MS CAROL MITTEN, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF ZONING
441 4TH ST. N.W.
ROOM 210 SOUTH
WASHINGTON D.C.

FEB - 3 2005

RECEIVED
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2005 FEB -4 AM 11:23

CC: COMMISSIONERS
MR. ANTHONY HOOD, VICE CHAIRMAN
MR. KEVIN HIDEBRAND
MR. JOHN PARSONS
MR. GREG JEFFERIES
MS. SHARON SCHILLIN
MR. CLIFF MOY

RE: CASE N.04-22 (ABDO DEVELOPMENT, LLC-220 H STREET, N.E.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2005 6:30 P.M.
OFFICE OF ZONING HEARING ROOM 441 4TH STREET, N.W.-
SUITE.220-S
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

Dear Board of Zoning Commissioners:

Mr. Chairman and Co Chairman and other Commissioners,

We are requesting party status as residents and property owners of square 776, who will be most effected by this project, and to be allowed to testify concerning the appropriateness of this project.

We ask that you consider and accept this testimony as additional objections to this proposed development as presented, during your deliberations of February 8 and 24.

First we would like to state that we are for development in our community but we would like for it to be compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Thank You, for this opportunity to give testimony, which is our civic duty concerning this Plan development and colossal expansion in our neighborhood.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-22
EXHIBIT NO. 45

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.04-22
EXHIBIT NO.45

As you are aware the residential square with over 20 homes and close to a 100 residents is at a fundamental level the first political unit of our organized communities in this city. All of our ANC's, Councilmember's and even the Mayor gets their support, criticisms, suggestions and marching orders form these units.

This unit is the beginning of our social, political and economic community responsibility. We have a profound duty to protect, serve and help enrich our community.

We give this testimony because of our deep concern over what this proposed development, as it is presented, may do to the historical character of our community.

We oppose the proposal to exceed the existing building height several stories which will result in our panoramic view of our western skyline being block. We think the city has recently been allowing two many developers to exceed the district long standing height limitations on building which was enacted decades ago to protect the ariel beauty of our capital city. We ask that the commission enforce the current height restrictions.

We ask that the commission look at and compare the commercial building height just west of the H Street bridge and sitting in a very low line terrain, at about 12 stories maximum and the new federal building just south of us with a maximum of 12 stories which also sit in a very low line area called historically "swamp poodle". Look how these structures dwarf all other entities around them. The schools, churches, private homes are directly effected by these colossal building blocking out the sun light and casting a huge shadows over the neighborhood that's so close to the US Capitol. It once was thought that the US capitol was the tallest building in this section of the city allowing it to be viewed from the air all across this historic city. Allowing these colossal building so close is certainly not respecting that history.

Please consider that this proposed development is planning to at least double the existing structures height and maybe matching and exceeding the stories of the other commercial and federal buildings that were mentioned. This would surely impact the site lines, the western setting sun and the historical architectural symmetry of the Capitol Hill colonial neighborhood.

This proposed building height and residential development is just too big and out of place for this neighborhood!

We oppose the proposed developments density proposal which includes 500 units on a residential square and neighborhood that was not originally design for 500 times two additional people. We ask that the commission insist that the development reconfigure its density proposal.

We ask that the commission look at how this proposed development of 500 units will affect the parking availability in the existing neighborhood. The developer should be required to find an alternative solution to this problem. Residents of this development will have the option of parking inside of the development and on the street. Square 776 residents have only one option and that is to fight for street parking in front of their own homes. This is not a fair arrangement.

We ask that the commission insist that the developer meet with the effected residential squares to iron out problems and come to a joint solution on how to make this a successful addition to the community and not an albatross.

We recognize that developments will be coming all over the city but we insist on our civic right to play a major part in it, since we have years and generations of investment in this area. We understand fully as one commission said that their decision "must strike a balance" between existing community and new development. We humbly ask that the balance be fair. We have seen neighborhoods where this has worked (Think Georgetown). We ask for development and a fair balance. We wonder if residents of Michigan Park or any other highly concentrated neighborhood of single family homes would allow this type of development on their residential square. We doubt it. We expect and welcome new residents but we don't want the rights of long time old residents that have given much towards the history, culture and development of this city to be truncated and put on the back burner just because something is new. That is not right!

