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Washington, DC 20024

March 25, 2019

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman
DC Zoning Commission
441 Fourth Street NW., Suite 200S
Washington, D.C. 20001
via email: zcsubmissions@dc.gov

Re: Z.C. Case 17-21 – As You Like It LLC Application for a Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) and Related Zoning Map Amendment

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

I am writing to express my strong support for Erkiletian Development Company’s and Shakespeare Theatre Company’s application to the Zoning Commission for the proposed PUD and related Zoning Map Amendment for a mixed-use residential and cultural project (the “Project”) at 501 I Street SW (Square 492, Lot 52) (the “Property”).

I have lived in SW DC for the past 8 years and my husband has owned an apartment in SW for nearly 20 years at 1301 Delaware Avenue, SW in the River Park Complex designed by midcentury architect Charles Goodman. When I first moved to SW DC I lived at 1100 6th Street SW in the building designed by world-renowned architect IM Pei right by the Duck Pond and just across the Street from Arena Stage. Having Arena Stage as a neighbor was an added benefit. Visiting actors lived in our building and on my floor and it was wonderful to have live in a community where my neighbors and friends were famous artists. These were some of the very best neighbors that I ever had.

I was attracted to SW DC because it is a cultural hub. The International Architecture (of Brutalist meets Mid Century) is unique. The cultural programs and institutions made this little, and now booming, quadrant most appealing to me. From Arena Stage to seeing legendary Jazz artists every Friday night at Westminster Church. From DC student art exhibitions and community yoga classes at Blind Whino, and the DC Fringe Festival taking over SW in June to the new Randall School project, **SW is a Cultural Hub!**

As a member of the community and someone who appreciates the unique character of SW, it is important to me that the Property be developed in a manner that is appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood and provide a Project that benefits the community as a whole. **I am excited about the Project and the opportunities it presents for the Southwest area. And thrilled that it will be another good Cultural neighbor.**

I appreciate the Project's overall design and uses and believe they will complement the existing neighborhood. I also appreciate the applicant's efforts to work with the community and revise the Project and the benefits based on community input.

I am very supportive of the Project, particularly due to the benefits Shakespeare Theatre Company is providing to the community. It is important that Shakespeare has offered to provide discounted tickets for Southwest residents to performances and has also committed to give out free tickets for a Ward 6 Night. These commitments will allow our community to benefit from Shakespeare's addition to our neighborhood.

What is most appealing to me are cultural learning opportunities for our youngest residents. *I am the executive director of the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative. My organization's works with over 115 cultural institutions, including Shakespeare Theatre Company, to provide equitable access to arts and humanities learning opportunities for DC students in every Ward. These are significant and transformative learning opportunities for students!*

Shakespeare is focused on benefiting the schools and residents in Southwest by providing gift certificates for PTA raffles, priority invitations for educators, scholarships and discounted tuition to classes, and class tours of Shakespeare facilities. The Project also commits to programming for the local schools including *District Shakespeare* and productions of children-friendly versions of Shakespeare's classics.

The benefits committed to as part of the Project will allow the Southwest community, especially its children, to fully appreciate Shakespeare's works. These benefits show the applicant's commitment to the community, and the Project, with these benefits, will provide an exciting opportunity for the Southwest neighborhood. In its current iteration, I am proud to support the Project and the proposed benefits and request the Zoning Commission approve the Project to further support SW being a shining arts beacon and Cultural Hub.

With best wishes,



Lissa Rosenthal-Yoffe

SW Resident

Cultural Consumer

Executive Director, DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative