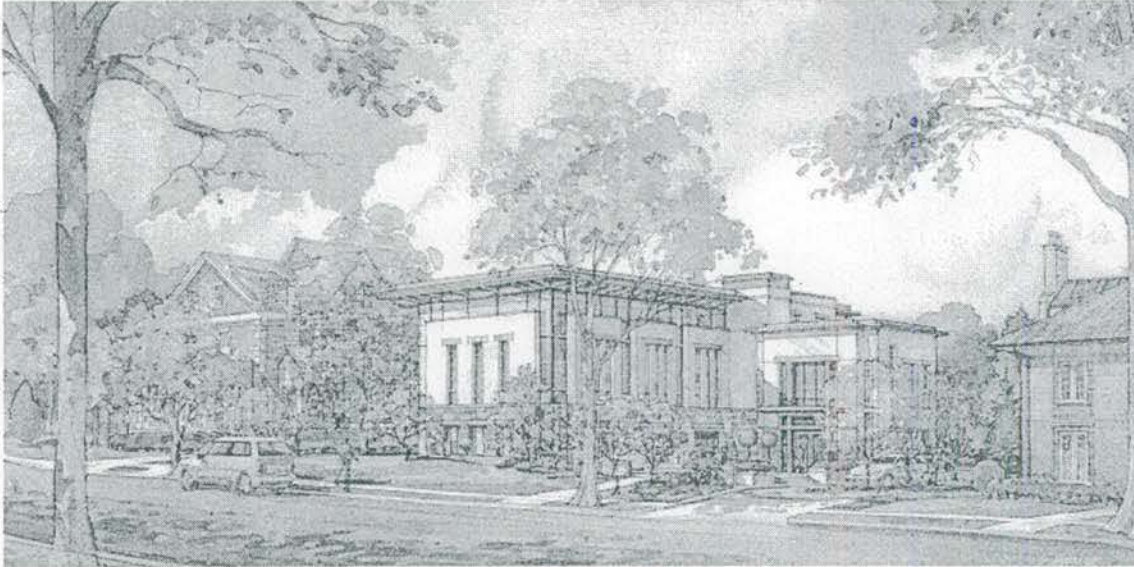
Attachment – Project overview

cc: File



Subject: Soka Gakkai International –USA Buddhist Culture Center at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Contact: William Aiken, Associate Director, Soka Gakkai International - USA
Office of Public Affairs
2233 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306
Washington, DC 20007
Tel. 202-338-1750, Fax. 202-338-1752, email: waiken@sgi-usa.org

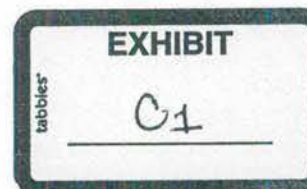


Artists rendering

Background

The Washington Region of Soka Gakkai International (SGI) – USA is the second oldest Buddhist community in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Since 1968, we have been located on the edge of the District at 4603 Eastern Avenue in Mount Rainier, MD. Our membership has grown over the years, and the center now houses four congregations (called ‘areas’). This includes the Washington DC Area with a membership of approximately 369. This membership comes from throughout the District from Anacostia to Georgetown and reflects the diversity of the District of Columbia.

On April 1, 2005, SGI-USA finalized its purchase from the Embassy of Cape Verde of a vacant lot adjacent to the embassy at 3415 Massachusetts Avenue, NW. This lot was created pursuant to approval by the Mayor’s Agent for Historic Preservation and other relevant authorities. The land will be used by SGI-USA to construct a church, which it refers to as a “culture center,” whose primary purpose is to serve the religious needs of the members of its Washington DC Area.



A Center for Prayer, Practice, Study and Community

As designed, the building will contain 8,000 square feet of program space. In addition, there will be one level of below-ground parking (approx 10,000 sq. ft.).

The church will be dedicated to the religious practices of its faith community and to functions related to the spiritual support of that community. An overview of its facilities is as follows:

- A 200-seat main sanctuary with adjacent baby room;
- A 50-seat sanctuary;
- Two combination prayer and study spaces to accommodate 20-30 people, each with a Buddhist altar;
- Two rooms for counseling, study, library and other small-group uses;
- Multi-purpose fellowship lounge;
- Administrative office space for four paid staff;
- Bookstore for the convenience of the members;
- Guest reception room; and
- Small pantry.

SGI-USA Buddhist Association and how it uses its Centers

SGI-USA is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit religious corporation incorporated in the State of California in 1963 and registered in the District of Columbia. Its mission is the study and practice of the teachings of the Nichiren School of Mahayana Buddhism. The roots of this school go back to 13th century Japan. SGI-USA members seek to apply Buddhist principles such as wisdom, responsibility and compassion to the complex realities of modern living. Toward this end its corporate worship and communal practice take place in a combination of small and large gatherings.

