Statement of Dino Drudi re Case No. 02-15.

Please enter the following written statement into the record:

It is intuitively obvious that a public facility such as a recreation center is, for zoning and land use purposes, more like a public school than uses which typically require variance or special exception proceedings. Its existence and siting in a particular neighborhood, like the public school's, is directly related to that neighborhood's residential character. Would opponents of such an approach, for example, wish to argue a recreation center more properly belongs in a warehouse district?

In the case of the Turkey Thicket example, located across the street from my house, how would the community react were the city to propose turning the site over to transit-oriented development similar to that contemplated for adjacent to the nearby Brookland-CUA Metrorail Station? No doubt with vigorous opposition, despite it being a matter-of-right development consistent with the underlying zoning. The Zoning Commission needs to ask whether the underlying zoning for such a facility is an irrelevant artifact. Perhaps the better solution would be to unzone parks and recreation facilities.

There is a more fundamental problem, however. The construction of a public facility is a public, even political, decision taken by elected officials with funding consciously appropriated by the city council and the Congress. For one entity of the government, in this case the Zoning Commission, to overturn the action of another one is self-contradictory to the structure of government. Because most Zoning Commissioners are mayoral appointees, persons challenging a recreation facility project which the mayor is proposing would be asking them to overrule the mayor who appointed them or, worse still, asking the federally-appointed Commissioners to overturn or fetter a local decision with primarily local impacts. The proper place for the impacts of a proposed new facility to be addressed is in the city council's appropriation process.

Respectfully submitted on 3 July 2002,

Dino Drudi

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-15
Exhibit 30

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D.C. ZONING COMMISSION

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-15
EXHIBIT NO.30