ANC 6B
Capitol Hill / Southeast
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B
921 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20003

8/27/03

3:47 pm

August 19, 2003

Zoning Commission
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: ZC #03-06
Southeast Federal Center

Dear Commissioners:

At its regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting on June 10, 2003, ANC 6B voted 6-0 (6 being a quorum for the conduct of business) to support, with conditions, the application for a Zoning Overlay for the Southeast Federal Center (ZC case #03-06).

ANC 6B claims party status in this case as an affected ANC. While the project does not directly abut the current ANC boundaries, it was within the ANC's jurisdiction until recently and has a direct impact on residents within the current ANC 6B boundaries. The project is part of and is located within the area of Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. One of the goals of that initiative is to increase the accessibility to the waterfront and connect the Capitol Hill neighborhood back to its waterfront – a connection that was severely strained by the construction of the SE freeway. There are a number of projects within the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative boundaries that affect the Capitol Hill communities' connection to the waterfront: Reservation 13; the Capper Carrollsburg redevelopment; the Southeast Federal Center (SEFC) development; and the DOT Headquarters building on the SEFC. ANC 6B is, therefore, keenly interested in all of these projects and their impact on Capitol Hill residents.

The ANC welcomes the efforts to create a new neighborhood at the SEFC – and not simply a Federal enclave or an office park. The high level of space devoted to residential, retail and recreation is key to the success of that effort.

However, the ANC remains concerned that this new neighborhood will be isolated from the communities to the north. Likewise, there is the concern that the Capitol Hill community will be cut off from the SE waterfront. The reason for the concern stems

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-06
Exhibit 38
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-06
EXHIBIT NO.38

from the size and density of the buildings. The ANC understand the need for high density development but would like to make clear that this development is very different from the medium-density development at the core of the Capper/Carrollsburg redevelopment and the lower-density townhouse in the area north of the SE freeway.

Given the physical locations of the site and the site of the DOT HQ building, a major connection between neighborhoods across M Street is at 4th & 5th Streets. Special care must be given to these streets and the buildings fronting them in order to prevent a canyon-like atmosphere. 4th Street is particularly important as it is the continuous route to the waterfront and likely to be the major route connecting the Capitol Hill neighborhood to the waterfront.

The ANC is pleased to see that the overlay area requires special consideration be given to 4th Street, including a 20 foot minimum setback. The ANC is also pleased that the proposal includes a requirement for Zoning Commission review of buildings along M Street. We would recommend, however, that the same requirement for Zoning Commission review be extended to buildings along 4th Street.

The ANC also recommends that special attention be given to encouraging primarily residential use in the areas along 4th and 5th Streets (blocks D and E) so as to create a residential corridor. This might be done by explicitly requiring that residential uses be given preference in any request for a special exception on those sites.

Incorporating these suggestions concerning the 4th Street area, ANC 6B supports this zoning text and map amendment.

Finally, Commissioner Kenan Jarboe, the Vice Chair of the Planning and Zoning Committee is authorized to present the ANC 6B report to the Zoning Commission.

Very truly yours,

Julie S. Olson

Julie Olson
Chairperson, ANC 6B