

TESTIMONY OF FOREST CITY WASHINGTON TO
ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
REGARDING PROPOSED ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS

Z.C. CASE No. 04-33A (INCLUSIONARY ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT)

October 19, 2006

Good evening, Madame Chair and Members of the Zoning Commission. I am Ramsey Meiser, Senior Vice President of Development for Forest City Washington. I am accompanied by Jacques DePuy, land use counsel for our SouthEast Federal Center ("SEFC") project.

I am pleased to appear before you in support of the recommendation made by the Office of Planning in its September 25, 2006 report to this Commission pertaining to the SEFC site. Specifically, we support the OP's recommendation that the SouthEast Federal Center Overlay be excluded from the Inclusionary Zoning Map.

I know that this Commission is very familiar with the SEFC site since it held public hearings regarding, and in 2004 adopted, a zoning overlay district that applies to the site. However, for the record of this proceeding, let me briefly summarize our project. Forest City's proposed Southeast Federal Center neighborhood will provide over 5.5 million square feet of new development in approximately thirty (30) buildings, a significant number of which are "contributing" historic structures. Upon completion the site will contain over 2,800 residential housing units featuring a mixture of incomes and tenure types, 1.8 million square feet of office space, up to 400,000 square feet of retail and cultural amenities, critical infrastructure (new streets and utilities) and a major new park and riverfront esplanade along the Anacostia River.

We support OP's recommendation that the SEFC site be excluded from the IZ map for the following reasons.

A. First, the SEFC site is currently owned by the Federal Government. The land was subject to an RFP that the GSA issued in 2003. During that RFP process the overall site density was determined through negotiations with GSA. That determination was further reinforced by the zoning overlay district that was approved by this Commission. The mapping of the IZ program at the SEFC site would be in conflict with those previously made determinations.

B. Second, a significant portion of the SEFC site is historic,¹ a fact that makes benefiting from the proposed bonus density difficult to achieve. Indeed, because of the large number of historic buildings and because the SEFC zoning overlay limits the site's overall density, we are unable to achieve the maximum permitted FAR on the site. Thus, we are essentially unable to

¹ According to documentation expected to be signed by GSA and Forest City in the near future, there are six (6) extant "contributing" historic structures on the SEFC site. These buildings consist of structures all dating to the Navy occupation in the 20th century and include a Transportation Repair Shop, Pattern and Joiner Shop, Maker's Shop, Lumber Shed and other historic buildings and resources.

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use the “bonus density” provided by the IZ program. For your information, I’ve attached several plans that depict the historic structures that are located within the site.

Please note that if this Commission decides to exclude all historic districts from the IZ map, we nevertheless recommend that the entirety of the SEFC site be exempt from the IZ map because the historic district boundaries are not identical to the SEFC boundaries.

We are appreciative of all the hard work and effort from the Office of Planning and the Zoning Commission on this issue and, as it pertains to SEFC, would encourage the Commission to support OP’s recommendations as currently drafted. I would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to appear.

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