

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Historic Preservation Review Board

Excerpt of Historic Preservation Review Board
Hearing

SIXTEENTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
900 16th Street, NW

HPA #12-344

1:16 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.
Thursday, October 25, 2012

Room 220-South
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

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Board Members Present:

GRETCHEN PFAEHLER, ACTING CHARIWOMAN
ANDREW AUERBACH
ROBERT SONDERMAN
MARIA CASARELLA (recused)
CATHERINE BUELL
JOSEPH TAYLOR
GRAHAM DAVIDSON
NANCY METZGER
RAUZIA ALLY

HPO Staff:

DAVID MALONEY

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Welcome back
3 everyone. Thank you for humoring us while we
4 extended our lunch a little bit, we ran a little
5 long in the morning, not as long as we have, but
6 still longer than we agreed to here. So we're
7 commencing again, the HPRB meeting for October,
8 25th and we are beginning with Item No. 4 on our
9 agenda which is 900 16th street, NW, a revised
10 concept and new construction for a building in
11 the triangle district.

12 David, would you want to start with an
13 introduction for us?

14 MR. MALONEY: This is Third Church?

15 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Yes.

16 MR. MALONEY: Okay. I'm pleased to,
17 Madam Chair.

18 This is for the Third Church in the 16th
19 Street Historic District and I am very pleased to
20 present a positive staff report on this project.
21 As I think probably everyone in the room knows,
22 this has been going on for a long time, the

1 discussion about this property in one form or
2 another since 1991, with the filing of the
3 landmark application for the existing church and
4 office building on the site which we then
5 designated in 2007 and, there's been a long
6 history of this that I don't think I need to go
7 over, but, it is an opportunity I think for us to
8 express our appreciation to everyone who has been
9 involved in this project; the representatives of
10 the church, the developer, certainly the
11 architects who have gotten us to this point, the
12 preservation groups who have been involved in
13 this and also the ANC and members of the
14 community who have voiced their opinions from the
15 standpoint of the public.

16 Although this was a long, contentious
17 discussion, I think it's a situation where one of
18 the takeaways, if you will, is that the
19 mechanisms and the preservation law did work in
20 this situation. Not everyone is happy with the
21 outcome and people are not happy, maybe for
22 different reasons, but, it is a situation where I

1 think we can be glad to reflect on the fact that
2 the law does accommodate situations of economic
3 hardship. It does allow fair consideration of the
4 historic qualities of buildings that may not be
5 particularly popular and it provides a forum for
6 the resolution of competing interests that are
7 important in the public consideration and that
8 the mayor and the city as monitors of the
9 preservation law have to accommodate.

10 So, many divergent views and I think, I
11 certainly hope, that we are at a point where we
12 have a very reasonable compromise. The building
13 that you'll see today, I think it will be a
14 handsome addition to 16th Street, one that's
15 compatible with its historic character and as I
16 said, it's maybe not 100 percent of what the
17 staff was asking for in May, but we did listen to
18 the comments that we got from the board, and
19 whereas the building may not conform strictly to
20 the matter-of-right zoning for this property, it
21 is designed in a way, I think, that it will --
22 that will not be readily apparent to people who

1 see this building after it is built.

2 The scale of the building and its
3 component elements, I think, now fit well with
4 the historic district. It has a contemporary
5 expression but it is still somewhat traditional
6 in feel, if you will. It's both classical and
7 modern in the small "c" and small "m" senses of
8 those terms, which I think is totally appropriate
9 to this situation, and the limestone and marble
10 façades of this new building, as opposed to the
11 raw concrete of the existing building, I think
12 will reinforce the continuity of 16th Street as a
13 historic district.

14 The project is still at the concept
15 stage, obviously, and the façade detailing is to
16 come, and I didn't talk much about the façade
17 detailing in the staff report or really have a
18 lot of critical comments to say about the
19 building.

20 There was one issue about the design of
21 the corner, which I suggested needed to be worked
22 on, but, the -- in terms of the work that will

1 follow in design development, the staff is
2 suggesting that this, I think, could be delegated
3 to the staff, if you feel comfortable with that,
4 but we would like to reserve the option of
5 drawing on the expertise of the board on an as-
6 needed basis because the -- I think it's very,
7 very important that the details of this building
8 are worked out well to be commensurate with the
9 quality of buildings on 16th street. And also,
10 the church façade which is an innovative, unusual
11 building type, if you will, is something that we
12 don't have a lot of experience with and we
13 certainly can use the help of architects on the
14 board in that regard.

15 And then finally, before turning it over,
16 just one small note about precedent which
17 certainly has been on our minds, as I think you
18 know from the last hearing, and I would just want
19 to reiterate the point that, first of all, that
20 16th Street is a special street in downtown. I
21 think it's well reflected in the city's planning
22 documents and it's obviously a historic district

1 as well, and the staff continues to feel that the
2 approach that we take to 16th Street needs to be
3 consistent and we will, I think, in the future as
4 projects come along, be saying some of the same
5 things we've said in our last hearing. And we
6 believe this site is really a unique
7 circumstance.

8 It's unique because of the need to
9 incorporate the church into the design of the
10 project. It's unique because of the economic
11 hardship situation and also for a very long and
12 bruising battle that we are hoping now will be
13 resolved.

14 So with that, I guess it's time for the
15 architects to present the project to you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you. Thank
17 you very much. Welcome back.

18 At this point the only thing, David,
19 that I wanted to make clear too, is that we are
20 also -- because we didn't discuss it as much the
21 last time, but we also -- you're also looking for
22 our opinion about the demolition of the church

1 and the integrity remaining for the rest of the
2 site with the administration building

3 MR. MALONEY: Correct. Yes and I'd be
4 happy to talk about that more if you'd like to
5 later.

6 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Okay. Thank you.
7 Thank you.

8 Sorry for the intro. Welcome, and if you
9 haven't already, as a matter of protocol, fill
10 out a white card with your names so the recorder
11 has your name spelled properly and then touch the
12 word "push," state your name first, and then if
13 you would focus primarily on what's changed and
14 the changes that have happened, that would be
15 helpful to us. Thank you.

16 MR. KIRKPATRICK: Madam Chair, members of
17 the board, I'm Darrow Kirkpatrick, a native of
18 Washington, D.C. and a resident of Washington,
19 D.C. This is our fifth appearance before the
20 HPRB over the last five years to obtain approval
21 to proceed with this project. We are indeed,
22 most grateful for the positive staff report and

1 the cooperation of the staff in developing
2 today's presentation.

3 We do not plan to review the cost and
4 religious exercise burdens incurred by what we
5 consider shortcomings of past reviews. We'd like
6 to move directly to today's presentation, which
7 we fully support, and then respond to any
8 questions involving the presentation, however, we
9 are prepared to speak to any aspect of the
10 project's 21 year history as to both substance
11 and process, should that become necessary.

12 David Stern from ICG Properties has brief
13 introductory comments, then Graham Wyatt from
14 Robert Stern will give the presentation.

15 MR. STERN: David Stern with ICG
16 Properties on behalf of the ownership and
17 development team, just want to echo what Darrow
18 said. We do appreciate the opportunity to be
19 here again. We want to thank the Board for the
20 comments and feedback we got back in May. We
21 think what you'll see today is that we haven't
22 just gone back over the past five months and

1 refined what we had. In essence, we've taken a
2 number of steps backward, reassessed the design
3 in the context of a shorter building and on that,
4 we'll turn it over to Graham, and look forward to
5 hearing what you think.

6 MR. WYATT: Thank you, David. Graham
7 Wyatt, representing the applicant, partner with
8 Robert Stern architects. Gretchen, you asked, we
9 will focus today on what we're actually
10 proposing. I know when I met in front of all of
11 you last, it was quite a lengthy explanation of
12 our understanding of the history of the 16th
13 Street corridor which, I agree with the Historic
14 Preservation Office report, is a unique and
15 exceptional part of Washington, D.C. It's not
16 just the typical fabric. So I do feel that that
17 was an important exercise to go through, we're
18 not going to do that today.

19 What I will do, is to call your attention
20 to the location of the site and specifically,
21 Gretchen, to your comment a moment ago, there are
22 the two existing properties. There is the church

1 itself, which is freestanding within a plaza and
2 then there is a building, the office building
3 known as the Monitor Building which is at the
4 north side of the site, a party wall to the 1600
5 K Street Building.

6 The proposed structure, replacement
7 structure consists of both a commercial office
8 building and a replacement facility for the
9 church. Both their auditorium, their principal
10 meeting spaces, their bookstore, their reading
11 room and their administrative offices. Here is
12 the site plan that shows all of the areas that
13 are dedicated to the office building, its main
14 entrance, retail space at the corner of I Street
15 and 16th, and lobby that leads to an elevator
16 core, and a shared service dock, shared between
17 the commercial building and the church, facing
18 the service alley at the rear. Parking entrance
19 at the western side of the site off High Street
20 and the church, here, located at the mid-block
21 between the proposed office structure and 1600 K
22 Street. The church itself, as you will see in a

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1 moment in the renderings, has two entrances. It
2 has an entrance that comes through the reading
3 room and it has a second entrance that leads to
4 an interior lobby that rises to the auditorium
5 and administrative offices above.

6 Without further ado, here is what we are
7 now proposing. It is a building of Cherokee
8 Marble at the ground floor and a combination of
9 Indiana Limestone and White Cherokee Marble above
10 a trim in a combination of bronze and bronze-
11 finished aluminum frame windows and it rises to a
12 cornice line of approximately 93.5 feet and I
13 will show how that corresponds to other cornice
14 lines along 16th Street. The main entrance to
15 the office building is located here, within a
16 double-height expressed base, retail entrance and
17 retail shop fronts at the corner of 16th and I
18 and the church, which is largely visible here but
19 will become quite visible in subsequent views, is
20 located further to the north.

21 This is the view from the other side. In
22 this case the church entrance is very visible.

1 The main façade of the office building rising to
2 the cornice height, which matches the various
3 cornices of the Hay-Adams, the Motion Picture
4 Association building and the somewhat lower
5 cornice of 1600 K street, and also
6 correspondingly matches cornice heights of other
7 buildings on the east side of 16th Street. This
8 is the entrance to the church, the church remains
9 to be developed in its detailing but it is seen
10 as a glassy crystalline structure set within a
11 recess approximately 10 feet deep and the glass
12 portion, which I'm highlighting here, contains a
13 double-height space for the church's auditorium.
14 That's their principle gathering space.

15 At the ground level, the entrance to the
16 reading room, again, a very glassy façade, which
17 the church wants, is opened here, onto a small
18 plaza while the entrance to the auditorium and
19 the offices above are located north of that.

20 This is a section that represents the
21 height of the building as seen along I Street so
22 what you're seeing here is 1625 I Street, the so-

1 called Ullico Building, which has the dominant
2 cornice line on I Street, somewhat higher than
3 the proposed cornice line of the 900 16th Street
4 building. The Ullico Building drops
5 significantly as it approaches 16th street but it
6 does have a high tower element which we'll show
7 in subsequent renderings immediately to the west
8 of the proposed structure.

9 I'm showing here a cross-section through
10 all of 16th Street so there is International
11 Labor Federation Building, on the other side of
12 the street and I won't comment on the specifics
13 of this, but they're addressed in the Historic
14 Preservation Office report that we have gone to
15 some lengths to consider the relationship between
16 the cornice line of that building and its
17 penthouse structures and their relationship to
18 the proposed building.

