Proposed W-0 Waterfront Open Space Zone
Zoning Commission Case #02-42

Comments by Bob Morris, Conservation Chair
D.C. Chapter, Sierra Club

The proposed W-0 Zone is seen as a positive and useful classification to apply to areas on the waterfront that are being proposed for re-development. These areas should be cultivated to promote access to the riverfront by residents and visitors.

Concerns about the proposed W-0 classification fall into two categories: protection of the rivers and conservation of the valuable undeveloped riverfront areas.

1. Protection of the rivers: Our rivers are currently underperforming as economic, aesthetic and recreational assets because they are polluted. It is essential that all future uses contribute to the extensive and expensive efforts now underway to reduce those pollution levels.
   The W-0 Zone classification should specifically require that any development use best practices to prevent runoff and pollution. These should include but not be limited to the use of Low Impact Development technology such as bioretention cells, porous pavers, rain gardens, green roofs, etc. as appropriate for the proposed usage. Additionally the use of trees in a riparian barrier should be encouraged to take advantage of their unique hydrologic functions and aesthetic and urban heat control features.
2. Conservation of undeveloped riverfront areas: The District is uniquely blessed with wild undeveloped parkland on our riverfronts. These areas are generally west of Key Bridge and along the west banks of the Anacostia. From both river and shore they provide a natural experience that is seldom possible within the confines of a major city. They also provide unmatchable hydrologic services in protecting the river and cleaning and cooling the air.
   The W-0 Zone should not be applied to currently undeveloped areas. These named areas west of Key Bridge to the District line and on the west banks and islands of the Anacostia should be designated as No New Development Zones to insure future generations have the possibility of a wild, natural experience within our urban environment.

While it is my understanding that the above goals are generally within the intent of the Office of Planning, I ask that the Commission specifically amend the proposed wording of the zoning regulations to insure that this is clear to current and future residents, prospective developers and zoning officials. The Commission is the agency that most clearly can set these parameters to maintain and even improve the quality of our rivers and their shores. Setting this balance will clearly promote redevelopment of parcels that presently detract~~ing~~ from optimal use of our waterfronts while maintaining our valuable and rare natural riverfront areas.

ZONING COMMISSION
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Exhibit 28

ZONING COMMISSION
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EXHIBIT NO.28