Statement of
GEORGE H.F. OBERLANDER, AICP
On behalf of
WATERGATE WEST
Zoning Case 03-16(62-19)
Before the
Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia
March 4, 2004

Madam Chairman and members of the Commission, for the record, my name is George H.F. Oberlander, I am a urban planning consultant since 1996, when after 31 years, I retired from the staff of the National Capital Planning Commission. This testimony deals with:

1. why converting the existing Swissotel Washington-Watergate to an apartment use would be **inconsistent** with specific policies of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital;
2. the intent of the original 1962 Zoning Commission Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval and subsequent BZA processing; and
3. the continued need for hotel accommodations at this location.

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

As you know, Section 492 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act of 1973, as amended, (Home Rule Act) states that

> "Zoning maps and regulations, and amendments thereto, shall not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital".

Amending the original Planned Unit Development (PUD) ZC 62-19, which was further processed by the Board of Zoning Adjustment order No. 7903 (1964) specifically, authorizing the hotel, through the conversion of the existing operating 250 room hotel to an apartment house, is **directly contrary** to **Section 1331 and 1333** (Ward 2 Hotel Development) of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital (Comprehensive Plan).

Reading Sections 1331.1, 1331.2 and 1331.3 one finds that "Hotels are a key element of the economic development of Washington and are important activity generators; that Ward 2 is the hotel center of the city; progress has been made in achieving hotel construction goals, but over the long term (2000-2020), additional hotels will be needed to fulfill increased demand from visitors, tourists, business people, and conventioneers".

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-16
Exhibit 121

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-16
EXHIBIT NO.121

In addition, Section 1332 deals with Ward 2 hotel development objectives. Specifically Section 1333.1 indicates the actions that should be taken in support of hotel development and states:

> (1333.1(a)) The District Government should do the following:
> (1) **Encourage continued improvement of existing hotels;**

By permitting the conversion of the existing hotel to an apartment house, the Zoning Commission, a part of the District Government, would issue a zoning order **directly inconsistent** with the Comprehensive Plan.

Yes, as the applicant and the Office of Planning indicate in there statements, the Comprehensive Plan has several general and specific policies supporting the creation of additional housing units. However the PUD is **NOT** in a "Housing Opportunity area". (See DC Generalized Land Use Policies Map 2). In addition the applicant includes the offer of various public benefits and project amenities including possible tax benefits. However in this situation there are very specific policies to the effect of **maintaining and continuing to improving existing hotels in Ward 2**. This is one instance, in comparison with other cases the Commission has had to consider, where the Commission does not need to weigh one general Comprehensive Plan policy against another.

Section 1333.1 specifically states, and I emphasize, that **"The District Government should...encourage continued improvement of existing hotels in Ward 2"**:

In addition to the specific policies mentioned, there are other general policies supporting the retention of the hotel in the Economic Development Objectives of Ward 2:

- (Sec. 1301) deals with maintaining and increasing employment opportunities.

The closing of the Hotel would reduce employment by approximately 250.The applicant claims these employees would be absorbed at other hotel locations. This may or may not be the case and is not certain. In any event the Comprehensive Plan indicates that the DC Government **should not** take actions that would reduce the number of jobs in existence.

- Historic Preservation policies in the Comprehensive Plan also relate to the issue at hand. Ward 2 Actions in support of Preservation and Historic Features Objectives Section 1320.1 (a) (3) page 13-30 states the District Government shall:

  "Undertake studies of special streets and places in Ward 2, with emphasis on major avenues, circles, and squares of the L'Enfant Plan, as well as community streets with special character;"

Certainly the Watergate Complex, a "Town within a City" along Virginia Avenue, a designated Special Street, is of special character. To date, the closest historic district to the Watergate complex, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is the Foggy

Bottom district. This districts southwestern boundary is 26th Street and the Potomac River Freeway directly opposite the Watergate complex.

Currently, before the DC Historic Preservation Review Board, there is an application for "Landmark Status". This application has been submitted by the Committee to Preserve the Watergate Heritage, Inc. That submission, among other things, documents the historic nature of the entire complex and identifies that in the design **"Each use (in the complex) is interdependent on the other, and together contributes to the functionality of the complex as a whole."**

If the Watergate complex does obtain landmark status then eliminating the hotel from the mix of uses would alter its historic character and affect the balance originally intended and necessary to maintain the vibrancy, vitality and special nature and attractiveness of the PUD. Official landmark status would require any building permit application, for renovation of windows and/or interior spaces, to be approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board.

To summarize the applicability of Comprehensive Plan Policies to the application, **the applicant is asking the Commission to make a "not inconsistent" finding when converting an existing hotel to an apartment house in the approved PUD would directly be "inconsistent" with the specific language of Section 1333.1.**

Intent of original 1962 Zoning Commission PUD approval and subsequent BZA processing (1964-1968 etc).

