June 2, 2005

Chairman and Members of the Zoning Commission
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Zoning Commission Case No. 05-08 - Capital Gateway Overlay District Text Amendment, Squares 702-706 and Res. 247

Dear Chairman and Members of the Zoning Commission:

As a resident who lives within a mile of the proposed ballpark, I am keenly interested in the proposed redevelopment of this area to ensure that the new ballpark and associated development are integrated into and compatible with the surrounding community. I am also interested in ensuring that any negative impacts associated with the ballpark are sufficiently mitigated. I have read the staff report of the proposed ballpark text amendment prepared by the Office of Planning and had several conversations with Joel Lawson, Development Review Planner, who has been very responsive to my requests for information and subsequent discussion of the proposed zoning changes.

In general, I am supportive of the proposed text amendment. I am pleased that the amendment calls for the redevelopment of the area with a mix of uses to create a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented place; limits the amount of on-site parking spaces and encourages the use of public and other forms of transportation to access the area; and requires a review process by the Zoning Commission for the future ballpark and other new development. Redevelopment of this magnitude warrants substantial public consideration and comment and extreme vigilance on the part of public officials to ensure that the benefits of this redevelopment accrue to the community.

With regard to the proposed text amendment, I offer the following comments for your consideration:

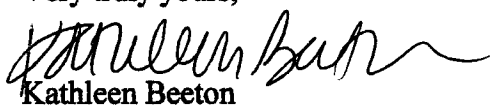
- As stated in the staff report, one of the planning principles to be considered during the future review of a development plan for the ballpark is that it "be in context with the surrounding neighborhood and street patterns"(revised summary). This is a critical principle that should be considered for any redevelopment, ballpark or otherwise, that may occur in this area. In addition, I believe that specific emphasis should be added to strengthen this language to both **ensure and promote** this level of integration and connectivity with the existing community

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- It is also extremely important that the future ballpark and other new development provide a mix of uses, including **residential**, to ensure that the area is vibrant year-round, not just on game days. A mix of uses, including residences, will assist in creating a vibrant, exciting place as well as a market to help support the new restaurants, services and other uses that are anticipated to co-locate with the ballpark.
- I strongly support the limit of on-site parking spaces to 1,225 and would object to **any** additional on-site parking. As the site is in close proximity to a Metro Station and has Metrobus access, public transportation should be the primary mode of transportation to the ballpark area. Land use decisions should encourage and support the use of public transportation by both patrons and employees to this area. The MCI Center is a successful example here in the City of this principle in action. Providing any additional parking is a huge disincentive for public transportation usage.
- Section 1606.8 of the proposed text amendment limits the number of on-site parking spaces and provides a mechanism for the approval of additional parking spaces if needed "to satisfy parking demand generated by the ballpark not met by existing or approved but not yet constructed parking facilities." No threshold or other standard beyond being needed is required by this language. I strongly recommend that before permitting any additional on-site spaces, a thorough parking study be conducted to assess the parking demand in order to verify whether such demand exceeds supply and to evaluate the range of alternatives that exist to address the additional demand identified in the parking study. Thus, I recommend language be added to Section 1606.8 (a) requiring an independent analysis of existing parking supply and demand, with an evaluation of alternatives, be submitted for review by the City Planning staff and Zoning Commission as part of any future request for additional on-site parking.
- On a related note, if additional surface or above grade parking is allowed to be constructed, there should be an enhanced screening and buffering requirement to mitigate against the impacts of the parking. I suggest revising the language of Sections 1606.7 (a) and 1606 9 to include a requirement to this effect.

In closing, it is incumbent on all of us to ensure that the proposed zoning will both protect the existing community by mitigating against negative impacts and ensure the highest quality redevelopment of the area with substantial public benefits. Thank you for this opportunity to share my concerns with you. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Very truly yours,



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