Foggy Bottom and West End
Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC-2A)

c/o St. Mary's Court 725 24th Street, NW Washington, DC 20037 (202) 736-1775

June 10, 2004

Ms. Carol Mitten
DC Zoning Commission
401 F Street NW
Suite 312
Washington, DC 20001

RE: CASE NO. 00-27, Zoning Map Amendment – Square 37, Lots 810,811,831,836,837and 855

Dear Chair Mitten:

ANC2A has been asked to weigh in on a petition by an owner in the southern half of Square 37 to eliminate a seeming "inconsistency" in the designated use for the Square between the Comprehensive Plan and Generalized Use Map on one hand, and the existing zoning for the site on the other. In our report on rezoning for the Square back in November 2001, we noted that the West End already suffers from too much inconsistency in its zoning. This inconsistency has resulted in sterile and monotonous blocks of 90 foot or higher buildings with office and hotel use dominating, compromising the overall attractiveness of the West End as a residential neighborhood and creating dark and dead zones at night. If the Comprehensive Plan were up for revision, we would be using the political process to change the specified use of the Square to conform to its existing zoning. But the Comprehensive Plan is not up for revision for several years.

What are some of the other implications of eliminating the seeming inconsistency? As a recent Office of Planning traffic study of the area around Square 37 showed, we already have "F" level traffic at intersections in the area. Upzoning will increase density and only make a very bad situation unbearable for those people who live in the West End and those who use these roads.

Upzoning will also threaten the security of persons who currently live in affordable housing in the Square. It will threaten the continued existence of our West End Branch of the DC Public Library. Furthermore, many of the residents of the Gibson Condominium adjacent to Square 37 bought their homes with the understanding that the existing zoning was R-5-B.

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Exhibit 83

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EXHIBIT NO.83

ANC2A feels that the existing R-5-B zoning is not inconsistent for the area. Across L Street to the south, a portion of that Square is zoned R-5-B, and two blocks away the western portion of 25th Street is also zoned R-5-B. We need the lower density of the designated zoning of the southern half of Square 37 to enhance the livability of the area as a residential neighborhood. The area may yet become the attractive residential neighborhood envisioned in the 1973 Planning Division's report "*A Plan for the West End.*" But we need variation in height and scale to make that happen. Retaining the existing zoning for the Square will encourage development of townhomes that will give us the variation we need and also minimize traffic congestion. It will also provide a "pedestrian-oriented neighborhood" and a "variety of housing opportunities" promised in the 1973 report on the West End.

For all of these reasons, at a regularly scheduled, properly noticed meeting with a quorum present, ANC2A voted to retain R-5-B zoning for the southern half of Square 37, and have the chair represent ANC2A at the hearing on June 10th.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Miller

Dorothy Miller,
Chair, ANC2A