

COALITION FOR SMARTER GROWTH

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July 18, 2011

Antony Hood
Chairman, D.C. Zoning Commission
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street NW, Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20001

Via email zcsubmissions@dc.gov

Re: **Support** for Case No. 11-03, Southwest Waterfront, 1st Stage PUD & Related Map Amendment

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth. My organization works to ensure that transportation and development decisions in the Washington, D.C., region accommodate growth while revitalizing communities, providing more housing and travel choices, and conserving our natural and historic areas.

We wish to express our strong support for this transformative development for the Southwest Waterfront. The proposal is consistent with the Southwest Waterfront plan which we previously supported. The project offers outstanding benefits for nearby neighborhoods and residents citywide. The project offers extensive public space, public access to the waterfront, small blocks to maximize water views and the porosity of the large scale development, and a mix of residential, office, retail, cultural space.

While the proposal is a substantial change from existing uses, the project is respectful and accommodating of nearby neighborhoods and offers quality public amenities to existing residents. We appreciate the project's attention to transit access, increased bicycle parking and interest in accommodating streetcars.

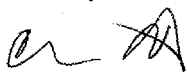
We are enthusiastic about the affordable housing included in the project to serve D.C. households earning up to 30 and 60 percent Area Median Income (AMI). This will amount to at least 160,000 square feet of low and moderate income housing. While we strongly support the project and the affordable housing component, we are disappointed that the affordable housing standard was reduced from the original agreement with the city. Instead of providing 30 percent of all residential development affordable for households earning between 30 and 60 percent AMI, the city is now allowing the developer to cap the amount of affordable housing and provide what it terms "workforce" housing for households earning 100-120 percent AMI. This is far above what most working households in D.C. earn. One-hundred to 120 percent AMI translates to 120-180 percent of D.C. median household income, amounting to an annual income of \$106,111 – \$127,300 for a family of four. Apartments affordable to households earning 100-120 AMI are generally available in the area. Thus this high income targeting does not benefit D.C. households in need of more affordable housing options. Given the acute shortage of housing affordable to moderate and low income D.C. residents, we hope that future public land deals will remain committed to providing housing at these lower income levels. Public land is an important and rare opportunity to address D.C. resident's housing needs at lower income levels.

We appreciate the project's buildings will be LEED Silver and LEED Gold for Neighborhood Development. We also look forward to the project achieving the high performance stormwater management standards set out in the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative.

We ask the Zoning Commission to advance this PUD without delay. The Southwest Waterfront is an underutilized area that will greatly benefit from this bold redevelopment. Local residents and residents citywide will benefit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Cort', followed by a stylized flourish or mark.

Cheryl Cort
Policy Director