



FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARBORETUM

3501 New York Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20002-1958

phone 202-544-8733 fax 202-544-5398 WWW.FONA.ORG

Testimonials submitted by
The Friends of the National Arboretum

William B. Inglee, Chairman of the Board
Kimberly Rush Lynch, Program Director, Washington Youth Garden

November 9, 2006

Case No.06-15

Abdo New York, LLC

Consolidated Planned Unit Development & Related Zoning Map Amendment

Office of Zoning and Hearing

441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 220-South

Washington, D.C. 20001

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 06-15

EXHIBIT NO. 52

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Chairwoman Mitten and Members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is William Inglee. I have the honor of serving as the Chairman of the Board of the Friends of the National Arboretum. I am here today to convey the support of that organization for the proposal of the Abdo Development Corporation.

As you know, the National Arboretum occupies 446 acres of land that fronts on both New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road, very close to the proposed development site. It is sometimes referred to as the "best kept secret in Washington." Both New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road serve largely as corridors for commuters. As major gateway into the city, New York Avenue is not welcoming nor does it offer much in the way of amenities to the general population. The proposed Abdo project would greatly enhance New York Avenue, which is the District's gateway for so many people. It would be desirable to send a new message to commuters from Maryland – a message that all over the District new buildings are providing attractive, nurturing places for District residents. A project like this might well encourage people to abandon their weary commute and move into the District, bringing tax dollars and reducing pollution from all the commuters' vehicles.

The Abdo proposal would enhance our neighborhood. Currently, there are few restaurant options and almost no retail services. This proposal would bring a market, a pharmacy and retail services, all amenities that this neighborhood urgently needs.

The Friends of the National Arboretum would welcome new neighbors. Both we and the National Arboretum staff currently provide a number of programs for the public, including a very successful Youth Garden. We appreciate our neighbors and would be delighted to see more people take advantage of this beautiful space.

I know that the area near the Arboretum is one of the few places in the District that is currently zoned for industrial uses. We agree that the current businesses are essential to the city but they do not need to be located on major arterial roads. We Friends of the National Arboretum want to be good neighbors and we want to share the treasures of the Arboretum with as many people as possible. Having thriving new residences and businesses near us would be most welcome.

On behalf of all the Friends of the National Arboretum, I would urge you to approve the Abdo Development Corporation proposal.



9 November 2006

Chairwoman Mitten and Members of the Zoning Commission:

My name is Kimberly Rush Lynch and I am the Program Director for the Washington Youth Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum which is a program of the Friends of the National Arboretum. Like Mr. Inglee, I appreciate the opportunity to pledge my support for the proposed Abdo Development Corporation project on New York Avenue.

Founded in 1971, the Washington Youth Garden provides a unique, year-round environmental science and food education program for D.C. youth and their families. Using the garden and Arboretum as a living classroom, the program teaches participants to explore their relationships with food and the natural world. Adventures in healthy cooking and eating, organic gardening and environmental literacy cultivate lifelong skills which transform our participants and the community.

Two of our programs, *Seed to Supper* and *Growing Food...Growing Together*, take place in the ¾ acre Youth Garden located on the grounds of the U.S. National Arboretum. Through these programs, we teach youth and families how to grow their own organic produce and herbs and then how to turn these fresh, nutritious ingredients into tasty, yet healthy dishes for their families.

Currently, *Seed to Supper* is a summer partnership with the D.C. Parks and Recreation's Arboretum Recreation Center in which we serve youth from the Arboretum, Brentwood, Carver Terrace and Trinidad/Ivy City neighborhoods. Our *Growing Food...Growing Together* participants and volunteers come from various communities around the District once a week and must rely on their personal vehicles or the B2 or X6 bus lines to get to the Youth Garden. We are very much looking forward to working with a community of program participants and volunteers that can easily walk to our Youth Garden and visit and nurture their 5 x 15 garden plots more than once a week. We envision that the increased frequency of participation will create a closer-knit community and more opportunities for our community of gardeners and culinary enthusiasts.

On behalf of the Washington Youth Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum, I would urge you to approve the Abdo Development Corporation proposal.

Friends of the National Arboretum

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Friends of the National Arboretum Mission

The Friends of the National Arboretum is an independent, 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization established to enhance, through public and private sector resources, support for the U.S. National Arboretum.

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