Mrs. Grazia Ragazzi
2510 Virginia Avenue, NW
Apartment 1002-N
Washington, DC 20037

Tel. (202) 625-6209
Fax (202) 625-6376

Ms. Carol Mitten
Office of Zoning
Suite 210
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

March 4, 2004

Oral Statement in Opposition to PUD Modification – Watergate Hotel (Case No. 03-16)

I have been living at Watergate East for almost ten years. I am strongly against the conversion of the Watergate Hotel to an apartment house.

One of the reasons for my opposition is certainly that the conversion would further aggravate density problems. For example, my husband and I are already buying drugs by mail from outside of the District rather than waiting in the long lines at the Watergate pharmacy.

The main reason for my and others' opposition, though, is more fundamental, and has to do with the need to preserve the Watergate Complex as a world-class monument known throughout the world and attracting to the District many visitors, who cherish the possibility of staying at the Watergate Hotel.

The proposed conversion would alter in an irreversible way the Watergate Complex, which was designed as an integrated environment, in which living (the apartments), working (the offices), visiting (the hotel), and shopping (the mall) would all be essential components: if one disappears, the other ones would suffer, to the detriment of the whole District and its ability to attract visitors by preserving its historical landmarks.

The proposed conversion would also entail shocking changes to the exterior of the Watergate Complex (the anti-aesthetic carports being only one example), thus affecting the Watergate as a work of art, which is a formidable asset not only to its residents but also to the whole city.

I am confident the DC Zoning Commission will not sacrifice to illusory gains the long-term contribution that this historical complex has done and will continue doing to our city.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 03-16
EXHIBIT NO. 29