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4530 29th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20008
November 30, 2002

Alberto P. Bastido, AICP
Secretary of the Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Temporary Adoption of Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay; Case No. 02-19

Dear Mr. Bastido:

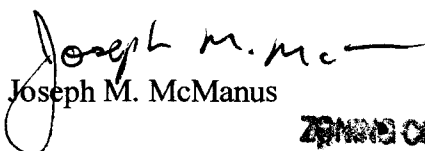
We wish to express our support and appreciation to the members of the Commission who voted to adopt the Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay, though we strongly believe the measure would better accomplish its purpose if the proposed minimum lot size had not been reduced.

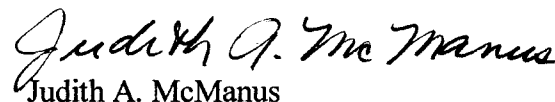
We certainly appreciate the Commission's action in requiring a uniform building setback, as this will prevent a great deal of damage to the character of this neighborhood. The minimal increase of building lot size to 9,500 square feet is also a positive step. Of course the adoption of the Overlay itself will, one hopes, prevent the wholesale destruction of trees in our neighborhood, such as, to pick only one example, has recently occurred on Chesterfield Place N.W. between 2839 and 2851.

However, the Commission's failure to adopt a 12,000 square foot minimum lot size may well undermine all the other efforts to preserve the character and environment of Forest Hills. For instance – though there are many other such examples in Forest Hills – in the 2900 unit block bounded by Albemarle St. on the south and Brandywine Street on the north, there are no fewer than eight existing lots consisting of at least 20,000 square feet. The possible subdivision of these lots into two or more housing units will greatly contribute to the destruction of old growth trees and the increase of density in this neighborhood. Indeed this already has occurred in the mid 1980s with the development of the one lot at 2945 Albemarle into its present five building sites. All the trees, green space and open land were transformed into roof tops and asphalt. As one living downhill from this site I can attest to the undesirable effects of runoff and debris after every strong rainfall. The sewer in front of my home on 29th Street has been clogged and totally closed since the development of the 2945 Albemarle site, nearly fifteen years now!

We understand that the Overlay is only a temporary one and we strongly urge the Zoning Commission to make it permanent. However changing the minimum lot size to 12,000 square feet is necessary to preserve the character and long term property values of Forest Hills and we urge the Commission to adopt such a change.

Sincerely,


Joseph M. McManus


Judith A. McManus

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-19
Book 292

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-19
EXHIBIT NO.292