

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Monday, March 1, 2010

6:00 p.m.

Woodridge Neighborhood Library

1801 Hamlin Street, NE
Washington, DC 20018

The District of Columbia's Office of Planning and Economic Development ("the District") will conduct a public hearing to receive public comments on "RHODE ISLAND AVENUE: Diamond of the District" ("the RIA Plan"). The document represents the conclusion of a community, economic development planning process which outlines specific redevelopment and use targets for Rhode Island Avenue NE between 3rd Street NE and Eastern Avenue NE. Over 200 community, business and institutional stakeholders provided input during the series of community meetings which led to this document.

Historically and to this date, Rhode Island Avenue NE has been one of the District's prominent corridors, but it is now characterized by used car lots, auto repair and tire shops, vacant structures, redundant uses, cross-town trucks, commuter traffic, and suburban style development and densities around a prominent Metro station. Implementation of the plan aims to transform the land uses along the corridor into a series of well-defined, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood centers while preserving and enhancing the quality of life of the diverse, existing neighborhoods abutting it. The RIA Plan is to be implemented over a twenty year horizon, but puts forth an emphasis on achieving visible progress sooner rather than later.

The RIA Plan presents a wide range of private and public investment opportunities for existing and new retail businesses, office services, housing providers and cultural entrepreneurs while conveying preferences and concerns shared by area stakeholders and the District for the appropriate redevelopment of under-utilized, private commercial and industrial properties along this three-mile corridor.

The District plans to submit the RIA Plan to the DC Council for adoption as a "small area plan." Upon approval as a small area plan, the RIA Plan will then provide guidance in public policy decision-making along Rhode Island Avenue. Guidance will be provided to District agencies, commissions, and the broader public about affordable and mixed income housing, local business development, quality design and development, public art, zoning and local resident participation.

A copy of the Final Draft will be posted to www.dcbiz.dc.gov under 'Great Streets' then 'THINK: Rhode Island Avenue' by 5 PM on Friday, January 29, 2010. A black and white copy of the plan can also be mailed by request to 202.727.6365.

Copies are also being emailed and mailed to the office of Councilmember Harry Thomas, Ward 5, and impacted Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners on the corridor. Copies will also be available for review only at Woodridge Neighborhood Library, 1801 Hamlin Street NE, Washington, DC.

Given the considerable interest in this planning effort to date, stakeholders are encouraged to call 202.727.6365 to sign up to testify **no later than 2 PM on Thursday, February 25, 2010**. Up to three minutes of testimony will be allowed per stakeholder. Written testimony should be emailed to derrick.woody@dc.gov or sent to:

ATTN: RIA PLAN
c/o Coordinator -- Great Street Initiative
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite 317
Washington, DC 20004

FAX: 202.727.6703

Please bring a written copy of testimony if you plan to testify.

Upon reviewing the document, forward written comments to derrick.woody@dc.gov or via fax, (202) 727-6703. Mail comments to:

Derrick Lanardo Woody
Project Manager
UPTOWN DESTINATION DISTRICT
Office of Deputy Mayor for
Planning & Economic Development
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Suite 317
Washington, DC 20004

Written statements may be submitted for the record until the conclusion of the public hearing.

Each individual or representative of an organization who wishes to present testimony at the public hearing is requested to furnish his or her name, address, telephone number, and name of organization represented (if any) by calling 202-442-8964 no later than 12 p.m., Thursday, February 17, 2005. All oral presentations will be limited to five (5) minutes.

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HEARING ON "RHODE ISLAND AVENUE: DIAMOND OF THE DISTRICT"

Monday, March 1, 2010
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Woodridge Neighborhood Library
1801 Hamlin Street, NE
Washington, DC 20018

WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

Derrick Lanardo Woody
Coordinator, Great Streets Initiative
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning
and Economic Development

Up to three minutes of testimony will be allowed per stakeholder. Written testimony should be emailed to derrick.woody@dc.gov.

