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MIRIAM HELLEN JONES
ISABEL P SABIO*
JAMES D SADOWSKI
*ADMITTED IN VA ONLY

1620 L STREET, N W , SUITE 900
WASHINGTON, D C 20036-5605

TELEPHONE (202) 452-1400
FACSIMILE (202) 452-1410
www gdllaw com

OF COUNSEL
MICHAEL T CREHAN

January 24, 2005

RECEIVED
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BY MESSENGER

Ms. Jerrily Kress
Director
District of Columbia Office of Zoning
441 Fourth Street, N W
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re. Takoma Park Commercial Overlay District; Z C No. 04-16

Dear Ms Kress

Enclosed is one (1) original and twenty (20) copies of a Statement of Centex Homes pertaining to the proposed Takoma Park Commercial Overlay District.

Please file the original in the official record of Z C No 04-16 Also, please distribute the copies to members of the Zoning Commission at or in advance of the public hearing and circulate the other copies to your staff and others as appropriate. As you know, a public hearing in this proceeding is scheduled for 6:30 p m , Monday, January 24, 2005.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jacques B DePuy (MAC)
Jacques B DePuy

JBD.mac251707v1
Enclosure

cc Ms Jennifer Steingasser (w/o encl.)
Mr Martin Mankowski (w/o encl)
Mr Keith Tunell (w/o encl)
Brian Buczkowski, AIA (w/encl)

ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 04-16
EXHIBIT No. 9

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.04-16
EXHIBIT NO.9

CENTEX HOMES

STATEMENT OF CENTEX HOMES IN SUPPORT OF TEXT AMENDMENT IN Z.C NUMBER 04-16 (TAKOMA NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL OVERLAY) AS PROPOSED TO BE MODIFIED BY THE OFFICE OF PLANNING

January 24, 2005

I am Keith Tunell, Maryland Engineering and Entitlement Manager for Centex Homes DC Metro Division Centex is the contract purchaser of the site at 7041 Blair Road and plans to develop it with a multifamily building containing approximately 151 residential condominium units This property, which is located in Square 3187, will be subject to the proposed Overlay District if it is adopted, and is located in an historic district Among many other efforts undertaken to date, Centex has engaged an architect and engineers to prepare architecture and preliminary site plans, and has met with historic preservation officials regarding the proposed design of its project We hope to move swiftly through the site approval and design process, and to file for a building permit by the end of 2005

We support the proposed Overlay, including the requirements that the streetwall of any new building be set back a minimum of thirteen (13) feet from the adjacent curbline and that the ground floor level of each new building shall have a minimum clear floor-to-ceiling height of fourteen (14) feet Please note that we have interest in the construction of a building with such minimum floor-to-ceiling heights even though the intention would be to put only residential use of such ground floor space

We also support the proposed modification of the draft text amendment proposed by the Office of Planning (OP) set forth on pages 3 and 4 of the OP Report dated October 18, 2004 This modification proposes to exempt certain residential developments, including one that could be constructed in Square 3187, from the proposed ground floor retail requirements

The Office of Planning has summarized the arguments for this exemption very well, as follows

(A) The Blair Road frontage in Square 3187 is isolated from the established commercial corridors in Takoma,

(B) The Takoma Central District Plan, which has been approved by the D C Council, identifies garden apartments and townhouses in this area, including in Square 3187, and

(C) There are no nearby retail uses along Blair Road in this location and none are located across the street in an R-1-B area on the south side of Blair Road [I would like to point out that

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the absence of retail uses in Square 3187 is explained, in part because this square until recently was zoned C-M-1 and has had, and still has, industrial uses No retail has developed here for other reasons discussed below]

In addition, we would like to point out the following

(1) Blair Road is narrow and extremely congested during many hours of the day and night

(2) No parking is allowed on Blair Road in this area The absence of parking is generally the death knell to proposed retail uses

(3) Because of the slope of the site, the garage entrance will be entered off Spring Place Spring Place is an undesirable access point, and it would be unrealistic to expect it to be used by retail customers Furthermore, we are very concerned that providing parking spaces for retail customers in a predominantly residential building will create security problems for future residents and their guests

We appreciate your consideration of our views and urge you to adopt the Overlay as proposed by OP to be modified by the exclusion of the retail requirement from Square 3187

Thank you