19 A view taken from the east looking west,
20 this is I Street. The entrance to the office
21 building, symmetrically placed within the
22 principal façade of the office building. The

1 office building has glassy corners facing onto
2 the intersection of 16th and I and a glassy
3 corner that faces onto the recessed portion of
4 the façade which features the church. It rises
5 to height of slightly more than 93 feet, at which
6 point, it's set back and there is a mechanical
7 penthouse and a small amount of occupied space
8 behind a roof trellis on that penthouse. The
9 silhouette that you see behind here is the Ullico
10 Building and its tower, which rises at mid-point
11 within the sight.

12 The church, I believe speaks for itself.
13 Its two entrances, the reading room and the
14 balance of its program.

15 The materials that we're proposing, David
16 Maloney referred to them in his introductory
17 comments, that we are proposing to use Cherokee
18 White Marble. It's the same marble that's used
19 in the Federal Reserve Bank Building. It comes
20 from Georgia. For a long time that quarry was
21 closed. It was repurchased about a dozen years
22 ago and open Cherokee White Marble is available

1 again. Use it, it's a great stone and it's very
2 characteristic of Washington, D.C. It's not just
3 use at the Federal Reserve Building, although
4 this is a particularly noted application of that
5 marble. That material, the Cherokee White
6 Marble, we're proposing to use in the two-story
7 base of the building and it would be used as
8 inset decorative elements in the portion of the
9 building above.

10 The balance of the building above will be
11 Indiana Limestone. There are various different
12 ranges. There is a buff range and a gray range
13 and actually very characteristic in Washington is
14 the empire range, which is a blend of buff and
15 gray. We haven't decided yet exactly which of
16 those we'll be using. As David Maloney points
17 out, that's a topic of further discussion.

18 The balance of the building, its window
19 frames, particularly at the street level where
20 they're most prominent than elsewhere above, will
21 be statuary bronze. Again, a fine tradition of
22 that in Washington, D.C. and our intention is

1 that all of the ground floor two levels will be
2 statuary bronze. Probably the corners, we're in
3 the process of studying that and a combination of
4 bronze and triple-coated bronze aluminum on the
5 upper floors.

6 The floor plans, I'm showing primarily
7 because they illustrate the setbacks, the typical
8 floors of which the fourth floor here is
9 representative, show the way in which the
10 building holds the property line on I Street and
11 holds the property line on 16th street, aligning
12 with the façade of 1600 K to the north. Very
13 slightly set back at the two corners here, those
14 two glassy corners that I mentioned a moment ago.
15 And then set back by a further 10 feet to
16 accommodate the glass structure and the glass
17 canopy of the church.

18 I should point out that we discussed at
19 our last presentation and meeting with you, the
20 fact that the church projects slightly,
21 approximately three feet beyond the property
22 line, which adds visibility and helps to

1 differentiate it from the dominant façade of the
2 office building.

3 Elsewhere, the setbacks, as the office
4 building rises to its penthouse, run in 10 foot
5 increments. So, 10 feet at the eighth floor and
6 a further 10 feet above that for the trellis and
7 at the church, 10 feet. 10 Feet at the seventh
8 floor for a terrace and a further 10 foot setback
9 at the eighth floor. So the building does step
10 back in a series of those increments. Here you
11 see that in section, and particularly relevant is
12 the section that shows the church which occupies
13 three floors, the ground floor, a double-height
14 auditorium on the second and third floor, office
15 and support space that runs all the way through
16 to the rear of the building on that floor, and
17 the glassy tower element that rises above. And
18 here, you see the setbacks on the subsequent
19 floors above.

20 Three views of the church itself set into
21 its recess in the façade, the reveal if you will,
22 between 900 16th Street and 1600 K, this is a

1 portion of the building which is still very much
2 in development, but this certainly shows our
3 intention that it will be crystalline and glassy
4 and that the glass, in this case, comes down to
5 the street and conveys the symbolic transparency
6 that also the actual transparency that the church
7 is after.

8 A few views, you may remember, we did an
9 exhaustive study of everywhere in Washington,
10 D.C. from which this building would be visible
11 and working with Historic Preservation Office.
12 We've chosen a few of those views which they felt
13 were really most relevant to represent the
14 building as seen from the public domain. Here,
15 from the intersection of K Street and 16th to the
16 east of 16th Street. Here you see 1600 K Street
17 in the foreground, with the church somewhat
18 concealed but within that reveal that separates
19 the two buildings and then the main façade of the
20 office building. Rising behind it, the Ullico
21 tower, the tower of 1625 I Street and just
22 visible above the cornice line from this vantage

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1 point, the open trellis work that fronts the
2 penthouse of the proposed building.

3 Here another view taken from the east
4 curb line of 16th Street, north of K Street,
5 similarly you can see the penthouse structure
6 with its trellis up above the reveal, with the
7 church marking the bottom and the cornice line,
8 the dominant cornice line of 16th street, which
9 the building respects.

10 So that's the presentation, I don't want
11 to belabor it, but I hope that it was clear and I
12 look forward to your questions. Thank You.

13 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

14 While our eyes adjust, I'll ask, in the
15 packet, I don't know if we had any further input
16 from the ANC or community that you would like to
17 share with us, David.

18 MR. MALONEY: I think that there are
19 people here who would like to speak and I did
20 just pass around a letter from DC Preservation
21 League and anything else that we had in the
22 record I think would already have been

1 distributed with your packets, yes.

2 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Okay. Then, how
3 many people are here to speak, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
4 Six people, great.

5 At this point what I would like to do is
6 invite you up to the table. The usual rules
7 apply. If you haven't filled out a card, please
8 do so. Before you speak touch the word "push" on
9 your microphone. When the green light
10 illuminates, please state your name first, then
11 share you information with us.

12 We are -- because, as you know, we are on
13 a time schedule. We ask that you be respectful
14 and keep your comments to about three or four
15 minutes. We can put the timer on but we'll rely
16 on your pacing and respect of that wish. Thank
17 you. So if you would like to come up to the
18 table that would be wonderful.

