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Ms. Carol Mitten
Chairperson
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: ZC Case No. 96-3/89-1(Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway Overlay District)

Dear Commissioner Mitten:

The purpose of this correspondence is to respond briefly to Planning Director Altman's response to your inquiry regarding our written and oral testimony in support of BP/C-3-C density for Square 701. Square 701 has direct access to the Navy Yard/Southeast Federal Center Metro-rail station. You asked Mr. Altman to comment on our proposal for higher commercial density (BP/C-3-C as opposed to BP/CR). His response, in essence, was that the BP/CR zone would allow for a better mix of residential and commercial uses.

We, too, are sensitive to, and supportive of, mixed use commercial and residential for the Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway community. However, we differ on how it should be achieved. We are confident that as the area grows and develops, the demand for housing will increase and therefore, residential development will follow.

However, the issue that we have raised is one that relates to the highest and best use for the properties with direct access to the Metro-rail station. Given the current demand for commercial/job generating uses for the Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway area, it would appear that the "smart growth" management approach would be to encourage it to develop as close to the Metro-rail station as practical. Concentrating commercial development around the Metro-rail station would reduce the reliance on vehicle traffic and minimize the harmful effects of urban sprawl. Residential development would also have a similar, but lesser impact. The average size of an office is approximately 250 square compared to approximately 850 square feet for a residential unit.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
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Exhibit 117

We are not suggesting that residential development should not be encouraged around the metro-rail station. Instead we are proposing that the Commission considers an order of priority, i.e., higher density commercial/retail development on properties with direct access points to the Metro-rail station, and residential development located immediately adjacent to it. With sensitive design, the two could be connected so that the residential development would share and enjoy the same access to the Metro-rail.

The Mayor has established a Task Force on Transit-oriented Development. It is my understanding that the idea originated from the June 14th Brookings Institution Conference on the Future of the Core of the Washington DC Region (a copy has been provided to you). One of its purposes is to evaluate ways to increase transit-oriented development at Metro-rail stations within the City as a way to minimize traffic congestion and reduce the reliance on vehicles.

Finally, OP staff has proposed BP/C-3-C for properties located immediately across the Street (M Street) from Square 701.

Madame, Chairperson, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this case.

Kind regards,

Fred L. Greene