I will not repeat the entire zoning history of this PUD, as approved in 1962 and amended by various BZA and Commission processing in later years. That documentation is in the OP Report. What I would like to outline at this point, is the extensive detailed planning background for the original PUD as reflected in the records and transcripts of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) in their approvals and recommendations to the Zoning Commission.

In order to present the Commission all the planning background of this PUD, Watergate West asked me to search the Zoning Commission and old NCPC files to identify the facts with regard to "Watergate Town Development", one of the first private large scale redevelopment in the form of a PUD, in the city.

It was advertised as a "Packaged Living" self contained complex containing apartments, offices, shops along the street and in an interior Mall, hotel and recreation uses. It created a new style of urban living in Washington.

The 1962 Zoning Commission files have not been located at the DC Archives. Therefore I searched for the NCPC files located at the National Archives. I was only able to find NCPC approvals of the original PUD in 1962 in the form of NCPC map files (Attachment A). That map file shows the Hotel. The 1962 report and text recommendations to the Zoning Commission file have not been located.

However I also searched the Commission on Fine Arts (CFA) files at the National Archives and found copies of the drawings and tables reviewed by CFA in 1962 and 1968.

I mention the relevance of NCPC approvals and CFA reviews, because in the 1960`s and until Home Rule in 1973-74 the PUD process required approval and recommendation to the Zoning Commission from the then city planning agency NCPC.

The available 1962 NCPC drawings (which faintly show the actual square footages approved for each building use, including the Hotel) and the 1964/1966/1968 maps, files, reports and numerous letters between the three Commissions, NCPC, CFA and the Zoning Commission, (available for submission to the Commission) all deal with the special nature, character, mixture, design and intent of this very early PUD.

The approved PUD provided for:

- An FAR of 4.5 allowing a total of 1,890,000 sq. ft.
- Lot occupancy of 34.2%
- 1600 dwelling units including 1300 apartments and **300 hotel rooms**
- 183,000 sq. ft. of office space
- 80,000 sq. ft. of retail & service, and
- A parking garage of 438,400 sq. ft. (1250 spaces & 11 loading berths).

This above summary is detailed in the four tables and two maps from the CFA files (Attachment B, C1, C2, C3, and C4)

The major issues where the height of the buildings, the design of the complex, and the mixed use nature of the project. This included:

- The maximum height of buildings was set at 130 feet after Virginia Avenue was designated a "Business Street". The CFA`s recommendations regarding height was 110 feet. On May 25, 1962 an agreement was reached with CFA to limit 130 feet height to only 25% of the building complex.
- The total gross floor area of the high rise buildings shall not exceed the total permitted under then existing R-5-D regulations.
- Office uses were limited to the uses allowed in the new SP zone(s)
- The project area of 10 acres was **designated as one structure**, and
- BZA was given the latitude to alter limits designated on the approved plans as well as the nature of the commercial uses and commercial adjuncts **not to exceed the approved total floor area** for such uses as approved by the Zoning Commission.

The purpose of identifying these issues, in the PUD review process back in the 1960`s, is to emphasize the very careful planning then of the mixed uses within the overall design

of the complex. This complex was designed to be a complete town with in the City north of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The record shows that there was a very careful balancing of height, floor space and **the mixture of uses.** Although hotel space in some of the orders may have been considered dwelling units or commercial/retail space, the mixture of apartment units, office space, retail and hotel space was very carefully established and given specific limitations. In particular the gross floor area of office space was limited to 25% of the 1,792,000 total square feet approved by the Planning and Zoning Commissions in 1968. The hotel room count had increased to 303 by 1968 and the apartment count became 769 for a total dwelling unit count of 1,072 as compared to 1600 in 1962. (See BZA case 7234, 1963, showing the approved IV stages of construction and maps showing Hotel, and BZA case 9303, 1968 increasing hotel units to 303).

In 1968 NCPC approved recommendations to the Zoning Commission dealing with changes in the shape of some of the buildings and use change for Building 1, prior to construction, from residential to office. These documents established the maximum of 25% of the total build able space for office uses.

Later BZA orders dealt with modification of the SP zone office occupancy limitation to general office uses.

The specific BZA approval of the Hotel use, in an SP district, in 1964, incorporated the Zoning Regulations provision Section 512 dealing with Hotels and Inns (SP). Section 512.5 specifically states:

> "The approval of the hotel or inn **shall** result in a balance of residential, office, and hotel or inn uses in the SP district in the vicinity of the hotel or inn." (Emphasis added)

Altering this carefully orchestrated mixture of complementing uses, by the elimination of the hotel portion of this PUD, **would be contrary to the original planned intent of the self contained PUD and its implementation as built.** The complex as currently built and occupied is an excellent text book example of a zoning order (zoning change/ amendment) implementing a planned unit (total interrelated) development.

