



CONSERVING OUR REGION'S NATURE SINCE 1897

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June 27, 2002

Mr. Alberto P. Bastida
 Secretary of the Zoning Commission
 Office of Zoning
 Suite 210
 441 4th Street
 Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case No. 02-19

Dear Mr. Bastida:

Thank you for providing the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS) the opportunity to comment on the proposed Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay (Case No. 02-19).

ANS supports the purpose of the overlay district: to preserve the natural topography and mature trees in Forest Hills neighborhoods to the maximum extent possible; to prevent significant adverse impact on environmentally sensitive natural areas; and to limit new and expanded construction to encourage compatibility with existing neighborhood conditions.

In our view, preserving trees in Forest Hills neighborhoods protects critical habitat for many wildlife species, particularly neotropical migrant birds such as warblers, flycatchers, and orioles. The forest habitat on the western edge of Rock Creek Park, including that found in Forest Hills, along with the park itself, makes up the largest block of forest habitat in Washington.

ANS has been collecting water quality data from the Pinehurst and Melvin Hazen tributaries of Rock Creek for many years. The data supports data obtained from other parts of the Chesapeake Bay watershed: forested watersheds provide better habitat for aquatic organisms than watersheds where significant portions of the forest system have been lost to development.

I urge the Zoning Commission to support the Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay District.

Sincerely,

Neal Fitzpatrick
 Executive Director

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case

02-19

Exhibit

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