1. Ronnie Edwards, ANC 5C11
2. Gina Dennis, Esq., Dennis Law Group
3. Janae Grant, ANC 5A11
4. Janice Booker, Booker Waddelle Development Company, Inc.
5. Norman Glasgow, Jr., Holland & Knight
6. Sandy Wilkes, Chairman, Wilkes Company
7. William "Bill" Barrow, Executive Director, H Street Community Development Corporation
8. Cheryl Dixon, Resident
9. Ronald Allen, Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church
10. Philip Blair, ANC 5A10
11. Leroy Hall
12. Stephanie Rones, Premiere Community Development Corporation
13. Hazel Thomas, Premiere Community Development Corporation
14. Johnnie Bond, Resident / Attorney / Small Business Owner
15. Eugene Ford, Sr., Brookland Manor Apartments
16. William Shelton, ANC 5B01

Thanks to all for your continued participation in this important process and to DC Cable Television for recording today's proceedings.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development



PUBLIC HEARING ON "RHODE ISLAND AVENUE: DIAMOND OF THE DISTRICT" Monday, March 1, 2010

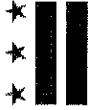
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Melissa Marsden	526 Ridge Rd, Annapolis, MD	410-995-2064	MShelder@aol.com
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Laura Stockton	3142 Monroe St., NE		
Beyla Adero	2111 R.T. Ave NE Washington	202-635-2986	info@naturesthythm.net
Kym Jackson	3434 S. Dakota Ave NE 20018	202-529-0580	Queenick9@ymail.com

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Ronald Allen Sr	" "	" "	
ERNESTINE ALLEN	" "	" "	
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Dawn M Pritchett-Herman	Seaburghead S	2/529-8701	dpritchett@seaburghead.com
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Cynthia Frederick	1460 Channing St NE	2/269-1744	
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Nathanial Carthorn	1500 - Newton ave NE 20018	202-832-2561	
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Essita Duncan	1817 Irving Street NE 20018	369-7593	eduncan@duncandidence.com
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Denise Whipple	219 K. ST. NE -	2144-7154	dreddette@htmail.com

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Cerald Matthews	1521 CHAMMIST NE	702244-7267	
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C. Hunter	223 Adams St, N.E.	2/635-6274	
Ted Henson	2939 Mills Ave NE	2/372-7159	
Tanya Garraway	2415 07th ST NE		
Marshall R. Phillips Jr	336 Channing St NE	2/529-1831	
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Sue			
Shelby Ten Nagel	3714 20th St NE		shelbyjtnagel@yahoo.com
LEROY HALL	1618 R.I. Ave NE	526-0183	Lemar@RCN.COM
SCOTT JACOBS	2423 32nd St NE	202-550-2050	SJACOBS5500@MSN.COM
Anthony Hood	1859 Channing St NE	2/269-0354	Hood.Anthony@EPA.gov

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Keith Sellars	1495 F Street	2/66/-8688	ksellars@wdc.netmail.com
Dr. Larry F. McInain	2033 Hamlin St. NE	2/526-2902	Dr. Larry McInain
			@Hotmail.com

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SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICT 5A11

SLOWE SCHOOL DEMOUNTABLE

1322 Irving Street NE Washington, DC 20017

Phone: (202) 635-6563 • Fax: (202) 635-6565 • Email: 5A11@anc.dc.gov

To: Derrick Woody – Coordinator – Great Street Initiative – Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

From: Janae Grant – Commissioner 5A11

Date: March 1, 2010

RE: **RIA Plan**

Greetings. As an active Commissioner within my SMD 5A11 located in the Woodridge area of NE, we want to weigh in on this matter to share our concerns and guidance on the Rhode Island Avenue Plan.

Initially, it must be said that the recognition of this Great Street Initiative to be looked at like a jewel is commended, yet more importantly we'll know we are a cut above the rest based upon the actual outcome of the proposed "the Avenue". Likewise, the substantial revelations of this outcome will be when we can counter the Rhode Island Avenue Sample Resident Survey from over a year ago thus showing the characteristics of Rhode Island Avenue to be majoring in the Good to Excellent categories for *goods and services, aesthetics, neighborhood identity and community pride*. We will also reap the benefits of this project by making sure that the following general merchandise and services such as a (bookstore, dry cleaners, gym, etc.) are of good quality, are key staples of this project and are implemented throughout 'the Avenue' to not only recapture lost revenue spent outside the District, but to capitalize on the tremendous potential this 'Avenue' can become.

