STATEMENT OF

FRED GREENE OF *FLGALLC*

ON BEHALF OF

WATERGATE WEST

ZONING COMMISSION CASE NO. 03-16

BEFORE THE

DC ZONING COMMISSION

MARCH 4, 2004

GOOD EVENING MADAME CHAIRPERSON, MY NAME IS FRED GREENE. I WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT BRIEFLY ON THE CHALLENGES FACING THE COMMISSION AS YOU DELIBERATE THIS CASE.

FIRST, THE APPLICANT WOULD LEAD YOU TO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A SIMPLE REQUEST TO CONVERT THE HOTEL TO A MORE "FINANCIALLY FEASIBILITY" PROJECT—THAT THE REQUEST IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BECAUSE HOUSING IS A PERMITTED USE IN THE EXISTING SP-2 ZONING—AND THAT THE REQUEST FOR MODIFICATION IS GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BECAUSE THE PLAN ENCOURAGES RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. IN FACT, MR. SHER STATED THAT "WHAT THE AREA NEEDS IS MORE APARTMENT HOUSES."

WELL, MADAME CHAIRPERSON, IT IS NOT THAT SIMPLE. IN FACT, THERE

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IS A MORE COMPLEX ISSUE AT PLAY HERE, AND IT IS THE **INTEGRITY OF THE PUD.** THE COMMISSION HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE PUD AND NOT ALLOW IT TO BE DISINTEGRATED BY AN ENTITY WHO HAS SPOTTED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A FAST BUCK AND "MOVE ON TO THE NEXT PROJECT" AS INDICATED BY THE APPLICANT. IT IS THE COMMISSION'S RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE DISTRICT'S AS WELL, TO **MANAGE** THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, UTILIZING ZONING AS ONE OF ITS TOOLS, TO ENSURE THAT "BALANCE" IS ACHIEVED AND MAINTAINED IN MAKING LAND USE POLICY DECISIONS, AS REFERRED TO IN SECTION 2403.8, WHICH STATES THAT THE COMMISSION SHALL JUDGE AND BALANCE...ANY POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL.

THE APPLICANT, FOR EXAMPLE, STATED THAT THE REQUEST SHOULD BE GRANTED BECAUSE IT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP WHICH ALLOWS HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL. WELL, THAT IS TRUE, **BUT** THE GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP ALSO ALLOWS MEDIUM DENSITY COMMERCIAL—**WHERE IS THE BALANCE?** THE PLAN ALSO STATES THAT HOTELS ARE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF WASHINGTON AND ARE IMPORTANT ACTIVITY GENERATORS, AND THE DISTRICT GOVERNMENT SHOULD **ENCOURAGE** CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING HOTEL—**NOT THE ELIMINATION OF THEM.** CONSEQUENTLY, IT WOULD APPEAR TO ME THAT THE ELIMINATION OF THE WATERGATE HOTEL WOULD BE CONTRARY TO DISTRICT PUBLIC

POLICY, AND LAND USE POLICY AS WELL.

MADAME CHAIR, WE ALL AGREE THAT THE WATERGATE COMPLEX IS A PLANNED COMMUNITY, BUT HAVE WE REALLY STOPPED TO THINK WHAT THAT REALLY MEANS? **WHAT IS A PLANNED COMMUNITY**? WHEN THE ROUSE CORPORATION STARTED COLUMBIA, A LOT OF THOUGHT WENT INTO PLANNING THE OPTIMUM LIVING ENVIRONMENT WHERE EACH USE HAD A PURPOSE AND EACH, BY DESIGN, HAD AN INTER-RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER, IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE FUNCTIONALITY, VITALITY, AND EFFICIENCY. THE SAME THOUGHT PROCESS WAS EMPLOYED BY PLANNERS AND OTHER EXPERTS WHEN THE WATERGATE WAS ORIGINALLY CONSIDERED AND ULTIMATELY APPROVED. THE PLANNING PRINCIPLES OF WHAT CONSTITUTE AN OPTIMUM PLANNED ENVIRONMENT ARE NO DIFFERENT TODAY THAN BACK THEN. THE BALANCE OF USES AND THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIP MAKE THE PLANNED COMMUNITY ATTRACTIVE AND FUNCTION AT OPTIMUM CAPACITY. BOTH COLUMBIA AND THE WATERGATE TOWN, AS IT HAS BEEN REFERRED, I MIGHT ADD, HAVE DEVELOPED THROUGHOUT HISTORY AS TWO OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PLANNED COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