19 Why don't we start with the ANC first.

20 MR. STEPHENS: Hi. Thanks. My name is
21 Will Stephens, I'm the chair of ANC2B, the ANC in
22 which this project falls and ANC representatives,

1 as you guys know, have come out, I think, each of
2 the five times that the project has been
3 presented and we voiced our support. We
4 supported the prior iterations because the
5 proponents of the project already addressed the
6 comments we had about massing and sight lines and
7 the new concept is perfectly consistent with
8 that. So we voice our continued support for the
9 project.

10 We're very glad to hear that there's been
11 a positive staff report. As others have
12 mentioned, there's a lot of history we could talk
13 about but there's no reason to now. It seems
14 like we're all rallying around the project. I
15 just wanted to come in person to voice our
16 support -- continued support for the project.

17 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you. Thank
18 you very much.

19 MR. SILVERSTEIN: Madam Chair, my name is
20 Mike Silverstein, I represent ANC2B06 which is
21 adjacent to the property. I have been hardly
22 reticent about my opinions on this, to this

1 point. I don't think I'm on Mr. Maloney's
2 Christmas card list, but I have to admit, being
3 honest, that this is actually a better project
4 than the one that we saw previously. We support
5 that.

6 This is more handsome, perhaps more
7 fitting to the neighborhood. I don't want to get
8 back into the 20 Years War. It is time to move
9 forward. Time to thank all of those who have
10 helped us to reach this point and I don't want to
11 take any more of your time. I urge you to
12 support it.

13 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

14 MR. MYER: Good afternoon. I'm Don Myer
15 with the D.C. Preservation League and presenting
16 our support for the project on behalf of both the
17 Board of the League and its project review
18 committee, which worked with the developers and
19 the church over the last year to hammer out any
20 number of refinements to the design which we feel
21 pretty good about.

22 But I might qualify our support by saying

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1 it's very specific to this design on this sight
2 with its apparent 90-foot cornice line being
3 quite, quite visible. There's no equivocation
4 about that, I hope. But at any rate, we also
5 appreciate the chance to work with the D.C.
6 Preservation Office and the developers and the
7 architects as this project moves forward.

8 There are a number of specific comments
9 made in our letter to you, which you have a copy
10 of and if you like, I could paraphrase those or
11 you could read them yourself, but I think they
12 basically support the idea of using the highest
13 quality materials, including landscape as an
14 integral element of this project which goes from
15 the curb to the roofscape, perhaps, including a
16 green roof, perhaps, vines on the trellis, that
17 kind of thing as considerations.

18 One thing about the trellis that the
19 project review committee recommended was that
20 consideration be given to removing the
21 northernmost bay of that trellis to shorten it a
22 bit and to -- that actually diminishes the height

1 somewhat, but also makes a more comfortable
2 transition between the setback portion of the
3 building above the church. The suggestion
4 further, was that that setback portion might be
5 somehow distinguished a bit from the office
6 portion of the building as the project's design
7 evolves and as the church façade develops. And
8 that particular façade, it's hoped, will be
9 developed in its anticipated crystalline form
10 with, really, a glass expression, not a whole lot
11 of exterior metal.

12 And so, that said, unless there are
13 questions, it's a great pleasure to say that one
14 year of working on this has produced a much
15 better design. Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you for your
17 time.

18 Welcome.

19 MR. ROBERTSON: Good afternoon. I'm
20 Charles Robertson testifying again in this case
21 on behalf of the Committee of 100 on the Federal
22 City and as the former architectural historian

1 member of this board for 12 years. We were
2 pleased with the Board's action last May in this
3 case, which adopted the staff report's
4 recommendation, quote, that the Board find the
5 proposed construction in excess of 90 feet -- the
6 90-foot height limit to be incompatible with the
7 character of the 16th Street Historic District
8 and the urban design character of major
9 contributing element of the L'Enfant Plan.

10 This directive is very clear. Anything
11 above 90 feet, except the mechanical penthouse
12 was disallowed. The recommendation was supported
13 by a lengthy and carefully reasoned 16-page staff
14 report and by an oral and visual presentation to
15 the Board by David Maloney. So we're baffled
16 that the new staff report unequivocally supports
17 the revised design despite the fact that the top
18 floor above the 90-foot limit is two feet three
19 inches higher than the hundred and seven feet
20 three inches that was rejected by the board in
21 May. So the new height is a hundred and nine
22 feet, ten inches. It's higher than in May, not

1 shorter, as the applicant suggested.

2 David Maloney, in his staff report, set
3 forth a convincing argument that the document --
4 that documented the history and importance of
5 16th street, that surveyed the prevailing
6 building heights along 16th street, and
7 especially, that cited the dangerous precedent of
8 permitting this exception as opening the gate for
9 others to follow suit in exceeding the 90-foot
10 height limit.

11 You also saw a model that showed what
12 could happen along the street, if indeed other
13 property owners followed suit. And it will
14 happen. ICG, the developer here, owns the World
15 Center Building, a 90-foot contributing building
16 that's adjacent to and immediately north of the
17 side in issue. ICG's settlement agreement with
18 the D.C. Preservation League requires that DCPL
19 not oppose an addition to the World Center
20 Building that is set back 35 feet and rises to a
21 height of 130 feet. So if you approve a height
22 of 90 feet for the structure at issue, how can

1 you refuse a similar addition to the World Center
2 Building?

3 The top floor of the present design is
4 now labeled an event space. The plans presented
5 in May did not have an event space. If such a
6 space is so crucial, it could certainly be
7 located elsewhere in the building. The staff
8 report praises the fact that an office floor has
9 been removed from the design, but the
10 substitution of an occupiable event space does
11 not diminish the visual impact of the additional
12 height on the historic district. And who knows
13 how this event space might be transformed in the
14 future? The matter-of-right mechanical
15 penthouse, which has been revised to half the
16 size originally proposed, is now well located,
17 adjacent to the penthouse for the World Center
18 Building which is a substantial improvement.