- Our regular gathering of the full community - called 'World Peace Prayer' - takes place on the first Sunday of each month. The Washington DC Area anticipates a regular attendance of up to 200 people.
- We meet in smaller groups at other times to study and discuss Buddhist teachings in various groups divided by level of practice, age, gender, language, and other special interests. These groups usually range in size from 10 to 40 people.
- Nearly all meetings begin with a liturgy that includes a recitation of the Lotus Sutra and other prayers. This service is performed before a Buddhist altar that will be located in each of our classroom/worship spaces.
- Groups may also gather either during the week or on weekends for communal prayer recitation, especially if there are special needs for prayer.
- The center houses a small bookstore where practitioners can purchase books on Buddhist teachings as well as other religious supplies like candles, incense, and prayer beads. This store will neither advertise nor have any public commercial presence.

Historic Preservation

The Embassy of Cape Verde owns, and is housed in the Babcock-Macomb house, a landmark listed in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites. Accordingly, the design of any new building on the Church lot must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) and approved pursuant to the city's historic preservation legislation.

To meet the design challenges of this location, SGI-USA retained the services of the architectural firm Hellmuth Obata and Kassabaum (HOK) here in Washington. The principal designer on this project is Bill Hellmuth whose renowned designs include the Japanese-American Museum in Los Angeles, CA, the US Embassy in Moscow, and the Udvar-Hazy Center of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Chantilly, VA.

Following public meetings in November 2004 and January 2005, the HPRB found the proposed building to be compatible with the existing landmark and voted 8-1 to grant conceptual approval for the design, subject only to staff review during the design development and final permit processing.

Zoning Issues

The property in question is Lot 43, Square 1939. This area is zoned D/NOPD/R-1-B, meaning that it is zoned for residential and diplomatic use and that there is a Naval Observatory Security overlay.

SGI-USA is an exclusively religious organization, and this facility will be used as a church, which is a matter-of-right use in residential zones. Current design plans conform to all zoning requirements and require no zoning variances. Although zoning regulations for this site permit churches lot coverage of 60%, SGI-USA will build on only 42% of the surface and will share the existing driveway (and curb cut) with the Embassy.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) and Neighbor Issues

The site is located in the Massachusetts Avenue Heights neighborhood in ANC-3C. In the course of the HPRB approval process, SGI-USA and its consultants met four times with the ANC or its representatives (Nov 8 & 15, 2004 and Jan 10 & 24, 2005). On Dec 16, 2004, SGI-USA co-hosted a meeting at the Cape Verde Embassy to present its plans to the local residents, answer their questions and listen carefully to their concerns.

Neighborhood opposition has centered on the perceived intensity of SGI-USA's use and related traffic and parking issues. Opponents argue that this is not an appropriate use for what they perceive to be a quiet residential neighborhood. It is our position that the location in question (Massachusetts Avenue) is already a busy thoroughfare, and the majority of buildings along the avenue (including the two adjacent buildings) are used for institutional - not residential - purposes.

In response to neighborhood concerns, SGI-USA has made numerous modifications to its plans. These changes include re-routing the ingress/egress from the rear alley to Massachusetts Avenue; reducing the height of part of the church from three floors to two floors; providing a more articulated design for the rear of the building and providing more green landscaping along the rear alley.

The above changes are in addition to such good neighbor gestures as: hiding and silencing the HVAC system by placing it in a well on the roof; voluntarily reducing our lot coverage from 60% to 42% and agreeing to provide the Cape Verde Embassy with daily parking for their 6-8

staff and special events, thus eliminating what would otherwise be significant daily demands for parking on 34th Place.

Opponents to the project have questioned whether this building will actually be used as a church or rather as a commercial office and conference center, stating that since our main sanctuary constitutes a limited portion of the building, religious use must be ancillary to other (unspecified) uses. In fact, the center's primary use will be for Buddhist study, prayer and practice in the Nichiren tradition.

We are committed to engaging in good-faith dialogue with the residents of Massachusetts Heights regarding our plans for both building and using this facility.

Conclusion

We recognize that the presence of a church in a neighborhood invariably brings with it some inconveniences, especially related to parking and traffic. We also recognize that any construction project produces some additional noise and traffic. We have made considerable efforts as described above to ameliorate these potential nuisances, to create a building in harmony with its setting and to respond to the concerns of our neighbors. We will continue to engage in good-faith dialogue to hear and respond where possible to neighbors' concerns.



The InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington (IFC)

Promoting Mutual Respect and Social Justice

June 19, 2006

Mr. Bill Crews
Zoning Administrator for the District of Columbia
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
941 N. Capitol St. NE Suite 2000
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Administrator Crews:

The InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington (IFC) recently learned that you lifted the administrative hold on a permit application submitted by the Soka Gakkai Association. We are pleased that after the long delay, they will now be able to proceed with their application to build a Buddhist center on Massachusetts Avenue.

The IFC, an organization representing the Baha'i, Buddhist (Observer), Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Latter-day Saints, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh, and Zoroastrian communities in the metropolitan Washington area, is paying particular attention to this issue. Respect for our society's many vibrant and diverse faith traditions is a beloved American value. For over twenty-five years, the InterFaith Conference has worked to preserve and strengthen that value in our Washington region. Because of this commitment to religious freedom and understanding, we are deeply concerned about the controversy surrounding Soka Gakkai's application.

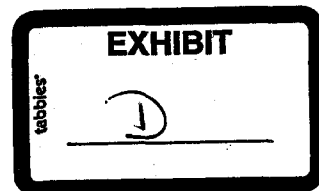
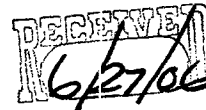
The IFC's support and defense of our community's many expressions of faith include the unencumbered liberty of each tradition to gather and worship in their own, distinctive manner. While much of the debate has centered on Soka Gakkai's use of their proposed center, the IFC is clear that it will be operated as a house of worship consistent with the intent of the zoning regulations of the District of Columbia.

The IFC knows that the Soka Gakkai Buddhist Center, a beautiful architectural structure that will provide a peaceful and spiritual sanctuary for Buddhists and others, will be a noteworthy and compelling tribute to the growing religious diversity of our nation's capital. Moreover, there is no better location for this Buddhist center than on Massachusetts Avenue, among embassies and other houses of worship.

We are keenly aware of the amount of pressure this situation is placing upon you. We are confident, however, that you will act with utmost integrity and that your office will issue a principled ruling, one that is consistent with the facts before you and with local and federal laws.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Clark Lobenstine
Executive Director



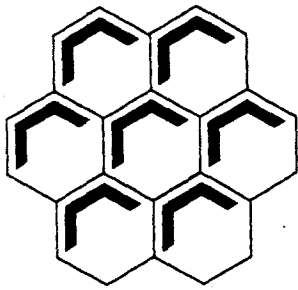
Executive Director: Rev. Clark Lobenstine, D.Min. Assistant Director: Mr. Michael J. Goggin, M.A.
1426 Ninth Street, NW (at P Street) • Washington, DC 20001-3330
Tel: (202) 234-6300 • Fax: (202) 234-6303 • Email: ifc@ifcmw.org • Website: www.ifcmw.org



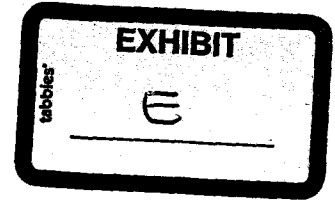
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The InterFaith Conference (IFC) brings together the Baha'i, Buddhist (Observer), Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Latter-day Saints, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh and Zoroastrian faith communities in this region to promote dialogue, understanding and a sense of community among persons of different faiths and to work cooperatively for social and economic justice in metropolitan Washington.



The Downtown Cluster of Congregations



1313 New York Avenue, N.W. ■ Washington, D.C. 20005 ■ (202) 347-7015 ■ Fax (202) 347- 4630

June 19, 2006

Mr. Bill Crews
Zoning Administrator for the District of Columbia
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
941 N. Capitol St. NE Suite 2000
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Crews,

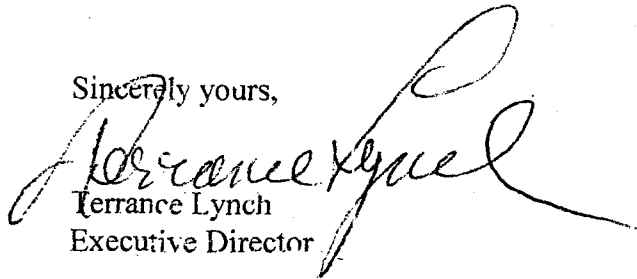
For the past year I have been following the progress of the proposed Buddhist center on Massachusetts Avenue with much anticipation. I understand that your offices have lifted an administrative hold on their permit application and will be allowing their application to go forward.

