November 25, 2002

To: Carol Mitten, Chair
Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
From: Mark Batterson, Pastor
National Community Church
Re: Z.C. Case No. 02-22

My name is Mark Batterson, I'm a seven-year resident of Capitol Hill (6th and F Streets, NE) and I serve as Pastor of National Community Church (NCC) which meets in the movie theaters at Union Station and owns the corner lot at 2nd and F Streets, NE (201 F Street, NE). On behalf of our 500+ member congregation, I'd like to speak in favor of the petition to rezone lots 103-106 & 109 in Square 754 from CAP/R-4 to CAP/C-2-A. This statement briefly outlines our history in the community and our purposes in purchasing and developing 201 F Street, NE.

In the last six years, National Community Church has grown from a congregation of 19 to over 500 people in regular attendance at weekend services. Over half of the congregation lives in the District of Columbia and many are residents of our immediate neighborhood. NCC has a history of community service. In 2002 we sponsored an Easter Egg hunt at Lincoln Park for 300+ children who live on the Hill. We painted a single-mom's house that lives in the 200 block of F Street, NE. We planted flowers in tree boxes in the 200 and 300 block of F Street, NE. And we sponsored a community event at Stuart-Hobson school (4th and F Streets, NE) teaching children skills like painting, martial arts, and dance.

NCC has not only served the community, but established roots here as well. NCC has been meeting at Union Station since 1996 and has a signed lease to continue meeting there until 2008. In 1998, NCC purchased 205 F Street, NE which currently serves as staff housing. We also rent and pay taxes on a portion of that property. That property (205 F Street, NE) abuts the property at 201 F Street, NE. We have also leased offices at 316 F Street, NE for the past three years.

In February of 2002, National Community Church purchased the lot at 201 F Street, NE for $300,000. The abandoned and dilapidated building that stands on the property was originally built and used as a lunch counter in 1908, but has fallen into disrepair because of two decades of neglect. National Community Church would like to return the lot to its original use and build a fully-operational and professionally-managed coffeehouse with an historical motif celebrating the history of our neighborhood in photographs. If the property is rezoned C-2-A it will enable us to move forward with restoration and architectural plans. The coffeehouse will not only provide jobs and tax revenue for our community, but also serve a valuable community service as an informal gathering place for neighbors and formal gathering place for community groups.

We believe that there is overwhelming community support for this project as evidenced by hundreds of petition signatures and dozens of letters of support. Nearly every homeowner within a two-block radius has signed a petition or written a letter of support. We ask that the voice of the church and the community be heard on this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Batterson

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-22
Exhibit 44

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-22
EXHIBIT NO.44