The PUD process was and still is designed to "facilitate the development of well planned residential, institutional, commercial and mixed-use development..." (Section 2400.1 of the Zoning Regulations). The original PUD provisions in the 1958 regulations (Article 75) did not stipulate public benefits. They sought flexibility, mixture of uses and public design review which would benefit the neighborhood. The regulations then and now state (Sec. 2400.5) that '...the PUD process shall not be used **to circumvent the intent and purpose** of this title, **nor to result in action that is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

and purpose of this title, **nor to result in action that is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

The continued need for hotel accommodations at this location

As the Commission will remember, George Washington University was given permission to convert the Howard Johnson Hotel on Virginia Avenue, formerly opposite the Watergate Hotel, to student housing. This action eliminated 400 rooms from the hotel inventory in Ward 2 as well as numerous employment opportunities. There are no other hotels other than the Watergate Hotel west of the Potomac River Freeway (West leg of original Inner Loop) and near the Potomac River. There are six hotels within a 1/4 mile radius from the Watergate Hotel. That distance is far greater than the existing easy walking distance (approximately 264 yards or 792 feet) between the Kennedy Center and the Watergate Hotel.

The Center has used the Watergate Hotel for many of its dignitaries and visiting world renowned actors. The several smaller hotels in the rest of the Foggy Bottom area, none of the caliber of the Watergate, can only meet some of the hotel needs of this neighborhood.

In addition to the current and future hotel needs of the Kennedy Center, there are current hotel needs of the near by Pan American Health Organization, the Department of State, both on 23 Street, and the several existing foreign government Chanceries in the Watergate South office building and adjacent areas. (See attached photographs) Also see Attachment D-1, letter from Michael R. Sonnenreich, Esq. President of the Washington Opera and Attachment D-2, letter from Placido Domingo, General Director of The Washington Opera).

Future Hotel needs

You may be aware that there are plans and Congressional funds, in the amount of 400 million dollars, for constructing a plaza deck over the existing freeway directly east of the Kennedy Center. Such a deck will hide the existing freeway and make it possible to construct additional theater and cultural office space buildings which will further increase the hotel needs of the immediate Kennedy Center area. (See map-access improvements-Kennedy Center Attachment E). Private funds have already been donated in the amount of $100 million towards the construction of two proposed buildings.

These future need have been identified in Section 1332.1 of the Comprehensive Plan which states that it is a Ward 2 objective "To obtain a major increase in rooms in new hotels at appropriate locations...adding approximately 3,400 additional hotel rooms by the year 2000 (or early in the 21st century)."

Therefore to take government action and eliminate an operating luxury (****½ star) hotel would be inappropriate public planning and zoning implementation. Although the Commission is not technically a public planning agency, the zoning decisions of the Commission need to be based on established public planning objectives and policies.

Applicants Economic and Fiscal Analysis

I have reviewed the Economic and Fiscal Analysis submitted by the applicant and will only comment on the hotel and employee assumptions which are within an expert planners/zoning experience, study and knowledge.

A major assumption in the BBPA report is that the hotel need presently met by Watergate Hotel will be transferred directly to other hotels in the City. Page 12 of the Report indicates that "a significant portion of the existing hotel demand" will be transferred to other District hotels. However, the fiscal analysis assumes that 100% of the "hotel room-nights, jobs and taxes" will be transferred and is reflected in the "net new demand" analysis. This assumption needs much more examination and explanation.

From my understanding of hotel occupancy, the ability of other District hotels to absorb the Watergate hotel demand depends on the availability of rooms and on the competition offered by other regional hotels. Several studies of hotel needs in the District have indicated that quality hotels in Washington DC are frequently sold out on weeknights.

With respect to the Reports job transfer assumptions, it is unlikely that the number of jobs in the other hotels would grow to fully replace the Watergate Hotel. At best only a portion of the current jobs could be replaced since the other hotels would not require additional managers, head chefs, doorman, all of the housekeepers, parking attendants and wait staff.

Setdown reports of Office of Planning

The latest Setdown Report from the Office of Planning dated January 19, 2004 **does not recommend approval** of the application. The report identifies the numerous Comprehensive Plan policies that apply to this case including only one of the conflicting policies within Chapter 2 – Economic Development. The Report does not deal with the Ward 2 Hotel policies.

