SUBMISSION TO THE ZONING COMMISSION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, CASE NO. 00-27 JUNE 10, 2004

MR. & MRS. CHARLES S. AHLGREN, OWNERS OF LOT 810, SQ. 37

We have been the owners of lot 810, and the small row house upon it at 1115 24th St., NW, since 1972. We appear before the Zoning Commission today in support of one of the zone alternative options for the southern half of Square 37 presented in the Zoning Commission Public Hearing Notice, that of R-5-E . For the reasons stated below, we oppose the more restrictive R-5-D option for the 24th Street portion of the southern half of the square recommended by the Office of Planning (OP) in its final report of June 1, 2004.

The OP's recommendation for 24th Street would, in our judgment, make residential development on the western portion of the square much less likely since, as the OP's final report acknowledges (p.7), the difference in the maximum allowable residential FAR between R-5-E and R-5-D is significant. Without development of the Tiverton apartment site to the north of our property or the West End Library south of us, our row house, with a frontage of approximately 15 feet on 24th St, is clearly not developable. We would therefore face the prospect of being in an investment limbo, a small sliver of land sandwiched indefinitely between the Library and apartment building properties. R-5-D designation would for us only mean higher property taxes without the ability to obtain compensating higher revenue from a more intense or more diverse usage.

The OP report states that future development on 24th St might be possible from either a PUD, similar to that obtained in the Columbia Hospital and Ritz-Carlton

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.00-27
EXHIBIT NO.91

Developments, or through requests for proposal (RFPs) for development of the two district parcels at the south end of the square.

With regard to PUDS, we note that the Ritz-Carlton enjoyed a base zoning designation of R-5-E in attracting a PUD. Columbia Hospital has an underlying zoning of R-5-D. This zoning was not, however, on the basis of the Comprehensive Plan but was an outcome negotiated on the basis of restrictive preexisting covenants. And, the hospital area is now rezoned C-2-C (as are the areas to the north and south of the Hospital). Since the OP has not proposed extending that C-2-C zoning across 24th St. into Square 37, it is proposing something other than a carryover of similar zoning east across 24th Street to Square 37.

With regard to RFPs, we note that the OP recommends R-5-E zoning for one of the district parcels (the police station), but R-5-D for the other (the Library). We don't see why the OP made this distinction; it seems to us that creative proposals for public-private partnerships for the district parcels are more likely to be forthcoming if both parcels are zoned R-5-E rather than one of them R-5-E, and the other R-5-D.

While the OP report says that 'no single zone' will accomplish the Plan's objectives in the area, it is by no means clear to us *which*, if any, objectives are better achieved by changing the zoning halfway through the block. Some zoning other than R-5-E for 24th St. might make sense if some commercial usage was desired, but it is not. A designation of R-5-D for one half of one half of the Square, surrounded as that area will be by classifications nearly twice as permissive, just doesn't make a lot of sense.

We therefore support a consistent R-5-E zoning throughout the southern half of the square. R-5-E zoning meets the Objectives for Residential Neighborhoods and the

Ward 2 Economic Development objectives (pages 7 & 8 of the OP report, respectively). It also seems to us to be compatible with community goals, in not allowing offices or generating much new traffic while improving residents' home ownership opportunities. The City would gain additional tax revenues, and everyone would gain from an upgrading of the existing library, the replacement of run-down housing on 24th St., and additional customers for the new retail establishments in the area.

In conclusion, we believe that a consistent R-5-E zoning of the subject properties would best meet the Comprehensive Plan's objectives while offering us an opportunity, after all these years, to participate in a phase of the West End's development.