

October 4, 2002

Re: Office of Zoning Case # ZC 02 -17
(Stonebridge Assoc.)

Carol Mitten, Chairman
Zoning Commission
District of Columbia Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210-S
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Chairman Mitten:

As a twenty year plus resident of the Friendship Heights neighborhood, I am committed to living and working in the District of Columbia. I have no interest whatsoever in suburban living. I make frequent use of Metrorail, park my car on the street with a Zone 3 parking permit, and walk to many of our neighborhood amenities. Therefore, I can state at the outset that I am not categorically opposed to development in the Friendship Heights area.

However, I am firmly in support of reasonable development. I do not think that highrise buildings have a place in our area. Chevy Chase Pavilion is too tall, and no more tall buildings of this height should be built nearby. The taller buildings mean more congestion for an area where parking, traffic flow, air pollution, and trash collection are already big problems for nearby residents like myself.

The debate over the proposed Stonebridge development at the Washington Clinic/Lisner Home site (at the intersection of Military Road and Western Avenue) indicates to me that many public officials and the developer are not addressing the fundamental issue raised by the community with respect to development of this site. Simply stated, the neighborhood is asking is that the developer be required to adhere to the rules established by the Office of Planning and the Zoning Commission when they decided to zone this tract of land for low and moderate-density residential development (R-2 and R-5-B).

We are asking that the Zoning Commission's earlier decision to upgrade the zoning of this site to R-2 and R-5-B (in recognition of its proximity to the Friendship Heights Metro) be respected and adhered to. The neighborhood does not oppose all development; it only is requesting that plans for this site be consistent with the previously upgraded current zoning.

However, the process thus far seems more focused on trying to secure a zoning increase for the developer, than demanding that he go back to the drawing board and submit a proposal that is consistent with the R-2 and R-5-B zoning. What is the point of expending time, energy, and resources on the city/neighborhood planning process, if, in the end, the developers are allowed to revise the rules to suit their financial gains?

ZONING COMMISSION
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Exhibit 69

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EXHIBIT NO.69

I recently attended our local ANC meeting chaired by Ms. Jill Diskan. Many of my fellow neighbors were there. Stonebridge, the developer, which was represented by a team of well-rehearsed professionals, obviously is very skilled at using certain buzz words (e.g., "smart development" and "community amenities") to shift the focus of this discussion away from the fundamental issue described above. It also is clear that they intend to use every means at their disposal to accomplish their ends. We were shocked to learn that one of the doctors who owns the Washington Clinic site sent his staff out into the neighborhood to remove signs posted by Friendship Heights Organization for Reasonable Development (FHORD) encouraging residents to attend the September 12, 2002 ANC meeting to discuss this matter. This clearly is not fairplay. Neighborhood residents should not lose this issue just because we do not have the money to hire professionals nor the inclination to engage in unethical behavior as did that doctor.

Letter writing and wearing a yellow button in support of reasonable development are the only means I have personally to impact this situation. As small as those gestures may be, I perform them in good conscience knowing that I am exercising my rights and taking up the responsibilities of a civic-minded citizen. My hope is that others on my block and those surrounding me are doing the same. The feeling is certainly there, given the number of people attending that ANC meeting and the content of the many discussions I have had on this issue with my family and neighbors!

I respectfully request that you require the developer to provide a plan that is consistent with current zoning. The Stonebridge application for increased zoning should be rejected. It demonstrates a lack of respect for the District of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan for Ward 3, the judgment of the Zoning Board, and the Friendship Heights neighborhood.

Thanking you for your consideration in this matter, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Carolyn A. Carroll
4116 Legation St., NW
Washington, DC 20015

Cc: Mr. Alberto Bastida