

**Testimony of Melissa Rohan  
Near SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council  
Consultant**

**"SW Waterfront Redevelopment PUD Hearing"**

**Hearing before the Zoning Commission  
One Judiciary Square  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street Northwest, Room 220 South  
Monday, July 18, 2011, 6:30 pm**

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**ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia**  
CASE NO. 11-03  
EXHIBIT NO. 78

Chairman Hood, Vice Chairman Schlater and Commissioners, thank you for inviting me to testify this evening.

My name is Melissa Rohan and I am the owner of a small business located in SW in its start-up year. My company is a boutique communications firm, MT Rohan Communications LLC, with a handful of clients on the cusp of becoming something bigger. This is a dream that has been brewing for about 12 years and my vision is to bring in only those clients that I truly believe in, and treat each one as if they are my one and only. One of my clients is the Near SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC).

I support the SW Waterfront Development and I strongly encourage you to adopt all of CBCC's recommendations in the PUD (Appendix A). That said, there is one recommendation that I personally feel compelled to speak about, the CBE community benefit.

There needs to be oversight and outreach to the SW small business community and budding entrepreneurs in our neighborhood.

### **Small Businesses and CBE**

For those that have never started their own business from scratch, let me walk you through some of the basics. I am the boss, the chief financial officer, the salesperson, the bookkeeper, the office manager, the receptionist, the scheduler, the IT expert, the HR person, and the janitor. Clearly each day is very busy.

A couple of months ago, I started the process in acquiring a CBE certification. I am still pending certification and unless something unexpected happens, I suspect I will be certified shortly. The application process alone was overwhelming; it took nearly a full week from all my jobs I mentioned.

One thing that every businessperson learns quickly is that time away from work is money lost. The bills continue to grow, the work piles up, the prospective clients go somewhere else, and some of the momentum dissipates. One week away from work becomes a week and a half when you consider the time it takes to catch up afterwards.

I am not complaining as I am very excited for the future of my company and I am rolling up my sleeves. That said, a less savvy businessperson may not see the benefits of going through the process when working out the cost-benefit ratio, especially given the time away from the work they love and the loss of money associated with time away from immediate revenue-producing aspects of the business.

Many small businesses and budding entrepreneurs in the SW community will need technical assistance to secure the CBE. This type of assistance should be among the benefits in the amenities package.

Additionally if the applicants, District of Columbia and the Developers, gesture to give preference to Ward 6 CBE's is sincere then significant oversight and outreach operations need to be in place in the SW neighborhood.

### **Preference and Oversight**

The CBCC is asking that the Applicants include language in the PUD which states a preference that 5% of the 35% CBE requirement be procured from Ward 6 and that the Applicant, along with the CBCC and other neighborhood based bodies, agree on a monitoring process to include the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD).

I personally don't think 5% is a large enough request, given that residents are asked to tolerate street closures, dust, views of scaffolding and cranes, and other uncomfortable aspects and risks of redevelopment, especially when Ward 8 is awarded a 10% preference. That said, I do request that the 5% is memorialized today in the Phase 1 PUD order.

In the endeavor to keep all efforts earnest, all stakeholder representatives need to agree on a process to monitor this commitment that should include the Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD).

### **Outreach**

Southwest is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in DC, an egalitarian vision born in the redevelopment of the 1960s - rich and poor, black and white, gay and straight, young and old.

With that said, in addition to giving our community preference, there needs to be a targeted effort in communicating these opportunities to residents in SW. Our distinct diversity also means that communications needs to take many different shapes and forms to be effective. And this message of inclusion is only meaningful if all demographics hear the message in enough time to actively respond.

While the developers have made commitments for unique and local retail as well as incubator and trial spaces at below market rents, these opportunities need to be appropriately communicated in order for them to be meaningful to the SW neighborhood.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I support the SW Waterfront Redevelopment with an adoption of the CBCC's recommendations as I think this ensures that the amenities package will be meaningful to the whole community.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify this evening. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

D.C. Zoning Commission Public Hearing  
Case No. 11-03  
Southwest Waterfront 1<sup>st</sup> Stage Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendments

Testimony of Rev. Ruth W. Hamilton, Chairperson,  
the Near SE-SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC)  
July 18, 2011

Preface

The Near SE-SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC) began in 2005 with public meetings down on the Waterfront to organize the community in the face of massive redevelopment beginning to happen. Out of that effort, CBCC came into being as a 501c3 not-for-profit, incorporated in the District of Columbia in 2010.