Since the OP Report does not provide any direct planning advice on the substance of the issues of the application, unless OP added to its Report at the March 4, 2004 hearing, it is hoped that the Commission would consider the special nature of the planning rational identified in this statement and **not allow the Hotel conversion.**

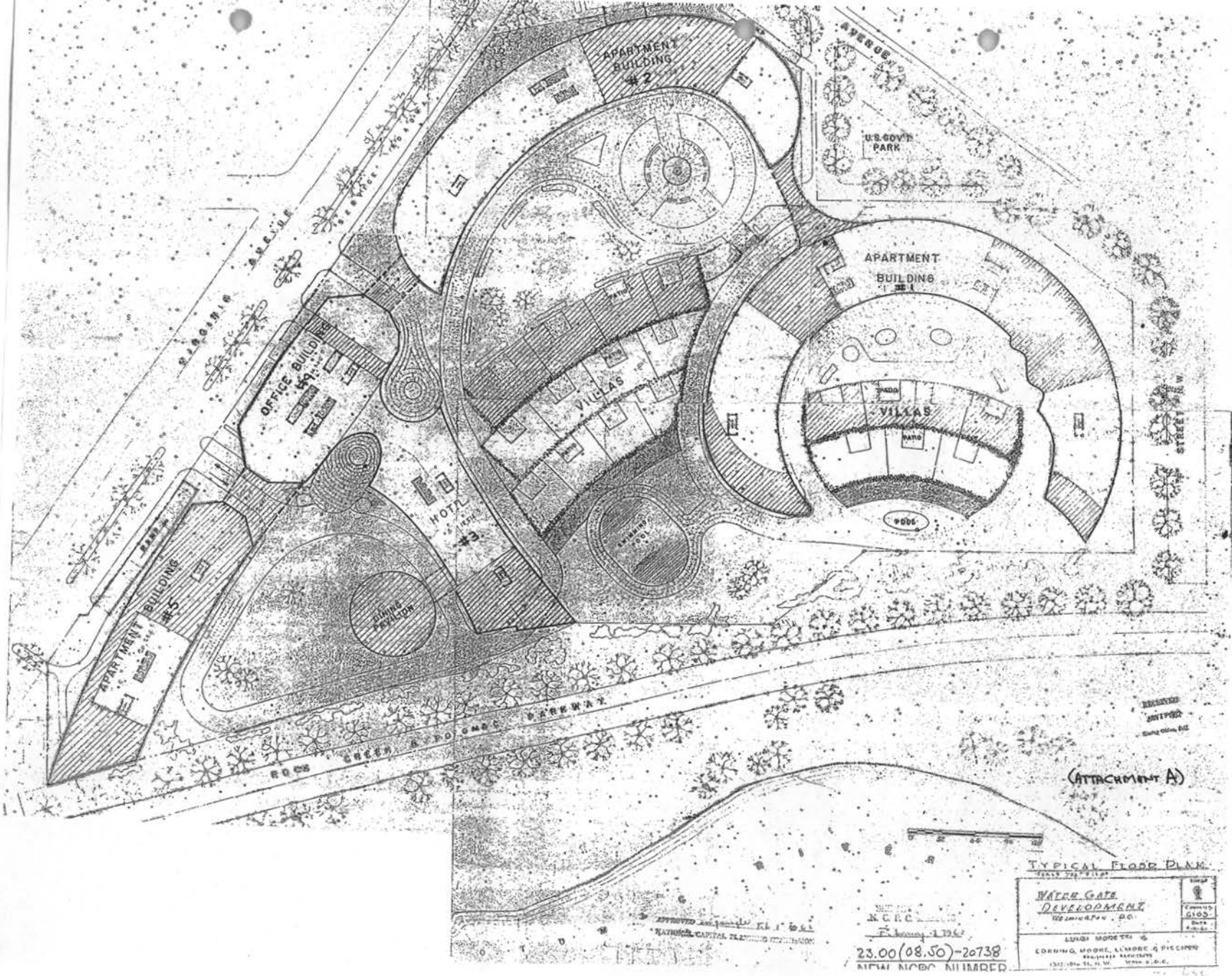
Summary

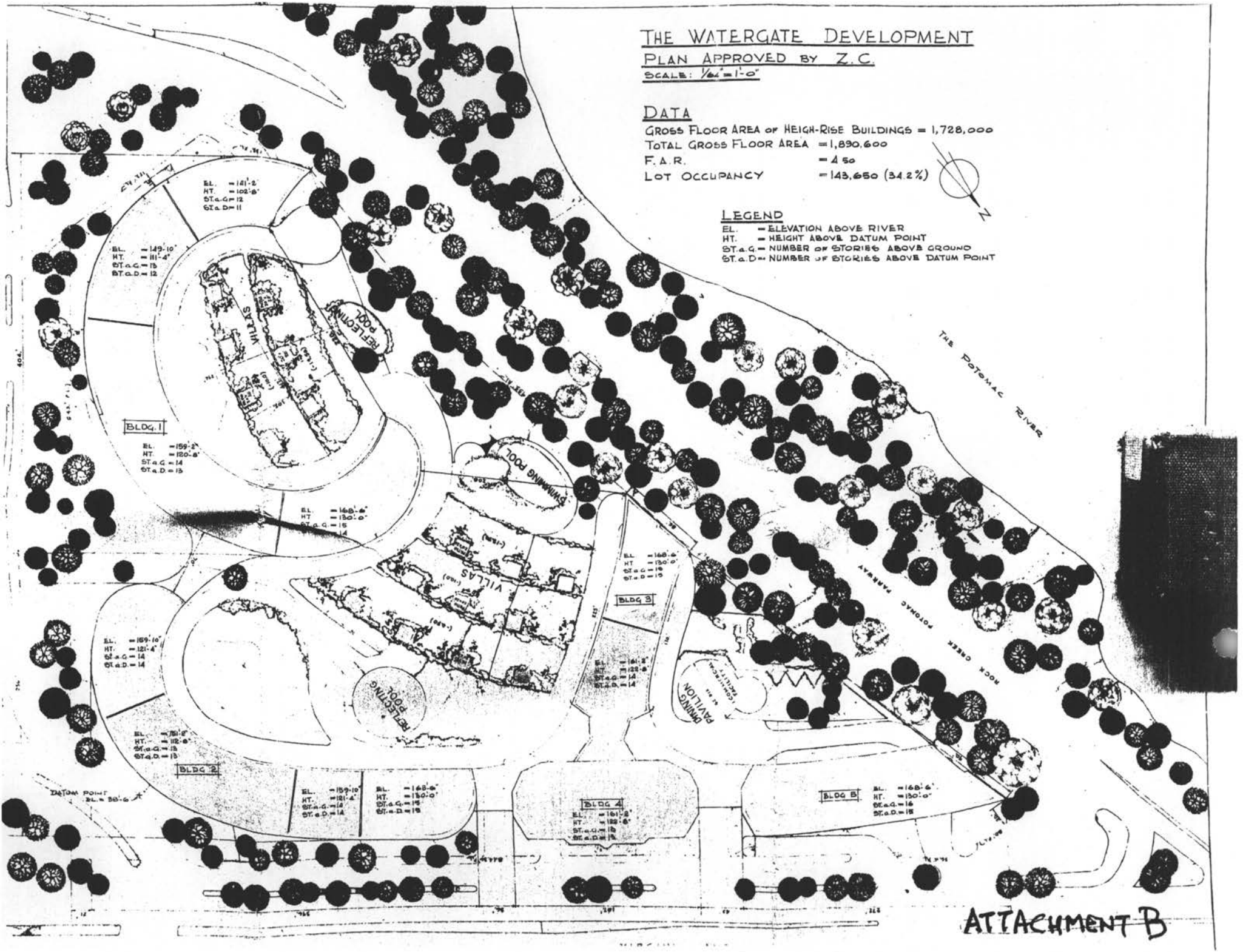
- There are several Comprehensive Plan policies which directly call for encouraging continued improvement of existing hotels in Ward 2 (Sec. 1333.1)
- The Comprehensive Plan states that the DC Government **should not** take actions that would reduce the number of jobs in existence in Ward 2 (Sec. 1301);
- Other than the applicant and the Office of Planning identifying Comprehensive Plan policies dealing with increasing the housing supply in Ward 2, there has not been established **any land use reason** for eliminating the 250 room hotel and altering the established Zoning Order integrated land use mix;

- This PUD amendment would violate the requirement of Section 512.5 of the Regulations dealing with land use balance.
- Amending this carefully planed, well balanced and self contained mix use PUD, by eliminating the 250 hotel rooms and substituting 155 or so apartments, would be contrary to the original intent and purpose of the approved PUD;
