

DATE: July 15, 2011

TO: DC Zoning Commission

FROM: Judith I. Urban

SUBJECT: Southwest Waterfront Plan, Case No. 11-03

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I have lived at 700 7th St. SW since 1969. There have been changes to the neighborhood during that time, but none as significant as those proposed for the development of the Southwest Waterfront. We are an existing residential neighborhood with townhouses, condos, and apartments, not the Inner Harbor in Baltimore that had only warehouses. I (as well as the vast majority of my neighbors) have a number of concerns about the proposed plan that I know will have an adverse impact on my neighborhood.

First, is the massive scale of the development. Not only will the height of the proposed buildings (130 ft. plus a possible 18 ft.) dwarf the existing buildings, but the proposed narrow corridors planned between the buildings form a barrier between the neighborhood and the water. They've even been referred to as "alleys." Anyone driving down Maine Ave. will not be able to enjoy the water as we do driving by the Watergate. All that will be seen is a wall of buildings. Also, now if we stand by the water at Haines Point, we can see into the Southwest neighborhood with a vista of the Capitol skyline. In the future, all one will see is a line of tall buildings. We need more space between the buildings to open up the vistas to the water and the buildings need to be scaled back. There is a residential neighborhood on the north end of the development and we must not be forgotten.

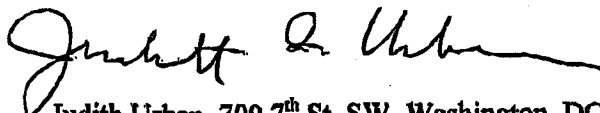
Second, there is no diversity of heights except at each end of the development. I don't consider an 11-story building instead of one that is 13 stories diversity. Where are the 4 and 5-story buildings interspersed with the tall buildings? If Alexandria can do it, we should be able to as well.

Third, there is a large park planned for the southern end. Why can't we have that type of open space at our end? I would suggest eliminating the performing arts building (parcel 2) and substituting a park. With Arena Stage in SW, we don't need another space for performing arts and there are already ample venues of this type around town.

Fourth, there is not enough planned parking. We are going to be flooded with traffic. No matter what the traffic planners say, if people can't find parking, they won't come and if they do come, they will flood our neighborhood streets. With area workers trying to get to M St., new residents coming home, and the ballpark, traffic will be at a standstill.

Last, from a personal standpoint, my quality of life will be affected in that I will no longer have my wonderful view of the river, only buildings that tower over mine.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan.



Judith Urban, 700 7th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 11-03
EXHIBIT NO. 55