IN SUMMARY, MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION, THE ELIMINATION OF THE HOTEL WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SIGNIFICANCE AND FUNCTIONALITY OF THE PLANNED COMMUNITY (PUD) **YOU INSTALLED** INTO THE FABRIC OF WASHINGTON BACK IN 1962. IT YOUR

RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE A **MACRO LOOK, NOT A MICRO LOOK,** AT THE TRUE IMPACT OF THE REQUEST BEFORE YOU, AND CONSIDER THE PRECEDENT THAT IT WOULD SET FOR OTHER PUD'S LIKE IT. BY CONCLUDING THAT THE REQUEST IS CONSISTENT WITH THE ZONE PLAN BECAUSE HOUSING IS ALLOWED IN THE SP-2 ZONE **IS NOT ENOUGH**. BY INDICATING THAT THE REQUEST IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE BECAUSE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ENCOURAGES HOUSING **IS NOT ENOUGH**. BY ACCEPTING THE ANC'S REASON FOR VOTING IN SUPPORT OF THE MODIFICATION BECAUSE OF FEAR THAT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY MIGHT BUY THE HOTEL AND CONVERT IT TO STUDENT HOUSING **IS NOT ENOUGH**. **WHERE ARE THE PUBLIC BENEFITS AND PROJECT AMENITIES?** PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS 2403.6 AND 2403.7 REQUIRE THEM. THE APPLICANT LISTED THREE BENEFITS AND AMENITIES IN MR. SHER'S TESTIMONY-(1) HOUSING; (2) MAINTENANCE OF THE OVERALL LANDSCAPING AND DESIGN SCHEMES; AND (3) CONTINUED INCLUSION OF HEALTH CLUB AND RESTAURANT BY EXISTING RESIDENTS. **COMMISSIONERS, THAT IS NOT ENOUGH**. IN FACT, THERE IS NO NET NEW BENEFIT OR AMENITY TO BE DERIVED FROM THIS CONVERSION AS REQUIRED BY THE ZONING REGULATIONS. THE HEALTH CLUB IS SMALLER, AND THE RESTAURANT APPEARS TO BE LOCATED AT A MUCH LESS ATTRACTIVE LOCATION.

THE COMMISSION MUST TAKE A LARGER VIEW AND PRESERVE PLANS

THAT ARE WORKING WELL, INSTEAD OF DISMANTLING THEM WHEN THEIR SUCCESS MAKES THEM ATTRACTIVE. IT IS MY OPINION THAT WITHOUT A HOTEL, THE COMPLEX MAY BE LESS ATTRACTIVE TO EVERYONE. IF THE COMMISSION DID NOT TAKE A LARGER VIEW, IT WOULD NOT BE FAIR TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING PROCESSES OR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PLAN, ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING THE PROJECT THAT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, PLANNED AND DEVELOPED WITH YOUR ASSISTANCE—AND ONE, I MIGHT ADD, THAT HAS BECOME A PREMIER ADDRESS IN THE NATION, AND THE WORLD AS A WHOLE.

I CONCLUDE, MADAME CHAIR, BY ASKING THE QUESTION **WHO'S MANNING THE SHIP? WHERE IS THE ATTENTION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF LAND USE POLICY FROM A MACRO (LOOKING AT THE BIGGER PICTURE) STANDPOINT.** IN ALL DUE RESPECT, THE OFFICE OF PLANNING MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY, AS ITS REPORT, UNFORTUNATELY, DID NOT CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT OF THE PROPOSED MODIFICATION ON THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE PLANNED WATERGATE COMMUNITY THAT WAS ESTABLISHED BY ZONING COMMISSION ORDER IN 1962. IT IS NOW UP TO YOU TO DECIDE THE **IMPORTANCE OF THE TRUE MIXED-USE** ASPECT OF THE WATERGATE COMPLEX, INCLUDING THE ROLE THAT THE HOTEL PLAYS, IN MAINTAINING THE VITALITY, VIBRANCY, AND 18-HOUR ACTIVITY OF THIS WELL-PLANNED AND SUCCESSFUL PUD.

THANK YOU.