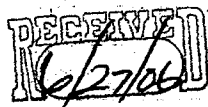
The presence of a Buddhist center of worship at this prominent location, especially one of such attractive design, is a real asset to the District of Columbia as a whole, especially at a time when many churches and congregations have been relocating to the suburbs. It provides a living testimony to the spiritual vitality and cultural diversity of this city, and should be welcomed accordingly. I know that the Buddhist Center will be of great service to many.

I am so greatly looking forward to the arrival of this new house of worship. I trust that all of its building permit applications and other reviews will be completed on a timely, professional basis.

Thank you for your on-going efforts and services to the city.

Sincerely yours,


Terrance Lynch
Executive Director



Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs

Permit Center

941 North Capitol St. NE Room 2100

Washington DC 20002

Tel: (202) 442-4589

B

Building Permit

THIS PERMIT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE PREMISES
OF THE PROJECT ADDRESS

PERMIT NO. 100009

DATE: 12/11/2006

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 3417 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NW		S S L:	SQ: 1939	SX:	LCIT: 42
		WARD:	3 ZONE GOV		
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: COVERED PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY & TEMP CONSTRUCTION FENCE					
PERMIT TYPE: ALTERATION AND REPAIR	PLANS (Y/N): Y	EXISTING USE: ASSEMBLY USES, OTHERS		PROPOSED USE: Assembly Uses, Other	
PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO OWNER: SGI - USA			PERMIT FEE: \$99.00		
AGENT NAME: DAVID FONTANA 703-691-1100					
CONDITIONS / RESTRICTIONS: ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT BUILDING CODES ; ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS ; THIS PERMIT IS REVOCABLE AT ANYTIME AT THE DISCRETION OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPT, TSA/OIO. COVERED PEDESTRIAN WAY & CONSTRUCTION FENCE ONLY NOT TO EXCEED 6 MONTHS UNLESS RENEWED.					
TO REPORT WASTE, FRAUD OR ABUSE BY ANY DC GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, CALL THE DC INSPECTOR GENERAL AT 1-800-521-1639.					

Acting
DIRECTOR:

Linda K. Argo

PERMIT CLERK:

EXPIRATION DATE:

12/11/2007

CONDITIONS: As a condition precedent to the issuance of this permit, the owner agrees to conform with all conditions set forth herein, and to perform the work authorized hereby in accordance with the approved application and plans on file with the District Government and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations of the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia has the right to enter upon the property and to inspect all the work authorized by this permit and to require any change in construction which may be necessary to ensure compliance with the permit and with all the applicable regulations of the District of Columbia. Work authorized under the Permit must start within one (1) year of the date appearing on this permit or this permit is automatically void. If work is not started, any application for partial refund must be made within six months of the date appearing on this permit.

THIS PERMIT MUST ALWAYS BE CONSPICUOUSLY DISPLAYED AT ADDRESS OF WORK UNTIL WORK IS COMPLETED.

NOTIFY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR THE DAY THE WORK STARTS. PHONE (202) 442-9557 at 941 NORTH CAPITOL ST NE WASHINGTON DC 20002

Separate permits are required for all Plumbing, Refrigeration, Gas Fitting, and Electrical Work.

EXHIBIT

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Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Permit Center

941 North Capitol St. NE Room 2100

Washington DC 20002

Tel:(202) 442-4589

B

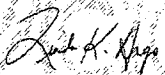
Building Permit

THIS PERMIT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE PREMISES
OF THE PROJECT ADDRESS

PERMIT NO. 98193

DATE: 11/30/2006

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 3417 MASSACHUSETTS AVE NW		S S L:	SQ: 1939	SX:	LOT: 42
		WARD: 2 ZONE D/NOPD/R			
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: EXCAVATION, SHEETING & SHORING FOR FOUNDATION OF NEW BLDG PER PLANS					
PERMIT TYPE: SHEETING AND SHORING	PLANS (Y/N): Y	EXISTING USE: ASSEMBLY USES, OTHERS		PROPOSED USE: Assembly Uses, Other	
PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO OWNER: SGI - USA			PERMIT FEE: \$650.00		
AGENT NAME: DAVID FONTANA 703-691-1100					
CONDITIONS / RESTRICTIONS: ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT BUILDING CODES ; ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS ; TO REPORT WASTE, FRAUD OR ABUSE BY ANY D.C. GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, CALL THE D.C. INSPECTOR GENERAL AT 1-800-521-1639 ; TO REPORT WASTE, FRAUD OR ABUSE BY ANY DC GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, CALL THE DC INSPECTOR GENERAL AT 1-800-521-1639:					

Acting DIRECTOR:  Linda K. Argo	PERMIT CLERK:	EXPIRATION DATE: 11/30/2007
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ORIGINAL

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EXHIBIT

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