

**Testimony to D.C. Zoning Commission on Case No. 11-03, July 18, 2011**

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I have been a resident of near SW since 1975 and fully support redevelopment of the Wharf. The developers have heard many of the community's concerns and made welcome adjustments, but there are still important issues that have not been addressed. I address only two issues today and hope to provide additional input for the record.

1. Traffic: Ingress, Egress and Density.

There has still been no credible, and independent, traffic study that addresses the huge increase in residents, visitors and commuters to SW offices and the SE/Navy Yard developments. Maine Avenue cannot now handle traffic during rush hour, special events, ball games or inclement weather. The proposed traffic design, including 24-hour parking that would effectively remove a lane from Maine Avenue, many new crosswalks and traffic lights to service new foot traffic from the north, and the proposed traffic circle at 6<sup>th</sup> St. will further slow the flow.

The combined effect of perhaps doubling the number of new docks, a 4 to 5000 seat entertainment space running 200 events per year, and an exponential increase in FAR from new residences, hotels and offices (at 130 feet height, I hope not a new normal for DC) is a massive increase to the population and transient use of the Southwest, and the current transportation and traffic systems will be absolutely unequipped to handle it.

2. Pedestrian-Only Preserve Along the Water. The plan's pedestrian-only pathway along the water side of the site, which many of us asked for, is raised from the current 8 foot level to the same level as the rest of the 60 foot width from building line to the water.

There is no reason to make this dedicated space level with the rest. The current path is a serene, protected space, very heavily used from at least 6:30 am (I can't personally attest to times earlier than that) to evening by Army cadets and neighborhood running and walker exercisers, fisherman and idle strollers—uninterrupted, not just in linear passage, but isolated from the activities that go on above and will increase exponentially in the proposed development.

The Yards development gets it right with its boardwalk, footpaths and boulders that are low and close to the water preserving an immediate and intimate connection with the river. The pedestrian uses start low (in some places at the water's edge) and gradually rise to building heights one to two blocks from the river. Major structures within the river site (e.g., new loft residences, renovated industrial buildings) are dotted throughout the site. This is a very different vision of how to use the river.

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The new footpath could be narrower, perhaps only 12 feet across, which would add more space for the restaurants and other activities above but be protected from them. On a related point, building massing at the Yards is primarily on the commercial M Street corridor,

We have heard different justifications for raising the path, at last week's ANC meeting the developer mentioned in passing that one could close off the whole space for special events and on occasion bistro tables might be moved into the space. We should not want bistro tables ever to migrate to that space, and a drop of only 3 or 4 feet would segregate the area and still provide additional square footage for special events.

The developer mentioned last week that some additional vehicular traffic would also be granted for restaurant access. A commitment to no individual vehicular traffic on the water side of the site needs to be made certain.

The Wharf <sup>are</sup> of the waterfront has been poorly developed by any account. It does not have to be overdeveloped this time round.