19 There's been some tweaking of the
20 building's architectural design, but in our
21 opinion, the design is undistinguished and
22 suitable for K Street, not this prominent

1 location.

2 Again we're baffled at David Maloney's
3 total abandonment and disregard of the
4 justification and recommendation for the 90-foot
5 limit. On the May staff report, perhaps, he's
6 explained this reversal to you but certainly not
7 to us in any way that the public can understand.
8 So, we would urge you to reiterate the very clear
9 directive that you adopted last may for the
10 building, that the building's height be kept to
11 90 feet as compatible with the 16th Street
12 Historic District.

13 But if you decide to approve the event
14 space floor, we have these recommendations. In
15 the May design for the building, this top floor
16 was set back 30 feet from the 16th Street cornice
17 line. In the current design, a highly visible
18 porch has been added to this floor, which is set
19 back only ten feet from the cornice line. The
20 event structure itself is set back another ten
21 feet. So this floor is not only higher than the
22 one proposed in May, but it's also much closer to

1 the 16th street cornice line than proposed in
2 May.

3 The new floor will be substantially more
4 visible than before, despite the views you have
5 been shown. Those views were taken from
6 relatively close vantage points, not from a
7 distance and did not provide you with a fuller,
8 more accurate picture of how this top floor will
9 appear from 16th Street, from I Street and from
10 Lafayette Park and Pennsylvania Avenue,
11 especially with the leaves off the trees. You
12 should be relying on actual figures rather than
13 artfully contrived views.

14 We recommend that any structure on this
15 top level including porch, event space and
16 penthouse be set back 30 feet from the principal
17 16th Street cornice line and 30 feet from the I
18 Street cornice line.

19 Further, we recommend that the event
20 space floor be reduced in height from 16 to 14
21 feet which will still allow a generous ceiling
22 height for this space. These modifications will

1 considerably reduce the floor's visibility from
2 the -- from important historic vistas and will
3 actually conform with the proposal in May. I
4 mean, they're increasing the size of this thing.

5 Lastly, since both applicant and staff
6 have disregarded the board's clear instruction
7 from its May meeting, we recommend that any
8 revised design be brought back again before the
9 Board to ensure that your decision is accurately
10 implemented.

11 But again, we do urge that you stick by
12 your earlier, unequivocal decision and reject
13 this top floor entirely. If you have any
14 questions, I'll be pleased to answer them.

15 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you. Thank
16 you for your testimony.

17 Is there anyone else to speak?

18 MS. GIORDANO: Good afternoon, my name is
19 Cynthia Giordano with the Saul Ewing law firm and
20 I represent the owners of 1625 I Street, which
21 has been referred to as the Ullico Building. We
22 presented testimony and models last time in

1 opposition to any height above 90 feet. I think
2 we agree that the Board's directive last time was
3 very clear and we don't see a reason why there
4 should be a quote unquote compromise here or what
5 possible claim of hardship there could be.

6 At this point, we think the compromise
7 has been struck in allowing the demolition of
8 this building as well as the World Trade building
9 -- I'm sorry, the Christian Science Monitor
10 building. So, basically the 1625 Street I
11 building will be adversely impacted by height
12 above 90 feet. The owners of the building feel
13 strongly that they have relied on the zoning as
14 well as the historic district design guidelines
15 for that building and will be at significant --
16 significantly adversely impacted by height over
17 90 feet.

18 I wanted to point out that, as far as the
19 staff report goes, it refers to the building as
20 an eight-story building and it's really, it's a
21 nine-story building. I think even the
22 applicant's presentation showed the quote unquote

1 event space as office space. Obviously there's a
2 need for a mechanical penthouse. We don't have
3 a problem with that of course in a 90 foot
4 building but we urge the Board to stick to their
5 original directive of a 90-foot building and
6 advise the -- I think the Board was very clear
7 that the applicant should work within those
8 parameters and that 90 feet is 90 feet.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

11 MR. BOWER: I'm Thomas Bower, president
12 of the Dupont Circle Conservancy. While the
13 applicant did not discuss the current plans for
14 the proposed structure for 900 16th street with
15 the Dupont Circle Conservancy, we applaud them
16 for the proposed landscaping and for pulling back
17 the mechanical penthouse somewhat, as we
18 requested previously.

19 In May, the HPRB wisely instructed the
20 applicant, if they wanted to submit a revised
21 plan, the structure should be no more than 90
22 feet in height. We were surprised that the

1 revised plan calls for a building height of 109
2 feet, ten inches, which is two feet, three inches
3 higher than the earlier proposal. With much of
4 the utility penthouse space now converted into
5 event space to sneak occupiable space back into
6 the previously rejected building height.

7 How can occupiable event space not count
8 against the building's allowable height? A
9 utility penthouse allowance is intended for
10 utilities, not an excuse to open historic
11 district space into (inaudible). That a few
12 years ago, unfortunately, the Hay-Adams hotel was
13 allowed to break height restrictions to put an
14 event space on its roof is no excuse to allow the
15 same mistake a second time.

16 The DCC asks that the HPRB repeat the
17 previous decision to limit the building's height
18 to 90 feet including no additional occupiable or
19 event space above that height, keep the
20 mechanical space for that purpose alone and have
21 the penthouse pulled back as far as possible from
22 I Street and 16th Street.

1 Thank you very much.

2 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

3 Is there anyone else to speak?

4 (No response.)

5 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you very
6 much. At this time I'll ask the Board if you
7 have any questions of the applicants before we go
8 into comments of the applicants. I guess,
9 questions of anybody who spoke.

10 MS. ALLY: I do have a question.

11 It's for David, actually and it's on the
12 question that was raised by Charles Robertson
13 about allowing the extra two point three and a
14 half feet.