At a high level, **our concerns have been incorporated** into this plan. In the **Subarea 4 – The Gateway** encompassing from South Dakota to Eastern Avenue:

- ✓ we have the least amount of new homes slated for construction;
- ✓ due to the Zoning context in which we reside of low density we support the lack of housing above commercial thus keeping in line with the characteristics of our neighborhood and
- ✓ we support the re-use of land that currently exists due to the former car lots.
- ✓ we stand behind the Public Policy that this plan does not encourage or support the displacement of any existing residents.
- ✓ we support and look forward to the Notes under the Recommendations in Subarea 4, which came from our seniors – that of a medical office, pharmacy which sells convenience goods and a diner. However, the mentioning of a pet store didn't necessarily have to be housed in Subarea 4.

❖ One area that **needs further clarification** is that of Design and Development guideline – N: this avoids parking garage entrances from Rhode Island Avenue. While it's aesthetically appreciated to have a look similar to Chinatown's 7th Street, it is also noted that Chinatown's garage entrance is also on a block that doesn't house homes. Therefore we **need to ensure that vehicle traffic doesn't emerge on a residential street** and that the alley network is not compromised. Furthermore, this lends itself to **protecting 3000 block of Otis Street** as it relates to preserving the BT&T Auto for parking.

The remaining concerns deal with the **TIF funding** and the timing since next year C-1 in Subarea 1 is due to come online. Will the TIF designation be implemented in time or will C-1 be pushed back? Also, since Subarea 4 is the lowest cost \$57M with the least amount of time of 7 years per the corridor

totals, is the TIF funding of projected future tax revenues aggregated or segregated by Subarea? Likewise, do we have a say in whether the TIF revenues goes towards revitalization efforts or towards the TIF Notes?

Additionally – it is hoped that **a current transportation study will be enacted** for this plan to support the creation of 13,000 residential units this overall project anticipates to offset the current 31,200 vehicles per day that travel along the ‘Avenue’.

Likewise some noted mentionables from the Comprehensive Plan are: **Policy UNE-2.5.3** – Enhance pedestrian connections between the neighborhoods around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station and the station itself. This should include improvements to the “public realm” along Rhode Island Avenue, with safer pedestrian crossings, street trees and other amenities that make the street more attractive.

Policy UNE-2.5.4: Rhode Island Avenue Corridor – Strengthen the Rhode Island Avenue corridor from 13th to 24th Street NE as a pedestrian-oriented mixed use district that better meets the needs of residents in the Brentwood, Brookland, Woodridge, and South Central neighborhoods. Infill development that combines ground floor retail and upper-story office is encouraged. **Policy UNE-1.1.1 Neighborhood Conservation** – protect and enhance the stable neighborhoods of ... Woodridge, Brookland and South Central the residential character of these neighborhoods shall be conserved.

Policy UNE-1.1.6 Neighborhood Shopping – Improve neighborhood shopping areas... as a walkable neighborhood shopping street and encourage similar pedestrian-oriented retail development along Rhode Island Avenue. Also **Policy UNE-2.5.2 Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Sites** – Encourage the long term reuse of older commercial and industrial sites along Rhode Island Avenue, with higher value mixed uses.

Finally, we appreciate the amassed efforts made by Mr. Woody regarding this project and not allowing this project to fall beneath the cracks. It is evident that Mr. Woody has the best intention for the community and that of my SMD as its been documented throughout this Draft; our direct concerns stemming from housing to transportation, thus assuring the constituents of my SMD that they are being listened to and that their input is valued. Therefore **we support** moving this project along by way of a Small Area Plan to be approved by the Council.

We wish to thank the Office of Planning and Economic Development and Mr. Woody for his supervision on this major Great Street Initiative – RIA Plan. We definitely appreciate his skillfulness and look forward to reaping the potential outcomes of this proposed plan and to continue this working relationship to construct this long awaited ‘Avenue’.

