

2729 Ordway Street, NW #6
Washington, DC 20008

22 January 1988

Mr. Lindsley Williams
Chairman
D.C. Zoning Commission
The District Bldg., Room #11
Washington, DC 20004

Case # 86-26

Dear Mr. Williams:

I am writing to express my support for the Cleveland Park Historical Society and ANC-3C proposal to modify the zoning along the Macomb-to-Porter Streets corridor of Connecticut Avenue. I strongly support this proposal and oppose all large-scale, 8-to-10 story development projects, such as the one presently being offered for the Park and Shop site at Ordway and Connecticut.

I have lived on Ordway Street since 1978, first as a renter in Ordway Gardens, living there through the conversion of the property to condominiums, and since 1981, as an owner at Ordway Gardens. I have lived elsewhere in the metropolitan area before coming to the Ordway area, including Parkfairfax in Alexandria and Friendship Heights, Maryland. But those areas pale by comparison to this neighborhood. I like it here because of the mix of people and balance of activity we have in this neighborhood. It is a good, pleasant place to live.

I fear, however, that this pleasant community will be transformed into a not-so-pleasant community if certain kinds of development are given carte blanche along Connecticut Avenue.

The large-scale development plans that have been offered for this corridor are out of scale with neighborhood character of the area, and if permitted would downgrade the residential/local retail nature of the community. The net effect of such "canyon city" type development in this area, I believe, will be to make it less attractive as a neighborhood and less desirable as a place to live and/or raise a family.

Those of us who came to this neighborhood and made investments in homes, co-ops, and condominiums because of its unique quality and scale, are less likely to continue living here if the balance is tilted in favor of outside commercial developments that overwhelm the character and "carrying capacity" of this area.

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CASE No.

86-26

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District of Columbia

EXHIBIT No.

327

CASE NO. 86-26

EXHIBIT NO. 337

A large scale project, such as the one currently proposed for the Park and Shop site, would only increase automobile traffic in the area and add nothing of neighborhood quality. As a resident of Ordway Street -- along which children now play on the Ordway Gardens grounds for example--I oppose development that will increase the volume and frequency of automobile traffic along this street. Such traffic is already a problem along Ordway and Macomb, streets which some motorists seem to regard as raceways for their parking convenience. More automobiles in the area for new "in-and-out" commercial activity will only decrease the quality of life here and jeopardize the safety of children and all who walk our streets. Moreover, those of us who have to find on-street parking will be further pressed in the search for available spaces.

However, I am not opposed to all commercial development in our neighborhood. There is a place for new and/or upgraded commercial establishments in the Connecticut Avenue corridor, provided they are in keeping with the historical scale and mix that has made this neighborhood a special place. Commercial development could occur in this area that would maintain the pedestrian quality of the area and favor Metro traffic rather than automobile traffic. And District planners and politicians ought to be guided by that challenge.

The District has an opportunity to make the Cleveland Park Metro stop area an example of how urban development can occur around a Metro stop without ruining the neighborhoods that surround it. It seems that by squeezing the last possible dollar of air rights development and commercial opportunity out of these Metro stop areas--as is currently the wont of some developers throughout our fair city--you only wind up defeating the very urbane purpose of what living in the city is all about.

Rather than accommodating business-as-usual development around these sites, the District should be striving to distinguish itself as one of the nation's far-seeing urban centers that takes neighborhood scale and quality seriously in its planning and zoning actions. Certainly, achieving urbane scale and quality in urban growth around the remaining in-city Metro stops would put the District of Columbia more "on the map", so to speak, than would one more "canyon city" type project.

It is in the spirit of that positive opportunity that my comments are offered, and the hope that you will give the community-based growth process--as represented in the Cleveland Park Historical Society/ ANC-3C proposal-- a chance to succeed. Thank you.

Respectfully,



Jack Doyle
2729 Ordway Street, NW #6

cc: Hon. Marion Barry
Hon. Jim Nathanson
Tersh Boasberg
Roger Burns
Mary Anne Roussos