CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION SOCIETY
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October 20, 2003

Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director, Office of Zoning
Suite 210
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: Case No. 03-21, St. Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc.

Dear Director Kress,

This letter from the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) is in response to the above application. On October 9, 2003, the Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee held a meeting at which the applicant made a presentation on the proposed PUD and Map amendment. After due consideration, the committee recommended that the application be approved with two reservations and that the Board of CHRS send a letter of support.

St. Coletta seeks approval of a consolidated planned unit development (PUD) and map amendment for the northwesterly 5+ acres of Reservation 13. St. Coletta proposes to have the property zoned SP-1 and to build a school for students with cognitive disabilities and special educational needs. The school will have a maximum of 250 students and nearly the same number of staff.

Reservation 13 is a 67acre site that has an approved master plan but is as yet unzoned. The master plan calls for design guidelines to be

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-21
Exhibit 18

ZONING COMMISSION
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CASE NO.03-21
EXHIBIT NO.18

formulated and approved along with the zoning of the property. Neither a zoning of Reservation 13 nor design guidelines has been proposed.

The Office of Planning has recommended that St. Coletta apply for SP-1 zoning. CHRS believes that SP-1 zoning is incorrect on its face and the R-4 is a more appropriate zone for a school on Capitol Hill. The SP-1 zone is a transitional zone between commercial and residential and is not applicable to the circumstances presented in this application. R-4 is a common zone for schools on Capitol Hill and CHRS would support a special exception in this case for St. Coletta to build a private school in a R-4 zone.

CHRS is cognizant that St. Coletta wishes to proceed quickly with construction and supports expeditious approvals so construction can begin. However we are troubled by the lack of design guidelines as required by the approved master plan. Design guidelines could lessen the public disagreement about the proposed design of the building. St. Coletta is not at fault for the lack of design guidelines. However, lacking design guidelines, the neighborhood objection to the design needs to be addressed in a manner that will not unduly delay the applicant.

CHRS welcomes St. Coletta to the neighborhood and looks forward to working with it in the future. We support the application but recommend that R-4 is the proper zone and that design guidelines need to be created as required by the master plan.

Sincerely,

Robert L. M. Nevitt

Robert L. M. Nevitt
President, Capitol Hill Restoration Society

cc: Jacques B. DePuy, Esq.