15 MR. MALONEY: I feel a little bit in the
16 position of being like, "Lucy you've got some
17 'splaining" to do. And, let me start by saying
18 to our good friends in our community who maybe
19 have felt that this is a little bit of a turn
20 around on the part of the staff. I'm sorry that
21 we did not have more time to discuss this with
22 them before this meeting, just the press of

1 normal business, and I think that would have
2 helped. So I do want to apologize to them for
3 that and I think, perhaps, for feeling a little
4 bit, that this was a surprise for them. We'll
5 take the blame for that.

6 However, a little bit like our national
7 politics, we have to figure out sometimes, some
8 ways to admit that we can't always just stay in
9 our corners and hold to our principles on every
10 single thing. There are some times where we just
11 have to come to terms with conflicting objectives
12 and conflicting things that are in the public
13 interest in the case of development.

14 And this is a situation, as I said at the
15 beginning, where our druthers were very clear in
16 the last meeting; however, we did get direction,
17 I believe, from the Board to the effect that,
18 while there was a lot of sympathy for that
19 position, that maybe we should go back and take a
20 second look at seeing whether or not this was not
21 something that could be worked out in a way that
22 did not unduly compromise preservation

1 principles, that allowed for a reasonable
2 development to proceed in a way that maintained
3 the economic viability of the development. And
4 in a situation where we are asking for, and I
5 think are rightly expecting to see top quality
6 façade design and top quality materials on this
7 building.

8 It's got to have an economic base to
9 support it and I don't mean to be, sort of,
10 offering excuses, but, it seems to me that this
11 is as close as possible as we can come to the
12 principles that were laid out in May and still
13 maintain a project that allows us to proceed now
14 without further entrenched warfare. And I think
15 we just have to resolve it and move forward.

16 MS. ALLY: One further question.

17 Does the pro forma for the building, is
18 that the reasoning behind the top floor stepping
19 back only ten feet as opposed to 30 feet
20 originally? In the last presentation.

21 MR. STERN: Well, we could both answer.
22 I think it's dictated largely by design. In

1 follow-up to our May hearing we had many
2 discussions with Dave and Steve and one of the
3 issues that arose was if you're going to have a
4 90-footish, to bring back a term from five months
5 ago, building plus a penthouse, it's important
6 that that penthouse which will be visible from
7 the street, and it's only rising above 90 feet,
8 it's not on top of a hundred foot building, that
9 it be designed to be, I'm going to defer to David
10 on vocabulary here but, apparently that it was
11 meant to be there and part of the building and
12 not simply a Dryvit penthouse which is stuck on
13 top for that purpose.

14 So, that led into discussions about use
15 of the space, size of the space and, frankly, how
16 close it does get to the property line and even
17 down to the idea of a trellis and a column-spaced
18 outdoor area.

19 MR. MALONEY: And just to follow up on
20 that a little bit, the issue of making the
21 building a piece of architecture as a whole, was
22 very important to us. This is something that I

1 think, in the May staff report I tried to point
2 out about the existing buildings, many of the
3 existing historic buildings along 16th street,
4 the penthouses are not afterthoughts.

5 And over many decades of commercial
6 construction in the city, I think the common
7 sense people get is that buildings are 90 feet or
8 110 or 130, and there's just, sort of, nothing
9 above that. Well, there's not nothing above
10 that. There's always the mechanical penthouse,
11 and I think one of the criticisms you could make
12 about Washington architecture generally, is that
13 those penthouses are often ignored to the
14 detriment of good quality architecture.

15 In this case, I think that what the
16 architects have managed to achieve is to design
17 the portion of the building above 90 feet in a
18 way that looks as if it's an appropriate top to
19 the building. It's a part of the overall
20 building composition and not an afterthought and
21 it's something that has been done, in the same
22 manner as similar situations along 16th street.

1 For many years now, developers and
2 property owners have been pushing the limits of
3 the interpretation of, well not the
4 interpretation but what the law says about
5 occupiable space above the height limit is not
6 allowed. However, in residential buildings in
7 particular, it has become quite apparent that
8 rooftops are an important amenity in the city.
9 And to be able to use rooftops is something that
10 the city benefits from.

11 Well, you can't use rooftops unless you
12 have something up there to serve the rooftops and
13 there's been a lot of clever developments, on the
14 part of apartment building developers in
15 particular, to accommodate enough usable stuff up
16 there to make the rooftops usable. This is
17 perhaps a little bit of that and it is perhaps a
18 little bit more of that by having an admittedly
19 event space or office or whatever you want to
20 call it, up there.

21 It is admittedly occupiable space above
22 the 90-foot height limit, but I think in the way

1 it is handled architecturally, I don't think that
2 that is going to be readily apparent. I think it
3 is going to look like a 90-foot -- 90ish foot
4 building that has a penthouse on top of it or it
5 has, you know, an architectural termination to
6 the building that is better than most buildings.

7 MS. ALLY: Sorry for hogging the floor
8 but one further, final question.

9 Where will the railing be on that porch?
10 Will it be at the setback level or will it be at
11 the face of the rest of the building?

12 MR. WYATT: There will be a railing, a
13 glass railing which will be set at the back face
14 of that parapet. So, set back by -- we haven't
15 detailed this yet, but a foot or so.

16 I can also add a few points of
17 clarification to the questions that were made by
18 speakers a moment ago. One of them is that they
19 were correct that the floor area at that
20 penthouse level is now approximately half of what
21 it was before. So it is significantly smaller.

22 The views which were called artfully

1 contrived, in fact, are very precise and those of
2 you who were at previous meetings will remember
3 that we took over 400 photographs all over the
4 District and we worked closely with the Historic
5 Preservation Office to identify those views where
6 the building would be visible. And the views
7 that the Historic Preservation Office has asked
8 us to bring back to you today are the ones where
9 this is most visible. So you did, in fact, see
10 the extreme situation.

