HILLCREST COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

"Working Together for a Better Community"
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January 18, 2003

Ms. Carol J. Mitten
Chairperson
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Room 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 02-15, Recreation Centers

Dear Ms. Mitten:

During the January 4th regular meeting of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association (HCCA) the membership approved a motion encouraging that a text amendment be adopted to cover all recreation and community centers as a matter-of-right. Allowing the public recreation and community uses by a matter-of-right provision would allow renovation and construction efforts to continue on schedule and avoid costly delays that would be caused by the time needed to obtain variances from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) on virtually every project. It has come to the attention of the HCCA that there is a possibility the construction of the new Hillcrest Community Activity Center could be delayed if the standards put forced by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and Office of Planning (OP) are not adopted for recreation and community facilities as part of the text amendment approval process. We (HCCA) support the standards put forth by DPR and OP and encourage that they be adopted. These standards are:

1. 40% lot occupancy as a matter-of-right in a residential zone. This takes into consideration DPR's physical needs and development policies as well as being sensitive to the need to maintain open green space.
2. 45-foot height limitation in the residential district. This provides openness and is not obtrusive in the residential zone.
3. Any facility not exceeding 50,000 square feet in size be treated as a matter-of-right project.

We support these standard so that our community can finally begin to see the benefits of years of planning and negotiating to pave the way for long overdue, state of the art, first class community recreation centers. Establishing stricter height and size limitations will have a negative impact on the city's ability to deliver new facilities. All of which are the results of extensive community input on design and programming. Communities now expect a center to contain amenities such as, computer resource room capabilities, a place for homework and after school studies, a center for senior citizens to take advantage of wellness activities such as exercise and nutrition counseling, receive information and serve as the central meeting place for exchange of community news. These services cannot be contained in structures limited to 15 to 20, 000 square feet. However, they can be provided without compromising a centers green space.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-15
Exhibit 49

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-15
EXHIBIT NO.49

Within the Hillcrest community, as is the case with other communities across the city, community representatives have been played an active role in planning the programming for the recreation center for our neighborhood. DPR included the citizens at every point within the process. The final design for the Hillcrest Community Activity Center represents the results of many meetings and community coordination. Citizens are very pleased that recreation and community centers are no longer what they were 30 to 40 years ago. A narrowly defined interpretation of allowed uses for recreation and community centers would result in a disservice to the communities who have spent several years negotiating with DPR to develop a plan and program that is sensitive to their needs.

The members of the Hillcrest Community Civic Association encourages that the DC Zoning Commission will adopt the standard recommended herein. Our community would sincerely hate to see our project, or other planned projects, delayed or be subject to redesign consideration due to stricter standards conflicting with present day community interest and desires.

Your consideration and assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Franklin Senger

Pastor Franklin Senger,
President, HCCA

Cc:
ANC 7B
Washington East Foundation
Department of Parks and Recreation
Office of Planning