- This area has recently lost hotel accommodations. There is now and will continue to be a public need for good (luxury) hotel space in close proximity to the Kennedy Center and the several International and Federal organizations in the close-by neighborhood.

I will be glad to answer any questions from the Commission. Thank you.

ATTACHMENT A


APARTMENT BUILDING #2
U.S. GOV'T PARK
APARTMENT BUILDING #1
VILLAS
VILLAS
OFFICE BUILDING
HOTEL #3
APARTMENT BUILDING #5
DINING PAVILION
POOL
SWIMMING POOL
PATIO
ROCK CREEK & POTOMAC PARKWAY
(ATTACHMENT A)
TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN
WATER GATE DEVELOPMENT
Washington, D.C.
LUIGI MOORE ETAL
CORNING, MOORE, L'MORE & PIECZENIK
NCPC
February 1966
23.00(08.50)-20738
NEW NCPC NUMBER



ATTACHMENT B

TOTAL PROJECT DATA APPROVED BY ZONING COMMISSION ON JULY 17, 1962

	GROSS AREA ABOVE GROUND					GROSS AREA UNDERGROUND	DWELLING UNITS
	ENCLOSED AREAS		OPEN AREAS		TOTALS		
	HIGH-RISE STRUCTURE	1 & 2 STORY STRUCTURE	BALCONIES IN EXCESS OF 6 FT.	COLONNADE GROUND FL.			
RESIDENTIAL	1,303,000	47,500	31,000	[illegible]	1,435,100	[illegible]	[illegible]
HOTEL	197,000		4,000	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]
OFFICES	183,000			[illegible]	[illegible]		
CONNECTIONS		6,500		6,500	[illegible]		
COMMERCIAL	36,000	10,000			46,000	34,000	
COMMERCIAL ADJUNCTS	9,000				9,000	5,000	
SERVICE AREAS						43,500	
HOTEL SERVICES [illegible]						30,000	
[illegible]						438,400	
[illegible]	[illegible]	64,000	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	558,900	1,600