As the Developer and the Commission took the interest of the H street business community to heart (since the developer is not offering any businesses in the project to compete with H street). We would surely expect that square 776 concerns be address also. That would be fair.

We witnessed the various testimonies of concern citizens or groups that were for the project.

Our prospective on some of that testimonial are as follows;

Councilwoman Sharon Ambrose appear to have been for most development in our area without consulting with all those whom this development may effect.(She has her own issues concerning on rather or not she truly represent the best interest of the community as is evident in the recent recall efforts against her).

The Architect, Mr. Esocoff is well none for his work in this city but he benefits from this directly since he is the designer. He made references to projects on Connecticut Avenue and Cleveland Park and stated that the shadow effect of this huge building is not that much. This Capitol Hill area is not Cleveland Park or Connecticut Avenue. Both of those areas have higher land elevation, a different topography and various high raise building designs. It would not seem appropriate to suggest that the two areas are comparable. Ask him to submit complete site ariel views from Square 776 resident's homes, from the south, north, and west of the project. Also ask him to submit views from the old children's center in relationship to the maximum height of the new project. Ask him to submit detail shadow studies. We ask you not to make a decision on this application until after you have reviewed these.

What may work in those above mentioned areas would surely be out of place for Capitol Hill. Most structures are no more than three stories high. The other neighborhoods don't have the US Capitol. Let us not make Washington D.C. an ugly Ariel city like New York. Let us continue to enjoy the trees!

The Director of the Children's Museum testified for the project and is listed as a co applicant of the project even though the museum has sold out and left the neighborhood. This testimony is at best misleading. Why they are still listed as co applicant or a neighbor and they have left the neighborhood for greener pasture?

Two ANC representatives, one from the area who was just elected and one from the Near Northeast Neighborhood seem to support it despite the reality that they both are un informed as to the neighborhood's position on the

matter. They have not consulted with any one on square 776 concerning this issue.

Station Park Neighborhood Association's representative raise the issue about the Children's Center building being historic but the applicant has not agreed to keeping its original historic building and has all but designed a project that will totally dwarf and obscure the historic building while at the same time declaring in the application that he is sensitive to the historical nature of the building. How can this be? Yet this neighborhood Association still apparently supports the project event though questions were raise as to whether their ANC boundary was within the parameters for comments.

There was other testimony given in support of this project whereas the persons truthfully wouldn't be directly impacted by his project, as Square 776 residents would be. Where did these people come from and why did they have so much say?

Let us be clear that none of those who testified in support of this project can claim a greater negative impact of this development than the residents of Square 776. We live right across the street from it and will be directly affected by the colossal building's huge shadow, the 500 plus two people and the parking nightmare.

We ask the Commission to please review the transcript of the previous hearing on this issue and all of the testimony that was given in favor of the project. We highlight the pointed and fair questions that were asked by Commissioner Hildebrand and witnessed that the applicant give very weak responses to most of his questions and did not answer some at all. We submit that those questions and answers should be critical to your determining if this project should be approved or ordered to be scaled down.

We ask those same questions and would expect that the applicant for a project this size would have compiled better answers.

Finally, we believe that we all are Stewarts of our beloved community and we all have a vital role to play in making it better. This includes Developers, BZA Commissioners, Property Owners, Business owners, ANC Commissioners, City councilpersons, Mayor and last but not lease, homeowners and residents. Since our decisions will effect future generations and the over all view of our neighborhood we should delineate

and make the best decision possible for all concern. We should make the decision fairly and on balance, for the record will reflect Who said what?, Who did What?, Who sign off on what?, and Why?

Thank you for your consideration. We value your wise counsel.

On behalf of Residents and Property owners on Square 776

Co Chair Maekie McCrea 2/3/10005
814 4th Street N.E.
Washington D.C. 20002
202 543-1769 mmccrea3308@aol.com