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## TESTIMONY
BEFORE

## THE ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**CASE NO. 96-3/89-1 (MAP AMENDMENT & OVERLAY DISTRICT @ BUZZARD POINT-CAPITOL GATEWAY)**

Good evening Madame Chairperson, my name is Fred L. Greene. I am testifying tonight on behalf of two property owners within Square 701, namely Richard Cohen and Davis Camerlier. We are testifying in support of the proposed initiative, provided that the Commission considers the following points in support of a higher density in the vicinity of the Navy Yard Metrorail Station:

- **Square 701 includes the west entrance of the Navy Yard Metrorail Station.** The Square is bounded by M Street on the north, First Street on the east, N Street on the south and Half Street on the west. The Station opened in **1991** and currently attracts only 1,500 patrons per day.

- **Square 701 is pivotal to the redevelopment of the Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway area.** The capacity of land to support development is a function of public and private services available. Transportation accessibility is one of the most critical elements of development capacity. The location of Metrorail service in Square 701 represents the creation of additional development potential. Without direct Metrorail service, the Square would neither attract nor accommodate higher density development.

- **The Zoning Commission, through innovative planning and zoning application, has a unique opportunity to encourage and facilitate correct development at the Navy Yard Metrorail station, by creating a much needed "anchor" to jump-start development interest in theBuzzard Point/Capitol Gateway area.** According to recent market studies, the Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway area is likely to emerge as a major office and employment center that will include residential development and a festive waterfront focused on the Anacostia River. If you look at the Buzzard Point/Capital Gateway area as a large urban mall, then its success from a planning and development standpoint, will depend upon the creation and development of strategic concentrations of uses/activities that function as major destination points. The natural destination points within the Buzzard Point/Capitol Gateway area are the waterfront and the Navy Yard Metrorail station-A Macy's and a Norstroms'. If these anchors are developed to the maximum capacity, then properties in between will flourish.

- **Traditionally, the geographical area within a radius of 1,500 feet from a Metrorail station is considered the Primary Impact Area.** As a general rule, this is the area which will evidence the highest degree of investment which can be linked to the Metrorail station. Square 701 is located within this Primary Impact Area. In most urban areas, the primary impact areas are the ones which receive major public planning and zoning attention. While a great deal of land use studies have been provided for the Buzzard/Capitol Gateway area, there is still a need to prepare more fine-grained, site specific land use plans and strategies to do: (1) focus growth around the Navy Yard station to enhance ridership for the transit investment and provide access


ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 96-3/89-1
EXHIBIT No. 61

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.96-3
EXHIBIT NO.61

and mobility for growth in the immediate area; (2) generate short and long term economic benefits for the District, and the private sector through the coordinated control or management of property rights around the Navy Yard station; and (3) create the opportunity to integrate the Navy Yard station into planned and existing developments most effectively and aesthetically to ensure that transit is a complement to the neighborhood fabric.

- **One of the major concepts used to ensure appropriate development in the primary transit impact areas is referred to as joint public/private development.** Joint development is emerging as a major success story throughout the United States. One of the leading local proponents of this concept is the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority(WMATA). **The Commission could learn a lot from reviewing the WMATA experience with this concept. The region has invested a vast amount of money($12 billion over the last 20 years) in constructing the Metrorail system. It is time that we begin to capitalize on this investment. Appropriate zoning should be adopted which will encourage transit-related development.**

- While it is recognized that development is not appropriate at all of the stations, the Navy Yard station and its environs have long been identified as an area for major development. **The station's designation in the local elements of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan as Production-Technical Employment area(PTE) was to reinforce this potential.**

- **The proposed BP/CR Zoning District is inappropriate for Square 701. BP/C3C would be a more appropriate zoning district for the following reasons:**

    - 1. The District's adopted Comprehensive Plan calls for medium-density commercial and high-density residential in the Buzzard Point area south of M Street, S.E. Under the present D.C. Zoning Code, the petitioner's property is zoned CM-2, medium density industrial with an FAR of 4.0. However, much of the land directly north of M has recently been rezoned from CM-1 and CM-2 to C-3-C, medium density commercial with an FAR of 6.5. This represents the most appropriate zoning district for the petitioner's property and Square 701;

    - 2. The permitted commercial density under the proposed BP/CR does not allow the development of medium to high density office or retail uses appropriate for a property located within the primary impact of a Metrorail station. By encouraging high density development in the primary impact area of the Metrorail station, the City has an opportunity to capitalize on the public investment in the Metrorail system. Higher densities generate increased ridership, conserve energy, promote better land uses and aid in the implementation of the adopted Comprehensive Plan;

    - 3. The adopted Comprehensive Plan contains a number of supportive land use policies which include promoting mixed use and high density developments around Metrorail stations. The Zoning Commission recognized the benefits that accrue with higher density at Metrorail stations when it rezoned the area immediately to the north of M Street from M and CM to C-

- 3-C. The properties located to the north of squares 700 and 701 are already zoned C-3-C. **A BP/C-3-C designation on these properties would permit the same development densities, heights, and type of uses on both sides of M Street, a designated "Special Street" in the Comprehensive Plan.**

- 4. The proposed widening of South Capitol Street under the current Monumental Core Vision Plan prepared by the National Capital Planning Commission will provide greater visibility to the petitioner's property and Square 701 as a whole, and will enhance development interest. **The C-3-C zoning district supports the planning goals of the Monumental Core Plan by concentrating future high density mix use development near the Navy Yard station and the major thoroughfare of South Capitol Street.**

- **Finally, the Zoning Commission can stimulate transit-related development by identifying and marshaling zoning and high density land use incentives to support transit-related development. The District of Columbia deserves the same level of development around its transit stations as that enjoyed by some suburban neighbors. The Comprehensive Plan supports such high intensity development at the Navy Yard Metrorail station. The BP/C-3-C is the best means to achieve the policies in the adopted Comprehensive Plan for this area.**

- Thank you Madame Chairperson. I am available for any questions.