[illegible] BOOK [illegible] PG. 201)

132,150 SQ. FT. = 31.5%

11,500 SQ. FT. = 2.7%

143,650 SQ. FT. = 34.2%

47,500 SQ. FT. = 11.3%

[illegible] P. ZONING 44[illegible]

[illegible] P. ZONING 8)

[illegible]

TOTAL STAGES I, II & III APPROVED BY B.Z.A. AND ALREADY BUI[illegible]

	[illegible]	[illegible]	TOTALS	UNDERGROUND	UNITS
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	700,947		444
OFFICES	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		
CONNECTIONS	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		

TOTAL PROJ

ATTACHMENT C-1

TOTAL PROJECT DATA APPROVED BY ZONING COMMISSION ON DECEMBER 16, 1968

	GROSS AREA ABOVE GROUND					GROSS AREA UNDERGROUND	DWELLING UNITS
	ENCLOSED AREAS		OPEN AREAS		TOTAL		
	GROUND FL.	2ND THRU 13TH FL.	BALCONIES IN 2ND THRU 13TH FL.	COLONNADE GROUND FL.			
RESIDENTIAL	1,792,000		13,000	5,000	1,810,000		769
HOTEL	195,000		12,000		207,000		303
OFFICES	450,000				450,000		
CONNECTIONS			17,268	5,000	22,268		
COMMERCIAL	46,000				46,000	51,232	
COMMERCIAL ANNEXES	9,000				9,000	12,000	
SERVICE AREAS						134,720	
HOTEL SERVICES & RECREATIONAL						23,170	
PARKING GARAGE						589,629	
TOTALS	1,792,000		30,000	40,000	1,862,000	816,432	1,072
	1,792,000		70,000				

2	STORIES	MAXIMUM 13 STORIES ABOVE DATUM PT.
3	HEIGHT	MAXIMUM 111'-6"
4	LOT AREA	419,339 SQ. FT, (D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201)
5	LOT DIMENSION	SEE D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201
6	LOT OCCUPANCY	HIGH-RISE STRUCTURES 146,000 35% CONNECTIONS 5,000 1% TOTAL 151,000 36%
7	F.A.R.	4.44 = 1,862,000 / 419,339
8	PARKING	1,275 SPACES
9	LOADING BERTHS	11 BERTHS
10	OFFICE AREA	450,000 SQ. FT.
11	DWELLING UNITS	APARTMENTS 769 HOTEL 303 TOTAL 1,072
12	COMMERCIAL STORES AND ANNEXES	SEE SEPARATE LIST
13	EASEMENTS	EXISTING 2 (BOTH PUBLIC WITH D.C. SANITARY DEPT. BOTH TO BE CONT.)
14	TOPOGRAPHY	SEE DRAWINGS

Attachment #2

	GROSS AREA ABOVE GROUND					GROSS AREA UNDERGROUND	DWELLING UNITS
	ENCLOSED AREAS		OPEN AREAS		TOTAL		
	GROUND FL.	2ND THRU 13TH FL.	BALCONIES IN 2ND THRU 13TH FL.	COLONNADE GROUND FL.			
	769,600		6,116				

...ISTING 1 + PROPOSED 1 = TOTAL 2 (BOTH PUBLIC WITH D.C. SANITARY ENGINEERING DEPT. BOTH TO BE CONTINUED)

14 TOPOGRAPHY — SEE DRAWINGS

TOTAL STAGES I, II & III APPROVED BY B.Z.A. AND ALREADY BUILT OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION

	GROSS AREA ABOVE GROUND					GROSS AREA UNDERGROUND	DWELLING UNITS
	ENCLOSED AREAS		OPEN AREAS		TOTALS		
			IN ...OF 6 FT.	COLONNADE GROUND FL.			
			7,732	17,150	700,947		444
HOTEL	125,200			1,700	196,900		303
OFFICES	189,400			5,300	194,700		
CONNECTIONS			11,150	2,000	13,150		
COMMERCIAL	21,750				21,750	31,622	
COMMERCIAL ADJUNCTS	9,000				9,000	17,785	
SERVICE AREAS						84,726	
HOTEL SERVICES & RECREATIONAL						18,170	
PARKING GARAGE						379,629	
TOTALS	1,091,415		18,882	26,150	1,136,447	531,932	747
	1,091,415		45,032				

