Statement Before the Zoning Commission
In Zoning Commission Case No. 96-3/89-1
(Capitol Gateway Amendments and Overlay)

I am Allison C. Prince of Shaw Pittman. I am testifying tonight on behalf of Riverside Associates Limited Partnership ("Riverside"), owner of one of the largest sites in the proposed Capitol Gateway (Buzzard Point) Overlay ("CG Overlay"). Riverside wishes to express its strong opposition to the latest revisions proposed by the Commission at its April 19, 2002 meeting. At this meeting, the Commission proposed that, in the CR-zoned portion of the CG Overlay, hotels would not count as residential FAR, as they do in the underlying CR zone in all other parts of the city. The Commission expressed concern about the potential for the over-concentration of hotels in the CG Overlay area. As its reasoning, the Commission cited an overabundance of hotels in the West End. While there are several hotels in West End, the hotel development spurred significant office and residential resulting in skyrocketing property values, increased safety, and a critical mass of high quality mixed use development. These are the very types of improvements that are desired for Capitol Gateway.

While the motive of limiting hotels may make sense in a vacuum, Riverside fears that the real effect will be to inhibit the rise of property values, leaving them at a level that provides no incentive for current property owners to convert their properties from what will soon be non-conforming – yet economically sound – industrial uses to the more desirable high quality mixed use development. The "hotel restriction" will simply have the effect of lowering the market values and development potential of the area, preventing the economic conditions necessary to sustain a comprehensive urban renewal. The restriction may have the effect of nipping the fledgling redevelopment efforts in the bud.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 96-3
Exhibit 135

For the reasons stated above, Riverside respectfully requests that the Commission carefully consider the potential negative economic impact of these increased restrictions and keep the proposed CR zoning consistent with every other CR District.

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