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ZONING SECRETARIAT
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 30, 1989

Mr. Lindsley Williams, Chairman
D.C. Zoning Commission
District Building Room 11
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Proposed Rulemaking: Zoning Cases 86-26 and 87-27

Dear Chairman Williams and Members of the Commission:

As Board member and Chair, Economic Development Committee, Woodley Park Community Association ("WPCA"), I am writing to transmit the the following comments, which were adopted unanimously by the WPCA Board.

1. The preamble should reference "limited office space" and add "local neighborhood shopping areas" for purposes of ensuring both consistency with the Comprehensive Plan designation of Woodley Park ("WP") as a "local neighborhood commercial center" and to clarify that the purpose of the proposed Neighborhood Commercial ("NC") Overlay District is to encourage levels and uses of development appropriate to a local neighborhood.

2. Section 1301 should clarify that the intent is not to provide NC overlay provisions in excess of that permitted by the underlying zoning. We have brought this issue to the attention of the Office of Planning and the Zoning Secretariat, who have assured us that the intent was not to override underlying zoning.

3. Although both Cleveland Park ("CP") and WP have squares zoned C-2-A, are similar neighborhoods, and the NC recommended height is 40 feet, the proposed rule provides an FAR of 2.0 in CP and 2.5 in WP. The testimony and written hearing record do not provide support for this inconsistency, and WPCA requests that the FAR in WP squares zoned C-2-A be 2.0. This change is consistent the testimony of WP, CP, ANC 3-C and that provided by the Ward 3 Councilmember and community members.

WPC 3/31

ZONING COMMISSION

CASE No. 86-26

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District of Columbia

EXHIBIT No. 567

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4. Calvert Street, which sides on all three commercial squares in WP addressed in the NC, should be a designated street (Section 1307.4) and the single curb cut be grandfathered into the NC. Connecticut Avenue was determined to be a designated street by the Zoning Commission and the considerations for including Calvert Street are identical.

5. "Theaters, including motion picture theaters" should be deleted from the listing of preferred uses (Section 1302.2 (x)) and be included as a prohibition in Section 1307.5. Not only is this consistent with the case testimony and written materials (no one supported the inclusion of theaters), we believe that this is an error duplicated from an earlier OP listing of preferred uses which we were advised was in error and not recommended to the Zoning Commission. The primary reason, of course, for excluding theaters is the untenable burden of traffic on neighborhood streets. This is especially true in WP, which has little street parking and no public garages within the NC.

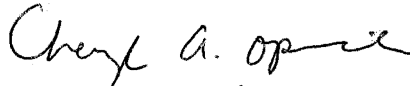
6. The reference to "fast food restaurants" and "department stores" in Section 1302.4 should be eliminated and included as prohibitions in Section 1307.5, for the reasons cited in 5 (above).

We encourage the Zoning Commission to take two additional actions in this case. First, Section 1304.1(d) permits the Board of Zoning Adjustment to 'impose requirements pertaining to design, appearance...'. However, the Board, as a practical matter, can only set such requirements on cases which come before it, i.e., those requesting a zoning variance. We are painfully aware, given the new structure nearing completion across from the WP metro -- ironically, whose proposed development led to WP filing for emergency downzoning and resulted in this NC -- that design standards are essential. With different, not necessarily more expensive, materials that are compatible with the neighboring structures, and slight design modifications, WP would have had a building in which to take pride. Model standards, or a prescribed design review process, would go far to ensure NC development visually enhances our special streets and neighborhoods.

Secondly, we request that the Zoning Commission revisit the issue of downzoning to at least C-2-A from C-2-B the single square with this zoning level in all the NC covered neighborhoods and the single square in WP that backs on to lovely residential townhouses. This would be consistent with zoning in CP, although it would exceed the C-1 zoning in Macomb-Wisconsin, would give the neighborhood needed protections, and would ensure that commercial development in this otherwise now protected NC would be consistent with the intent of the NC.

On behalf of the Woodley Park Community Association, I appreciate your consideration of our comments and thank you for your patient and considered views throughout this case.

Sincerely,


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