

**ANTENNA CASE: ZONING COMMISSION HEARING- CASE NO. 01-02
TESTIMONY OF THE CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY, OCTOBER,
17, 2002**

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this important matter. I am Richard N. Wolf, Chair of the City Planning Committee, Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS). I have been authorized to offer the following views.

As a first matter, we wish to extend our gratitude to the Commission, Ms. Ann Loikow of the North Cleveland Park Citizens Association and Ms. Jennifer Steingasser of the Office of Planning for their efforts in coming to grips with this complex matter. We particularly applaud the Commission and the Office of Planning for having a number of informal sessions to sort out the issues and to come to a proposed resolution. In this regard, we wish to associate ourselves with the excellent testimony of Ms. Loikow

In particular, we wish to endorse the supplemental report of the Office of Planning, October 3, 2002, regarding changes in Sections 1200 et seq. Zoning Regulations dealing with the Capitol Interest District. These changes enlarge the restrictions on uses to include antennas and are clearly within the intentions of the CAP District as spelled out in the regulations. Also in the supplemental report we endorse the proposed "removal" regulations, but we support Ms. Loikow with respect to strengthening the so-called "stealth antenna" proposals.

As we read the proposals before us, they deal with a series of issues requiring some kind of control through land use regulation that does not trench on rights granted the communications industry through the Congress. We believe that such a balance as been achieved through a process of clarification of definitions and a greater understanding of the antenna world. In this respect, the proposals recognized that antennas are visually disruptive, and can even be great physical intrusions on the land and surrounding neighborhoods; that there are potential and actual harms associated with the different kinds of signals and radiation being given off by these devices, and that technological change will alter the shape and even need for these structures in the future. We believe that field evaluation of radiation is better than computer simulations; that setbacks as proposed are proper; that elimination of unused antennas is necessary and appropriate, and that special exception process for almost all antennas is warranted.

Without going into further extended discussion of the details of these proposed regulations, I wish to pose the regulatory dilemma. There should be a registry of antennas kept by DCRA which would include all the detail of the order permitting the antenna, the permit itself, detail concerning the radiation studies of the antennas on the structure, with such a registry available to the public. Given the manner in which DCRA fails to perform its other regulatory responsibilities in regard to distressed properties, special signs and bill boards and so on, I would suggest that such a registry be kept in the Office of Zoning which has been performing its functions at a high level of effectiveness.

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I conclude this testimony by again saying we generally endorse what the Office of Planning is proposing with the addition of the changes in language proposed by Ms. Loikow. We understand that this issue will be a continuing matter, regarding periodic review by the Commission to assure that its regulations are up-to date both with respect to land use issues and technological developments. Thank you, again.