★ ★ ★ **Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D**

400 Eye Street SW • Washington, DC 20024
ANC Office: 202 554-1795

July 26th, 2003

Chairperson Carol J. Mitten
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW • Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

ANC 6D Testimony re: Cases No. 03-12/13, the Arthur Capper/Carrollsburg PUD

Dear Chairperson Mitten and Zoning Commission Members:

My name is Ahmed Assalaam, and I am an ANC Commissioner and the Chairperson of ANC 6D. I represent the ANC and the citizens of near Southwest and near Southeast tonight as we discuss the Arthur Capper/Carrollsburg PUD.

As you know from our written response to you, the ANC voted to oppose the First Stage PUD & Map Amendment for the Arthur Capper/Carrollsburg HOPE VI Project on three grounds. While we recognize the many positive aspects of the project, especially the one-for-one replacement of public housing, we believe the Zoning Commission would be premature, and cause irreversible harm to the community, were it to approve this PUD and related Map Amendment until those concerns are adequately addressed.

1. **Acquisition of Private Homes**
   The ANC is adamantly opposed to the taking of more than a dozen private homes through eminent domain over the course of the entire project. By granting even tacit approval to the takings at this stage, a bad precedent is set for the overall stability of neighborhoods that homeownership brings. We believe it is incumbent on the applicants to develop a plan that is acceptable to the current homeowners and the community before this PUD is approved.

   Many people see their homes as an investment, as well as a place to live in the neighborhood of their choosing. Taking private homes through eminent domain at today's market rate will not only be a financial burden on those home owners now, it will also force them out of their community, and the price for them to return to post-project new homes may be beyond their reach. Even a guarantee of first right of refusal on a new home that is no longer within their means is no guarantee at all. The applicants must be required to offer fair and equitable alternatives to the affected homeowners before this PUD can be considered for approval.

2. **Community and Supportive Services Program (CSSP)**
   Current residents of the Arthur Capper/Carrollsburg dwellings are being asked to sign an agreement to abide by the terms of a CSSP that as yet has not been fully defined as a condition of their return. A final CSSP program with all its terms and conditions spelled out and made available to current residents must be issued by the Housing Authority and approved by the CDC before – not after – residents are displaced.

   It's unacceptable to ask one of our most vulnerable populations to sign an agreement without knowing its terms, and it is happening today. Again, the Zoning Commission risks setting a very bad precedent if it allows this PUD to move forward without requiring the Housing Authority to do its job. More affluent residents who can afford legal representation would not find themselves in the position of having to sign a blank document as a condition for returning to their homes. We should accord the residents of the Arthur Capper/Carrollsburg dwellings the same respect as any other District resident.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-13
Exhibit 30

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-13
EXHIBIT NO.30

3. **Project Density**
   The proposed density of the overall project raises a number of concerns that need to be addressed before approval of this First Stage PUD can go forward. An overwhelming amount of commercial development is either proposed, approved, or underway in near Southeast and Southwest. This project must be looked at not only in terms of the impact it will have on the neighborhoods slated for redevelopment in this and subsequent PUDs, but also in the overall context of traffic, the delivery of city services, and its impact on nearby schools. It must include a clear plan for creating a cohesive social fabric that will successfully integrate the diverse economic groups packed within the project, and take into account the impact of millions of square feet of office space and the concomitant daily migration of office workers.

   In addition to the overall impact of the density called for in the project, the following specific items are of concern to the ANC:

   a) Questions regarding the project boundaries and Reservation 19 and Historic Preservation issues along 6th Street need to be resolved.
   b) The proposed row housing design is excessively dense, and the use of private alleyways means that lot occupancy is essential 100% with no yard and minimal parking.
   c) The increased number of homes will need to be served by grocery and other retail services not guaranteed in this plan.
   d) The amount of open space and park space is minimal, especially considering the lack of yards for the proposed row houses.

Allow me to conclude by returning to discussions held at the preliminary Zoning Commission hearing on May 12th. The Office of Planning expressed concern over a variety of items, and the ANC shares its concerns, particularly regarding the lack of specific public benefits and a timetable for their delivery, insufficient detail for LSDBE and job training programs, and a comprehensive analysis of traffic flow in the overall near Southeast /Southwest context.

The ANC cannot state emphatically enough our requirement that these issues be addressed before action is taken on this First Stage PUD. The ramifications of the precedents that would be set by premature approval of this PUD will have a negative impact that will go on for years and years, affecting not only this community but others as well. The Zoning Commission and the ANC have a common goal in serving the interests of the communities we are elected or appointed to represent, and we will not serve them well if we do not fix the major flaws in this project before it is too late.

Thank you,

/s/

Ahmed Assalaam
Chairman, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D

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July 15, 2003

Chairperson Carol Mitten
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairperson Mitten:

At a duly noticed public meeting on July 14th, 2003 ANC 6D voted 4-0-2 (The ANC has seven commissioners; four commissioners comprise a quorum) to oppose the Arthur Capper / Carrollsburg HOPE VI PUD on the following grounds:

- The taking of approximately 15 existing private homes over the course of the entire project by eminent domain.
- The absence of a final and operational CSSP program to equip the residents with the necessary tools to assure their ability to return to their homes.
- The excessive density of the overall project.

While the ANC recognizes many of the positive aspects of the proposed development, we could not, in good faith, approve of this PUD until these issues are satisfactorily resolved. It is our intent to amplify our views on the above issues at the upcoming public hearing on the project.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ahmed Assalaam
Chairman