Janae Grant

Thank you kindly,
Commissioner - 5A11
Janae Grant
Grant...It done



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 5A

SLOWE SCHOOL DEMOUNTABLE

1322 Irving Street NE Washington, DC 20017

Phone: (202) 635-6563 • Fax: (202) 635-6565 • Website: anc5A.org

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5A08 Timothy (Tim) Thomas
5A09 Shirley Rivens Smith
5A10 Phillip Blair, Jr.
5A11 Janae Grant
5A12 Robert (Bob) King

To: Derrick Lanardo Woody – Coordinator – Great Street Initiative – Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

From: Janae Grant – Chair ANC 5A

Date: March 9, 2010

RE: **Rhode Island Avenue Plan**

Dear: Mr. Woody:

After the March 1st hearing on the Rhode Island Avenue Plan our Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5A discussed that there may have been some uncertainty to the plan coming from the overall lack of constituent participation or comments mentioned at the hearing, despite the room being packed.

We would like to urge you that the **final version** of the Rhode Island Plan include a table listing all the Zoning changes mentioned in or required by the plan, together with the planned method of implementing the proposed zoning changes. (The methods include: incorporation into the Small Area Plan itself, changes in the Comprehensive Plan, the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, applications initiated by the developers or owners, or any other procedure.)

We feel that this will significantly strengthen the SAP. Such a table will provide an *easier way* to answer questions from our constituents of which include SMDs 5A09 thru 5A11 that will be affected, and to address many of their concerns.

I/we would be happy to discuss this with you farther, and would like to thank you for your overall involvement regarding 'the Avenue'.

Respectfully submitted,

Janae Grant

Janae Grant
Chair, ANC 5A

cc: Members of ANC 5A
William Shelton, Chair, ANC 5B
Anita Bonds, Chair, ANC 5C

**Testimony of Charles C. Wilkes
on "Rhode Island Avenue: Diamond of the District" (Small Area Plan)
March 1, 2010**

Good evening, members of the panel. I am Charles C. Wilkes, Chairman of The Wilkes Company, a real estate development and property management firm located in the District of Columbia. I want to begin my testimony by commending Deputy Mayor Santos and her team for undertaking this important initiative. "Rhode Island Avenue: Diamond of the District" is testament to the ability of the Deputy Mayor's office to successfully formulate a dynamic vision and planning framework for one of the most important mixed-use corridors in our city. Having served on the steering committees for planning exercises focused on Downtown, Mount Vernon Triangle and NoMa, I can assure you that the rigor, energy and vision displayed in this plan are at the same level as those very successful planning initiatives. Putting in place a detailed blueprint for sustainable, transit-oriented, mixed-use development is an art and a science, and this plan for the Rhode Island Avenue corridor has an abundance of both.

I do have a few suggestions for the panel's consideration as the plan is finalized and presented to the District of Columbia Council for adoption:

1. In recent days, there has been growing interest in developing a stand-alone community college in our city. In my view, the Rhode Island Avenue corridor, served by the Red Line, would be a perfect location for such an educational resource. The plan, then, might discuss this possibility.
2. Our company's largest holding in the plan area is in the 500 block of Rhode Island Avenue, NE (Site B on p. 17 of the plan). The plan recommends a rezoning of our property from the industrial category, C-M-2, to the mixed-

use category, C-2-C, “through the PUD process”. While we strongly endorse the recommendation of C-2-C zoning, we urge that the designation be by map amendment with our development permitted as a matter of right and not through the PUD process. C-2-C will provide a sufficient zoning envelope to facilitate redevelopment of our property from its current single-story retail use (“AutoZone”) to a transit-oriented, mixed-use development. It will place appropriate density (a) on a major arterial (b) within a short walk of the Rhode Island-Brentwood Metro Station. There is no compelling public policy that warrants burdening our redevelopment with the cost, time and expense of a planned unit development application to the Zoning Commission. The Plan’s recommendation of C-2-C, by right, for Site E on p. 17, which has identical proximity to the Metro Station, should similarly apply to Site B as a matter of equity and good planning. Since our company has a deep commitment to design excellence, we would be receptive to some form of design review.

3. Consideration should be given to an overlay district or simple text amendment to promote the practice of combined lot development in all or parts of the plan area. Combined lot development is a proven, effective tool for urban revitalization (see Mount Vernon Triangle) and has a role to play in the Rhode Island Avenue corridor.
4. It appears in “Sub-Area I Retail Diagram” on p. 17 that a road or alley is proposed that bisects our property as a new automobile connection between Rhode Island Avenue and W Street. We would appreciate removal of this

through-connection since such a slicing through the heart of our property will all but eliminate the opportunity for its redevelopment.

