NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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The Honorable Anthony A. Williams

Chairman, Council of the
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The Honorable Linda W. Cropp

**Executive Director**
Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC File No. ZC-96-03/89-01

MAY - 8 2002

Ms. Carol Mitten
Chairperson
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Second Floor
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Ms. Mitten:

I am contacting you regarding the Buzzard Point - Capitol Gateway zoning action currently being considered by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission. We understand the Zoning Commission has taken a proposed action on this text and map amendment to the Zoning Regulations, and upon the conclusion of the 30 day public review and comment period, the Commission will be able to take final action at its June meeting. During this period, the proposal will be referred to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for its review and comment, as mandated by federal law. We are anticipating the official referral from the Zoning Commission to occur in May, with NCPC action at its June meeting.

NCPC has a strong interest in the future redevelopment of South Capitol Street, the Anacostia Waterfront and its surrounding environment. The 1997 *Legacy* Plan for the National Capital calls for a future South Capitol Street that provides a pedestrian friendly, mixed-use environment, connecting a revived Anacostia Waterfront with improved gateway vistas to the U.S. Capitol. Further, NCPC's Monuments and Museums Master Plan has targeted this area as a future location for new commemorative works, as development pressure shifts from the monumental core to other areas of the District. Furthermore, NCPC is a partner agency in the recently initiated South Capitol Street Study, and is a signatory agency in the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the ongoing Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. NCPC considers both efforts to be of high priority.

The National Capital Planning Commission applauds the Zoning Commission and the District Office of Planning for taking this critical first step in the redevelopment of South Capitol Street and the Anacostia Waterfront. We believe

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the Capitol Gateway regulations will prove critical in inciting mixed-use and recreational redevelopments in both of those important areas. We also would like to notify the Zoning Commission of NCPC's anticipated approval of this zoning referral, which will include two critical recommendations that we feel would help this redevelopment move forward.

First, we recommend that the Zoning Commission add the National Capital Planning Commission as a referral agency in the "special exception" process outlined in §1603 of the proposed regulations. This approval process will only apply to development proposals in the BP/W-2 zoning district, and will give NCPC an opportunity to provide comments to the Zoning Commission on impacts on the federal interest as defined above. This type of "special exception" referral is not uncommon, as the Zoning Commission has adopted provisions in other districts that mandate federal interest review (e.g. Architect of the Capitol in the Capitol Interest Overlay, NCPC in the Naval Observatory District, etc). Furthermore, NCPC believes the addition of this referral provision will codify the redevelopment of the Anacostia Waterfront as a partnership between the District of Columbia and the federal establishment.

Our second recommendation involves South Capitol Street and the related study, which is underway. Although the Buzzard Point – Capitol Gateway Overlay will provide a strong initial zoning policy for redevelopment along South Capitol, NCPC urges the Zoning Commission to revisit this critical artery to the National Capital once the South Capitol Study is completed. Within that review, we recommend that the Commission develop creative zoning solutions to help implement the Study's recommendation to treat this area as a coherent corridor as opposed to the patchwork of zoning districts which are currently in place.

Again, the National Capital Planning Commission commends you and the other Zoning Commission members for their hard work on the Buzzard Point – Capitol Gateway Overlay zoning matter and we hope you will agree with our recommendations for the proposed zoning regulations.

Sincerely,

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director