11 I can specifically comment on
12 Pennsylvania Avenue and Lafayette Park where
13 these views and the penthouses are not visible.
14 Simply invisible. And we've demonstrated that
15 with computer construction and with actual
16 photographs which you saw previously and which
17 you reviewed repeatedly with the Historic
18 Preservation Office. So, I'm actually very proud
19 of the methodology that we use there. It's quite
20 complicated and fairly sophisticated and I have
21 my hat off to people we worked with who pulled
22 all of that off. I think it has been truly

1 scientific and not artfully contrived.

2 The comment about the penthouse itself,
3 it is lower than the code-allowed height for
4 penthouses. It's not 18 foot 6. It's a foot and
5 a half lower than that and it's also set back by
6 more than the one to one setback requirement
7 which is required for a penthouse. So, it is
8 smaller, lower, and set back by more. We are
9 pleased that within it there is an opportunity to
10 have some space along with the mechanical
11 equipment, which we're calling event space, and
12 the height of that event space is actually very
13 much determined by the size of the mechanical
14 equipment adjacent to it. So, the penthouse does
15 not have two different heights. It is a single,
16 uniform cornice line with a single uniform
17 pergola outside it. And as staff has commented -
18 - we've discussed with them and studied in
19 detail. So, I hope that clarifies some of the
20 comments that were made a moment ago.

21 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

22 Graham, would you go into a little more

1 detail, actually, that was one of the topics, the
2 difference in the 9th and penthouse plan. I do
3 recall that there was some occupied space, I just
4 don't have that packet with me, but if you could
5 just talk a little bit about that. There was
6 occupied space on that level as I recall.

7 MR. WYATT: Well previously there was an
8 entire floor there, but it is something that no
9 one has mentioned, but an entire floor was
10 removed from the building and that penthouse
11 level was dropped. The penthouse level
12 previously has a combination of mechanical
13 equipment and some occupied space. The overall
14 penthouse has become a bit smaller and it's been
15 dropped by a floor. Gretchen, does that answer
16 your question?

17 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: It does. And, in
18 exploring the penthouse height, 9th floor and roof
19 height, I certainly understand the requirements
20 for the mechanical space and clearances that are
21 required around the equipment that it takes to
22 heat and ventilate and cool a building like this.

1 Did you look at options or have
2 discussions about two roof heights for a lower
3 height for the occupied space? Maybe if you
4 could talk a little bit about that.

5 MR. WYATT: Yes we did. We did look at
6 that and reviewed it and the feeling is that that
7 would significantly detract from what David
8 Maloney has identified as the desire to have a
9 unified penthouse, which is an artful part of the
10 overall composition.

11 We also looked very carefully, and David
12 is charitable to say this is concept design, but
13 in fact, at the mechanical level we've looked at
14 this in far greater detail and that led us to our
15 willingness to drop the parapet height on the
16 mechanical penthouse somewhat, based on a rather
17 precise study that will go in there. I had
18 stated when we met previously, I absolutely do
19 not want to be the architect who will build a
20 building and you can see the tops of the cooling
21 towers poking out from behind the parapet. So,
22 that was what led us to the termination of the

1 height of the parapet.

2 I will go on record, I think it's
3 important here, that there is one element that
4 will protrude slightly above that but very far
5 back, and that is the top of the actual elevators
6 themselves which come up an extra foot or two.
7 We studied that from every direction. They're
8 way back at the back of the building but that is
9 the level of detail that we've gone to, to try
10 and fine tune the height of this penthouse.

11 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

12 David, maybe now would be a good time to
13 -- if you wouldn't mind talking a little bit
14 about the -- given the demolition of the church,
15 the comment from staff on the significance of the
16 monitor building as well.

17 MR. MALONEY: Certainly. Well, in
18 procedural terms, as I think the Board is aware,
19 when a historic landmark is demolished, that
20 demolition permit has to proceed to the Mayor's
21 Agent for a hearing. And, in this case, that is
22 what happened with the church. The application

1 for demolition was for only the church building
2 itself and not for the Monitor Building or even
3 for the parking garage beneath the church, as a
4 technical matter. So, once an application comes
5 in to demolish the Monitor Building and the
6 remainder of the landmark, it has to come through
7 the same process. The first stop is here and if
8 the board determines that it has lost integrity
9 as a landmark, then a mayor's agent hearing is
10 not required. So, that is, in effect, what we're
11 saying. We're judging that in advance, if you
12 will.

13 I think it's easy to envision the
14 situation where the church is gone and the
15 Monitor Building remains. And I think it's also
16 pretty fair to admit that if that happened, the
17 integrity of the composition which is entirely
18 based on the relationship between the two
19 buildings would be lost and that the Monitor
20 Building itself would not have sufficient
21 integrity to meet landmark designation criteria.

22 So, this would give them the surety, that

1 as they proceeded, that the Board would be in a
2 position to say that when this time comes, if the
3 project proceeds, in terms of the permits issued
4 for the new church, then the demolition of the
5 Monitor Building could proceed without going to
6 the Mayor's Agent.

7 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you.

8 Is there anyone on the Board that has
9 questions to be clarified by the applicant or
10 anyone that spoke, or David's presentation about
11 the demolition?

12 MR. DAVIDSON: Could you just make a
13 brief comment about the derivation and the
14 symbolism and the origin of the expression of the
15 church?

16 MR. WYATT: The physical form, the
17 crystalline and glassy form of the church came
18 very much from our discussions with the church
19 and their congregation. There is already some
20 established precedent for that within the church
21 as a broader international organization, that
22 there has always been a great desire on their

1 part, particularly for their reading room, to be
2 very transparent and open to the public. And in
3 some congregations for the auditorium, which is
4 the gathering space, to be transparent and open
5 to the public.