5. On p. 32, item "N" should be modified to limit the number of garage entrances to one (1) that serve new buildings on Rhode Island Avenue in lieu of an absolute prohibition, as drafted.
6. On p. 33, item "S" should be modified to provide a ceiling height of 14' from slab to slab rather than "ground level floor to finished ceiling". A height of 14' from slab to slab will provide more than adequate height for any type of retail, restaurant or service use.
7. Some discussion of the value and benefit of the inclusion of small urban parks would be a positive addition to the plan.
8. The plan might include a recommendation that a business improvement district (BID) be formed soon after adoption of the plan. The NoMa Small Area Plan and the Mount Vernon Triangle Action Agenda both made such a recommendation which was acted on in both instances.

In conclusion, thank you for this opportunity to appear before the panel. Rhode Island Avenue will someday, no doubt, be a grand boulevard filled with energy and activity and it's this plan that will deserve much of the credit.

Before the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

Testimony of the Greater Mt. Calvary Holy Church

Concerning the Rhode Island Avenue NE Great Streets Corridor Plan

March 1, 2010

Good evening. I am _____, appearing here this evening on behalf of the Greater Mt. Calvary Holy Church. The Church owns property at 610 and 616 Rhode Island Avenue located on the north side of Rhode Island Avenue just west of the railroad tracks; 605-611 and 649 Rhode Island Avenue located on the south side of Rhode Island Avenue just west of the railroad tracks; and 802, 804 and 806 Rhode Island Avenue located on the north side of Rhode Island Avenue just east of the railroad tracks. These buildings are devoted to a variety of church functions, including the sanctuary and worship areas and a religious school, as well as some devoted to commercial uses. All of those properties are within the immediate vicinity of the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail Station and all of those properties are within the area covered by the Plan which is being discussed this evening.

The Church has been a longstanding member of the community and we play a significant and positive role in the neighborhood. Our programs include a prison ministry; HIV-AIDS ministry; food bank; clothing bank; drug and alcohol center; Family Life Center programs; senior adult day programs; employment center; state of the art Mobile Medic Bus for screening, medical exams and testing for the community; and computer training.

The Church's long term plans are to develop its properties with higher density residential development as well as expansion of the church and its programs and commercial uses. We believe that the Rhode Island Avenue corridor and the city as a whole would benefit from that kind of future investment in the area.

The Church's properties are within the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Land Use Change Area designated on the Generalized Policy Map of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The properties are shown on the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan in the mixed use medium density commercial/high density residential, mixed use moderate density commercial/moderate density residential and production, distribution and repair categories. The Church believes that the combined effect of these two Comprehensive Plan maps is to suggest that high density residential with commercial and institutional uses included would be the most appropriate development for this area.

The current zoning applicable to the Church's properties is C-3-A and C-M-2. The C-M-2 District is an industrial zone which does not allow residential development and which permits a height of only 60 feet. The C-3-A District only permits a height of 65 feet. The Church believes that reducing the level of commercial development now permitted would be an appropriate trade-off to increase the overall height and the amount of residential development permitted. The Church therefore suggests and recommends that the Plan be clarified to provide that the properties be allowed to achieve a level of development equivalent to the C-2-C zone, which would allow a matter-of-right height of 90 feet and a matter-of-right FAR of 6.0.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify this evening and I am available to answer any questions that you may have.

Testimony

Hearing on "Rhode Island Avenue: Diamond of the District," a Draft Small Area Plan Monday, 1 March 2010

Philip Blair, jr., ANC 5A10

The Rhode Island Avenue Small Area Plan (SAP) has had an unusual genesis. The lead District of Columbia Agency was not the Office of Planning, but rather the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development. The initial community input process was for a Great Streets initiative, and only after much of that public process had been completed did the effort become one to create a Small Area Plan. The "small area" involved is very large, a three-mile stretch of a major arterial avenue and the adjoining areas.

Small Area Plans are more than suggestive guides for development; they actually can change the zoning status of tracts of land, drastically changing the kinds of development which are feasible for a tract. This proposed SAP is presented at a time when the nation is waiting for a commercial property value crash to echo the housing market value crash which is in process. In such difficult economic times, District resources are severely strained by new needs and declining revenues; commercial property owners and developers are especially eager to receive help from the District.