2	STORIES	MAXIMUM 13 STORIES ABOVE DATUM PT.
3	HEIGHT	MAXIMUM 111.5'
4	LOT AREA	419,339 SQ. FT. (D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201)
5	LOT DIMENSION	SEE D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201
6	LOT OCCUPANCY	HIGH-RISE STRUCTURES 91,836 SQ. FT. = 22.0% CONNECTIONS 2,000 SQ. FT. = .5% TOTAL 93,836 SQ. FT. = 22.5%
7	F.A.R.	2.7 = 1,134,447 / 419,339
8	PARKING	695 SPACES
9	LOADING BERTHS	10 BERTHS
10	OFFICE AREA	189,400 SQ. FT.
11	DWELLING UNITS	APARTMENTS [illegible] HOTEL [illegible] TOTAL 747
12	COMMERCIAL STORES AND ADJUNCTS	SEE SEPARATE [illegible]
13	EASEMENTS	EXISTING 2 - [illegible] CONTINUE
14	TOPOGRAPHY	SEE DRAWINGS

ATTACHMENT C-3

).C. SANITARY ENGINEERING
CONTINUED)

10	OFFICE AREA — 11 BERTHS
11	DWELLING UNITS — 450,000 SQ. FT. APARTMENTS 769 HOTEL 303 TOTAL 1,072
12	COMMERCIAL STORES AND ADJUNCTS — SEE SEPARATE LIST
13	EASEMENTS — EXISTING 2 (BOTH PUBLIC WITH D.C. SANITARY DEPT. BOTH TO BE CONT.)
14	TOPOGRAPHY — SEE DRAWINGS

[redacted]

	444
	303
	[redacted]
17,785	
84,726	
18,170	
179,629	
31,932	747

STAGE IV

	GROSS AREA ABOVE GROUND					GROSS AREA UNDERGROUND	
	ENCLOSED AREAS		OPEN AREAS		[redacted]		
RESIDENTIAL	415,735				426,735		
HOTEL							
OFFICES	260,600			4,850	265,450		
CONNECTIONS			6,118	3,000	9,118		
COMMERCIAL	24,250				24,250	10,000	
COMMERCIAL ADJUNCTS							
SERVICE AREAS							
HOTEL SERVICES & RECREATIONAL						5,000	
PARKING GARAGE						210,000	
TOTALS	700,585		11,118	13,850	725,553	285,000	
	700,585		24,968				

2	STORIES — MAXIMUM 13 STORIES ABOVE DATUM PT.
3	HEIGHT — MAXIMUM 111 -0
4	LOT AREA — SEE D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201
5	LOT DIMENSION — SEE D.C. SURVEY BOOK 181, PG. 201
6	LOT OCCUPANCY — HIGH-RISE STRUCTURES 54,164 SQ. FT. CONNECTIONS 3,000 SQ. FT. TOTAL 57,164 SQ. FT.
7	F.A.R. — SEE TOTAL PROJECT DATA
8	PARKING — 580 SPACES
9	LOADING BERTHS — 1 BERTH
10	OFFICE AREA — 260,600 SQ. FT.
11	DWELLING UNITS — APARTMENTS 325
12	COMMERCIAL STORES AND ADJUNCTS — SEE SEPARATE LIST
13	EASEMENTS — NONE
14	TOPOGRAPHY — SEE DRAWINGS

ATTACHMENT C-4

MICHAEL R. SONNENREICH, P. C.
ATTORNEY AT LAW

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January 26, 2004

Ms. Carol J. Mitten, Chair
The Zoning Commission of D.C. Room 210
441 Fourth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Madam Chairman and Members of the Commission,

I just learned that the Watergate Hotel may be sold and converted into cooperative apartments. I have maintained a law office at 2600 Virginia Avenue for many years and am currently the President of the Washington Opera, an organization with which I have also been associated for many years and which has its offices in this building. The Watergate Hotel has symbolized for us the prestige and quality needed in this neighborhood not only because of its high standards but also because of its proximity to the Kennedy Center.

The Kennedy Center, which offers top cultural and entertainment programs, and which houses the Washington Opera, is being renovated. This will increase the need for use of the Watergate Hotel's facilities because it has the status necessary to receive our national and international guests and opera stars, and there is absolutely nothing in this area that can offer the same level of suitable services and amenities.

I also use the Watergate Hotel's restaurant, almost on a daily basis, for lunches on behalf of the Washington Opera. The quality and diversity of what the hotel's restaurant offers is unmatched in this area.

I believe it is essential to keep the Watergate Hotel since it is the only hotel in our neighborhood on which so many of us rely.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Sonnenreich

ATTACHMENT D-1

THE WASHINGTON OPERA

Plácido Domingo – *General Director*

Ms. Carol J. Mitten, Chair
The Zoning Commission of DC, Room 210
441 Fourth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Opposition to the conversion of the Watergate Hotel

Dear Madam Chair:

I am the General Director of The Washington Opera, a resident company at the Watergate complex, and am opposed to the conversion of the Watergate Hotel into cooperative apartments.

