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TRANSMITTAL LETTER

TO: Sharon Sanchez

COMPANY: Office of Zoning

ADDRESS: 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

PHONE: 202-727-0340

FROM: Gordon Fraley

PHONE: 202-778-6271

DATE: February 11, 2003

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Attached are two letters of support, six copies each, for the PUD Application at Waterfront (Case Number 02-38). Both SW residents are planning to attend the hearing on Thursday and asked us to submit their statements to the Zoning Commission. Thank you.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-38
Exhibit 49

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-38
EXHIBIT NO.49

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Statement by Michael O'Dell, Harbour Square, in support of the matter of Case Number 02-38, PUD Application for the Waterfront project (formerly Waterside Mall), February 13, 2003.

Thank you for allowing me this time. My name is Michael O'Dell and I live at Harbour Square, a 447 unit cooperative one block south of the Waterfront project. I support the Waterfront project as proposed by the Forest City Enterprises and The Kaempfer Company. Of the many proposed changes, I especially support the reopening of 4th Street, SW between M and Eye Streets, SW. I strongly support this action for two reasons: First, reopening 4th Street can improve the safety and access for those of us who live and/or work south of the project and second, urban planners have long recognized that many of the vehicular streets that were transformed in the 1960s to pedestrian walkways have failed.

First, reopening 4th Street will improve safety and access. Because of the Southeast-Southwest Expressway, there is only one unimpeded street connecting residential Southwest to the area north of the Expressway. That street, 7th Street, SW, is the only direct route for residents and emergency vehicles between South Capitol Street and L'Enfant Plaza Promenade—9 blocks. The only other street that connects the Monumental Mall to Southwest is 4th Street, however, the existing Waterside Mall between Eye and M Streets blocks it. This limits access in and out of southwest for both residents and others, including police, fire and medical emergency personnel. The fire and police units that serve our community are located on 6th and 4th Streets, SW, respectively, on the north side of the Expressway. Opening 4th Street, SW will provide an additional entry street for emergency responses. Reopening 4th Street will also provide an additional exit for residents south of the project in the event of an emergency evacuation.

In addition to safety, traffic on 4th Street south of the Waterside Mall often finds itself in total grid-lock during evening rush hours because of vehicle accidents on the 14th or South Capitol Street Bridges. Southwest has no other exit for vehicles to take. Many of our neighborhood streets are not through streets and end in traffic circles. If 4th Street were reopened, it would provide at least one more street that vehicles could use to leave our neighborhood.

Second, many pedestrian walkways have failed. I was raised in the mid-Hudson Valley near Poughkeepsie, New York. During the 1960s, Poughkeepsie was one of the first cities to participate in the federal "Model Cities" urban renewal program. As a "Model City," Poughkeepsie experienced much of the same redevelopment that Southwest did: the razing of many city blocks that were replaced with new structures and the closing of several of its downtown Main Street city blocks to create a pedestrian mall. Within a few short years, all major stores and many "Mom and Pop" stores on the pedestrian mall closed and shuttered their doors. The street became crime-ridden and home to vagrants. People felt unsafe even walking through the area during the day. Only within the last 5 years, the city tore out the pedestrian mall and reopened the street to vehicular traffic and parking. The street has come back to life and businesses are opening and the downtown economy is rebounding.

Poughkeepsie's history is Waterside Mall's history. The Mall once had movie theaters, fine restaurants, a gourmet foods store, and an upscale meat market. It has slowly, but consistently declined over the years even with the presence of thousands of EPA employees and support of neighborhood residents. Reopening 4th Street will provide an opportunity to establish a vibrant cityscape and a town center that can serve as a focal point for our community.

Locally, the District has recently demonstrated that reopening two longtime pedestrian walkways to traffic has lead to immediate neighborhood benefits. The two streets are F Street between 7th and 9th Streets, NW along the front of the Portrait Gallery and G Street, between 9th and 10th Streets, NW adjacent to the Martin Luther King Library. In addition to easing vehicular traffic and making pedestrian traffic safer, these street reopenings eliminated areas that had become havens for drug use, vagrants, and crime. I know this to be true because I worked in the area for 21 years.

I strongly urge the Zoning Commission to approve the reopening of 4th Street between M and Eye Streets. It is a matter of economic improvement and safety. Thank you for allowing me this time.

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TESTIMONY TO THE ZONING COMMISSION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

February 13, 2003

Reference Case No. 02-38

Good Evening. My name is Annie King Phillips. I am a native Washingtonian and have resided in the District of Columbia for all of my 82 years. For the past 27 years I have lived in Southwest and actively participated in many community-based projects to promote the development of the people, the space, and the resources. Thank you for allowing me to speak tonight, to applaud and support the PUD application and site plans for Square 499, Lot 60 and Square 542, Lot 88.

I am deeply impressed with the innovative plan to maximize mixed use of the site by proposing to construct the four corner buildings at 112' height versus the 70' height in accordance with existing zoning. The departure from the existing zoning allowance is requested in order to create a more valuable configuration that can:

- First, provide land needed to re-open Fourth Street for 75,000 square footage of retail space. This is, indeed, a move in the right direction as current trends for city-wide progress seek to boost the economy by attracting more tourists, and responding more effectively to the needs of residents and workers with a variety of shops and services within the city.
- Secondly, the plans include the dedication of 400,000 square footage for residential development, which will bring young employed adults to live in the city nearer to their workplace. This expands the city's tax revenue. In my opinion, this is <u>real</u> progress.
- Finally, but no less important, is the 20,000 square footage planned for the public plaza to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the Waterfront community. In turn, this generates a vibrant seven-day-week of pedestrian traffic in a beautiful, functional environment. No longer would our neighborhood serve just as a work-day, pass-through area.

With these benefits in mind, I ask that you consider and approve the request to amend the existing zoning map (C-3-B) and allow the maximum building height of 112' for the corner buildings. Upon approval, the plans may move forward with deliberation to provide a more wonderful Waterfront community for the city of Washington, D. C. in the 21st Century.

Submitted by: Annie King Phillips
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