The chief mechanism for providing such support envisioned by the draft SAP is Tax Increment Financing, TIFs. But in uncertain times, TIFs are inherently risky; essentially, the District counts its chickens (incremental revenues) as hatched when the egg-laying hen (the additional

development) is not even born yet. It requires great discipline to manage TIFs responsibly; hopes and would-ovs and could-ovs and should-ovs can't take the place of real money, and unwise TIFs can drive the District deeper into a financial hole.

The loss of businesses along Rhode Island Avenue is serious and getting more serious very fast. In my own SMD, Saints-Bourbon Street and Bubba's Muskogee have closed recently; the Rhode Island Safeway at the east end of the SAP area may well be lost, which will endanger all business in that commercial strip; and even the Post Office on Rhode Island in Woodridge is threatened with closure.

Development planned for the Rhode Island Avenue Metro site has stalled.

The factual portions of the draft SAP are useful to the community as we look to the future of Rhode Island Avenue and the surrounding areas.

The parts of the draft that project future development show signs of hasty editing. For example, Subarea 3 is defined one way on one place and another way in another. The block between 17th and 18th Streets is in Subarea 2 in the section captions pages 13 and 14, but in the prose on page 14 it is part of Subarea 3; on page 20 it is mapped as part of Subarea 3. These editing lapses make the document unnecessarily difficult to understand for the ordinary reader.

In fact, the text on pages 13-14 largely duplicates without summarizing the text on pp. 16-25; pages 13-14 should be removed as redundant, after checking to see that no important information is lost. The maps for the second section (pp. 16-25) have the advantage of being readable and usable; those of pp. 13-14 are useless.

Page 5 states: "As this plan specifically focuses on commercially-zoned properties which contain no housing, this plan does not encourage or support displacement of any existing residents." This is a promise to which the current residents of Rhode Island Avenue will hold you, and no zoning implications of the SAP should be allowed to vitiate this commitment, despite the obvious temptation to do so in a number of areas.

In fact, the temptation to replace single-family homes has already led to breaking the promise: Site F in Subarea 1 (west of 12th Street) is one of several possible examples.

What is the un-named "sub-area which is ideal for a future DC Main Streets [program]?" (Page 5.) Is this Site C in Subarea 3? (See p. 14.)

In connection with Site C in Subarea 3, the area considered for a Great Streets program, there is language that seems to apply to the entire corridor:

"Recommendation:... Prohibit licenses issued to storefront churches, check cashing services, and other similarly redundant uses which tend not to enliven the streetscape here especially and throughout the entire corridor." [Emphasis added.]

Residents of that area would surely add addiction treatment facilities, half-way houses, and group residential facilities to

the list of unlicensed uses. However, the justice and wisdom of such prohibitions should be carefully considered and much better explained, and this recommendation should be moved to a less hidden place and made applicable to the whole corridor, if it is to be doable. "Similarly redundant uses" is a term without any discernable meaning. And of course this issue is not the existence of a reasonable number of such facilities, but their undue concentration in a few restricted areas.

For many reasons, the most important effect of most SAPs is to amend the Comprehensive Plan by modifying current zoning. The document would be very much improved by a table showing exactly what zoning changes are merely recommended or actually implemented by the SAP. There is remarkably vague language in many places where zoning changes (always up-zoning) are mentioned. Citizens deserve a clear statement of this crucial information in order to be able to make decisions that take into account their own legitimate self-interests and the interests of the city at large.

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March 1, 2010

ATTN: RIA PLAN

c/o Coordinator – Great Street Initiative

Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

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My comments concerns the recommendations for **SITE C** of Subarea 4 as described on page 23 of Draft, “Rhode Island Avenue, Diamond of the District.” I note the recommendation to “[p]reserve and rehabilitate [the] existing B&T Garage Building” with the recommendation to add an additional floor for parking off Otis Street N.E.

I object to the recommendation for an additional floor to the B& T Garage Building (“B&T Garage”). Currently, the upper section of the B&T Garage that is accessible via only an alleyway off Otis Street, N.E. is being used as an auto mechanic repair shop. The operators of the B&T Garage currently use the residential 3000 Block of Otis Street, N.E. (the “Block”) for overflow parking in connection with their auto repair operations. This has resulted in massive and untold inconveniences for those of us who live on the Block.