The Watergate Hotel is an integral and vital part of the Watergate and surrounding community. The complex as a whole was designed as a planned community, and has existed for forty years. The elimination of the Hotel would not only diminish the lifestyle of the residents, but would adversely affect the position of the Watergate Complex in the District as an acclaimed example of urban living.

I respectfully request that the Commission oppose the conversion.

Sincerely,

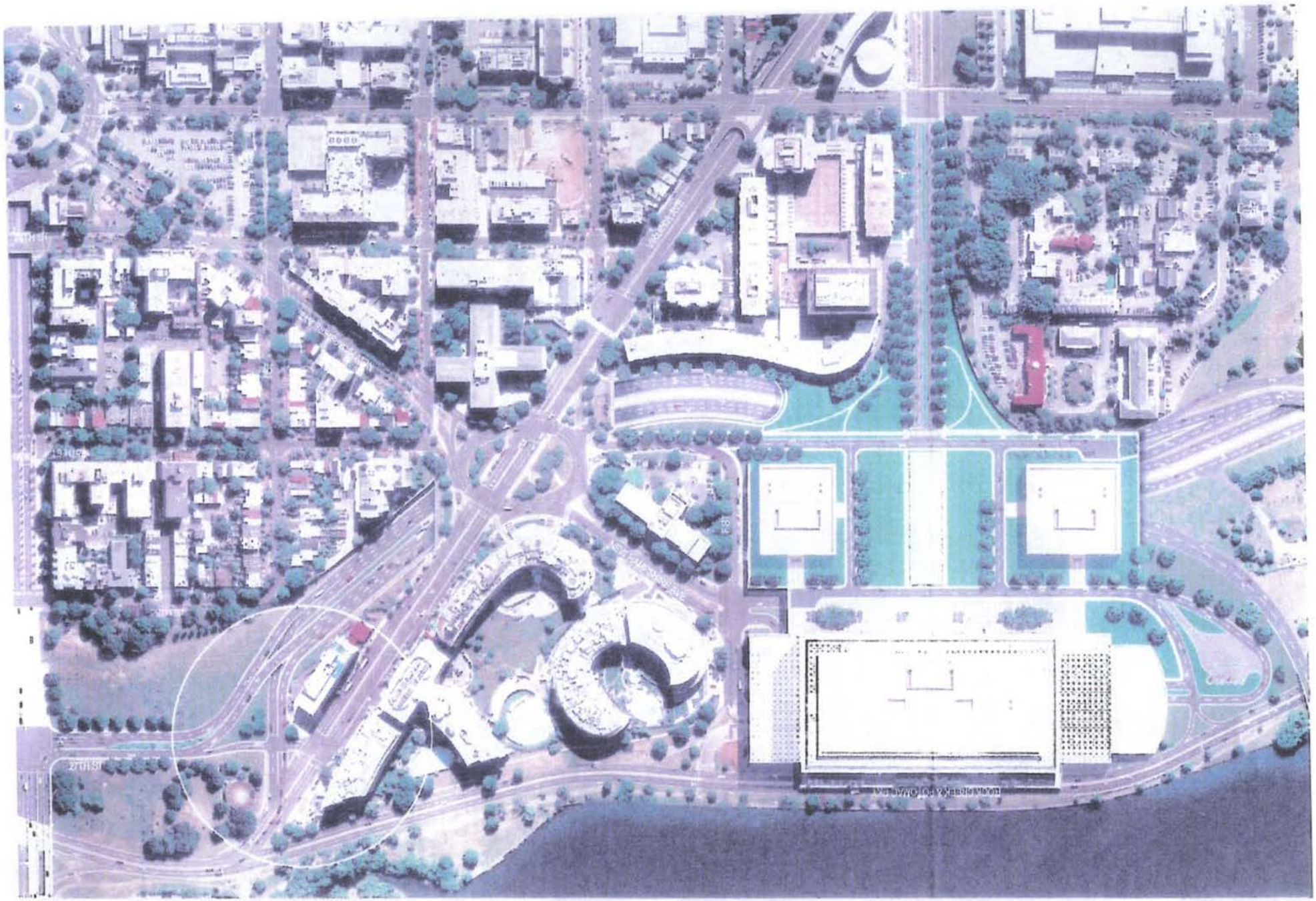
Placido Domingo
General Director
The Washington Opera

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
[illegible] Virginia Avenue, NW • Suite 104 • Washington, D.C. 20037
202 295-4410 • Fax 202.295-4479

www.dc-opera.org

WASHINGTON OPERA STUDIO
6301 Willow Street, NW • 3rd Floor • Washington, D.C. 20015
202.966.3600 • Fax 202.966.3615

ATTACHMENT D-2



PROPOSED ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS TO KENNEDY CENTER

(ATTACHMENT B)

500 1,000


Kennedy
Center

