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Washington, DC
July 24, 2006

Ms Carol Mitten, Chair
DC Zoning Commission
District of Columbia Office of Zoning
441 Fourth St., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001

Subj: Case # 05-34, Square 895/Lot 76, 708 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Capitol Hill

Dear Ms. Mitten.

I am writing to support the decision by the Zoning Commission to change the zoning on the Medlink Property (Square 895, Lot 76) from high density R5D to the compromise moderate density R-5B. I would have preferred the lower zoning level of R-4, as requested by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), but R-5B is a reasonable compromise, subject to the condition that a PUD never be approved for any project on the property. A Planned Unit Development (PUD) combined with an R-5B zoning would allow a size and density totally incompatible with the neighborhood.

The decision to downzone the Medlink property from R-5D is a reasonable action, not in any way unfair or capricious, intended to correct a mistake made when the property was upzoned. The original zoning for the site was R-4, the same as the rest of the neighborhood, and was only upgraded to R-5D to accommodate expansion of a hospital, with the support of the community due to a need at that time for better hospital services in the neighborhood. This need no longer exists. Any use of the high density zoning to allow dense residential development would violate the original intent of the upzoning, and would be considered a violation of the public trust.

Moderate density R-5B, without a PUD, is compatible with the DC Comprehensive Plan, which specifies moderate density for Capitol Hill. This density would allow a residential development compatible with the existing residential neighborhood. The present R-5D zoning would allow buildings with up to 90-foot height, which would tower over the lovely old St. James Church and the neighboring historic townhouses. This would be totally architecturally incompatible with the neighborhood and inappropriate to the surrounding Capitol Hill Historic District.

I have lived one block from the Medlink site for 28 years, and certainly support the idea of residential use of that site, but not at the expense of gridlock, parking shortages and large buildings towering over historic row houses. For all the above reasons I applaud the Zoning Commission's decision to downzone the Medlink property, and I urge you to make this decision final.

Sincerely,


Kendall T. LePoer

600 Constitution Ave. NE
Washington, DC 20002
202-547-3938

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 05-34

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
EXHIBIT NO. 65

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