*The Articles of Incorporation state:... the CBCC is organized to ...ensure that ANC 6D redevelopment sustains neighborhood diversity and improves residents' quality of life; to participate in negotiating ANC 6D community-benefits agreements; to address issues such as (but not limited to) creating a community center or workforce center or both, maintaining housing diversity, and increasing the supply of neighborhood-oriented retail.*

CBCC joins ANC6D commissioners and the SW Neighborhood Assembly board in testifying in support of the Applicant and like our neighborhood's elected leaders, we have specific requests to the Zoning Board, asking you to affirm and memorialize in your definitive and guiding ruling certain agreements that are now scattered across city agencies.

Whereas most of the testimony in this Stage One PUD hearing is related to massings, sight lines, circulation, etc., CBCC has limited its testimony to the matters that relate to our urban, national and global issues of poverty, unemployment, affordable housing, and opportunities for growth.

Memorializing Ward 6 and SW Preferences

As citizens of the District we are grateful that the city negotiated important community benefits as part of the LDA and that our District Wards with the highest rates of unemployment were named. But as residents of Ward 6 and specifically ANC6D, we are aware that within our community we have neighbors within a few blocks of this massive development living generation to generation in deep poverty and wary of promises that development will benefit them rather than remove them.

Southwesters see any new redevelopment as the chance to right the wrongs that were done to a community in the Urban Renewal of the 50s and 60s. Unless the current residents of this neighborhood are specifically targeted for services and preferences, it is as if the memory of the first removal had been forgotten. Your ruling can help it be remembered.

- 1) Highlight in your ruling the language from the 2008 First Source Agreement stating that the Applicant *shall use good faith diligent efforts to hire residents of Southwest Washington, DC for such new jobs.*
- 2) Include in your ruling that the Workforce Intermediary Program will at minimum have a satellite location in SW.
- 3) Include in your ruling that the Affordable Housing Plan make provision for reasonable preferences for residents of and workers who provide services in Ward 6 for all affordable categories offered (30% AMI, 60% AMI, 100% and 125% workforce)
- 4) Include in your ruling that 5% of the 35% CBE requirement be procured from Ward 6.

#### Memorializing a Process for Implementing and Monitoring Benefits Related to SW

CBCC commends the Applicant for significant outreach to the community and other wards as they are related to the project. CBCC also understands that when it comes to monitoring and enforcing of agreements, the “devil is in the details.” CBCC is prepared to work with Zoning’s PUD enforcement officer related to our areas of concern, therefore it is critical that the PUD at Stage One spell out the process by which the community will have a role in implementing and monitoring benefits. It is not enough to have an agreement on a shelf.

In the Applicant’s response to the ANC6D Resolution, the applicant has stated that: *Outreach with community has been ongoing and is anticipated to continue through Stage 2 PUD process and through construction of the project. HMW will continue to work with ANC 6D and other Southwest neighborhood oriented committees that are acknowledged by the ANC in the areas of workforce development, certified business enterprise hiring, and affordable housing.*

- 1) We would ask that your ruling name CBCC as one of the entities to be included in neighborhood oriented committees related to workforce, CBE and affordable housing. Both the current ANC6D and SWNA testimony have adopted CBCC’s three major requests for community benefits, thereby acknowledging CBCC’s leadership role related to these areas of the project.
- 2) We would ask that your ruling specify a time-frame for community engagement that goes beyond “through construction of the project” which suggests that community issues related to workforce, cbe and housing will cease at the end of construction. The lease is long-term. The process for implementing and monitoring agreements should be long-term as well.

#### Partnership for Community Enrichment and Services

Finally, CBCC is extremely grateful that Mr. Hoffman has signed a statement that includes this sentence: *HMW agrees to forge an ongoing relationship with ANC 6D and the community to realize the vision for a long needed community center.*

## Appendix A

Mr. Hoffman's support indicates that he understands that investment in buildings, piers, shops and roads is not enough to create a healthy community. We must invest in people. We must develop people and give them opportunities for self-development.

As a leader in the District's development community, the participation of Mr. Hoffman and his partners will be key in bringing in other developers as well as the city and community to establish a vision and a plan to build a world-class community center or campus of services for a world-class neighborhood.

- 1) CBCC, therefore, asks the Zoning Board to memorialize in its ruling, as part of this Applicant's community benefits package, the Applicant's participation in a joint City/Developers/Resident partnership to plan, finance and achieve creation of a comprehensive community center or campus for enrichment and services in and for the whole SW neighborhood.

### Closing

In Milan Kundera's novel, "The Book of Laughter and Forgetting," a character named Mirek makes the following observation: "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against oblivion."

CBCC represents a diverse community of people without the power of money or position, multiple offices or staff. For the average citizen, memory is our greatest asset and the ruling of the Zoning board in addition to the LDA provides the public with memory of agreements made, of human values lifted up, of a common vision shared.

Thank you for being a keeper of the public memory.