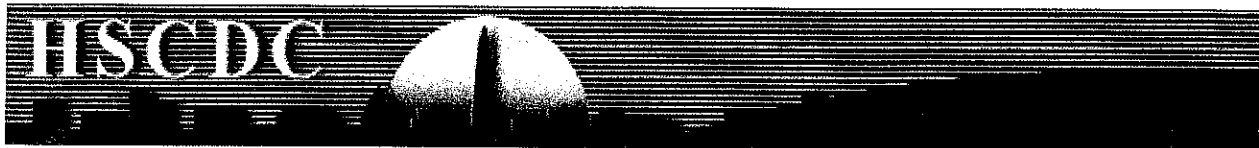
I note the recommended additional floor is to provide off street parking. However, in my view, this recommendation is an invitation to intensify the severity and degree of the hardship currently experienced by the residents of the Block. At its current size, the B&T Garage is not a responsible and respectful neighbor. The operators of the B&T garage overrun the Block with broken down cars and trucks, which are often left parked for days on the Block in front of residences. Repeated requests to the operators to cease parking the cars on the Block have gone unanswered.

I have no confidence that the situation will improve with an expansion of the B&T Garage, even if it is designated for “off street parking.” In my view, the additional space will simply result in compounding rather than resolving the existing parking situation on the Block. Therefore, I object to the recommendation and urge the elimination of that portion of the Draft.

Sincerely,

/Chester A. McPherson/

Chester A. McPherson



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STATEMENT BY WILLIAM J. BARROW, III

Executive Director, H Street Community Development Corporation

**Before the District's Office of Planning and Economic Development's Hearing on
"RHODE ISLAND AVENUE: Diamond of the District"**

March 1, 2010

Good evening, Mr. Woody and staff persons of the Office of Planning and Economic Development's for the record, I am William Barrow, Executive Director of the H Street Community Development Corporation, our office is located at 501 H Street NE. I am pleased to present H Street CDC's comments concerning the small area plan for the Rhode Island Avenue, NE corridor.

HSCDC appreciated the opportunity to participate in several of the stakeholders meetings which hopefully provided community building elements in the drafting of the Rhode Island Avenue small area study.

H Street Community Development Corporation is the owner of an approximately 40,000 square feet site at 2313-21 4th Street, N.W. (Square 3629, Lot 808) in the Edgewood community. Through an approved Planned Unit Development (PUD), HSCDC will be allowed to develop a 90 feet residential building with 170-units, with 3000 square feet of retail space on the first floor and 128 underground parking spaces. The project

has been delayed because of the downturn in residential market. However, HSCDC is still excited by the future of this project.

2313-21 4th Street, NE is located in Subarea 1- Site D and we do have a concern which if incorporated in the draft small area plan would assist in the facilitation of the stated objectives.

HSCDC suggests that the zoning of Subarea 1-Site D be changed to allow a development density of high density mixed use (6.0 FAR) and a height of 90 feet as a matter-of-right. Our approved PUD permitted a 90 foot height and 4.5 FAR. We believe that the elements in the C-2-C zoning are most appropriate for our site in Subarea1-D. The Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan provides for high density residential on the Edgewood Terrace property to the north and for moderate density mixed use on the shopping center property to the south and east. We think that allowing additional residential density on our site would be an appropriate trade-off for reducing the level of commercial development now permitted as a matter-of-right.

Zoning elements of C-2-C is more appropriate because of its close proximity to the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail Development Opportunity Area and because it will allow more flexibility to property owners in redeveloping their sites with development parameters outlined the draft plan.

HSCDC seeks clarification of the massing drawing on page 16 of the “Transit Oriented Development” section before commenting. HSCDC’s site is located in D-2 and shows our site being incorporated into a larger

development structure. It suggests that the District through its power of eminent domain will be consolidating sites to arrive at the massing outlined in the drawing. We believe that the Plan must be clarified to state that this drawing is an illustrative massing only, that it does not reflect current property ownership and that it is not intended to suggest or require that properties be combined or divided in the way that the buildings are laid out on the drawing.

This completes my prepared testimony. I will be happy to respond to your questions.