6 That actually was one of their many great
7 concerns about the existing building which is
8 very inward looking and solid. And this
9 particular congregation, right now, wants very
10 much to have their activities be visible from the
11 street and vice versa.

12 Within that, I guess you could say there
13 are many ways in which those functional goals
14 could be met but the church -- and we in our
15 early discussions, they said that they wanted
16 something that was special. Jewel-like is the
17 term that was used and so we took that very much
18 to heart. We also wanted, in creating something
19 jewel-like, to have something that had a -- was a
20 counterpoint to the more solid masonry façade of
21 the office building so the two were clearly
22 differentiated.

1 So, those were some of the really
2 practical lines of thinking that led us to this
3 form.

4 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Any other questions
5 to clarify?

6 MR. SONDERMAN: As those of you in the
7 audience know, I've been here the longest and
8 been through the thick and thin and the pain and
9 the grim and the good and the bad. I think it's
10 ironic actually, that the church has opted for a
11 modernist approach to the façade after rejecting
12 its modernist predecessor.

13 I have a practical question about the
14 crystal part of it. I think it's lovely. I --
15 from a historic district standpoint and a
16 compatibility standpoint, how do you envision
17 maintaining that? It seems like a very
18 challenging thing to create. I mean, I can see
19 the first week it'll look fantastic but there are
20 leaves and there's trees and there's dirt and
21 there's grime and, how do you maintain the
22 crystal clear openness of it?

1 MR. KIRKPATRICK: I can say that is very
2 much a topic which we have discussed and continue
3 to discuss. There are, in the overall design,
4 certain strategies that we've already implemented
5 that will allow it to be maintained. For
6 example, the glass crystalline structure has
7 behind it, within that 10-foot zone --

8 MR. SONDERMAN: It has a walk space.

9 MR. KIRKPATRICK: - a piece of solid
10 roof where there's a catwalk and it's easy to get
11 there -

12 MR. SONDERMAN: Right.

13 MR. KIRKPATRICK: - and to clean the
14 glass and repair it. And where, also, it will be
15 drained from the back. But the truth is, and
16 again, back to David Maloney, we're at concept
17 design --

18 MR. SONDERMAN: Okay.

19 MR. KIRKPATRICK: - but I want to make
20 sure that it's clear that this is something that
21 we've been discussing.

22 MR. STERN: And I'll just add. Failing

1 that, there's a cleaning provision in the AIA
2 contract with Robert A.M. Stern so --

3 (Laughter)

4 STERN: -- from a practical standpoint,
5 one of the things that we are sensitive to is,
6 Third Church is a small congregation and they're
7 not financially deeply solvent. We will have, on
8 the other hand, a rather valuable office
9 building, one which will be very expensive to
10 build and hopefully will rent for top-dollar in
11 the city. So, what we're going to be doing for
12 Third Church is combining all cleaning,
13 maintenance services and things of that nature so
14 that they fall under our general contract.
15 They'll reimburse a portion or some allocated
16 provision so that, while the church is only there
17 Wednesdays and Sundays, except for the reading
18 room, we'll have maintenance cleaning 24/7 as a
19 typical trophy office building would.

20 MR. SONDERMAN: Well, I think, having
21 come from a small congregation myself, being able
22 to maintain that critical element is the break

1 point for your development. If you can't keep
2 that beautiful, I think you're wasting your time.

3 MR. KIRKPATRICK: This is something that
4 we've considered from the beginning, not only the
5 maintenance aspect, but the cost of doing
6 business this way. I was greatly pleased when
7 Breen (ph.) and Maloney, right behind me, was
8 showing me the matrix, telling me the matrix that
9 they set up to evaluate this glass. And I'm not
10 sure I can touch all of it but its maintenance,
11 economics, environment and the like. It's
12 something -- I'm an engineer, I'm greatly
13 concerned about this. In looking at it, I think,
14 if we get it built correctly, which I think is
15 possible and you can believe we will be watching
16 our good friends who we have high regard for, but
17 we can bring in our own folks to take a look at
18 it. If we can get it built correctly, there are
19 ways of maintaining this from the outside.

20 My way of thinking, to return to history,
21 it will be much easier than what we've been going
22 through the last umpteen years in trying to

1 change light bulbs in the ceiling. Now, again,
2 it's very critical and we -- the structure we use
3 here, we're very sympathetic to not having any
4 structure show out. It'll have to be inside. So,
5 we're going to be watching all of those and as I
6 say, Breen (ph.) has a matrix back there of those
7 three things and a couple of others, that they're
8 going to check and you can believe we're going to
9 review it very, very carefully.

10 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Any other
11 clarification questions before we go into
12 comments?

13 Would you like to start, Rauzia, with
14 comments?

15 MS. ALLY: Thank you for your
16 presentation. I'd like to say I am in agreement
17 with the staff report. I do like the massing of
18 the building. I think it's very well done, very
19 elegant. I think the palette is beautiful and
20 the integration of the marble is both beautiful
21 and contextual. I like the restraint overall of
22 the building -- the office building, and I like

1 the glassy entrance for the church.

2 One minor comment, and it's just an
3 indulgence on my part, the glass corner on the
4 south side, the 16th Street side, I wish it were
5 wider. On the 16th street side, I think it does
6 -- there's no need for it to be symmetrical and I
7 think it would lend some weight to the
8 significance of the south side.

9 I do agree with the staff report on the
10 north rooftop porch and the way that it
11 terminates, but I trust that you can work with
12 staff to resolve those issues.

13 I think in the future, I would like to
14 see further development. I know you're at the
15 concept stage so I'm not going to ask about
16 cleanliness and all those things of the glassy
17 portion, I like it. But I would like to see the
18 development of it in terms of how do you handle
19 facets coming together and how the facets
20 actually touch the rest of the building.

21 I think when you look at the 16th street
22 elevation it seems the door into the building is

1 incongruent with the rest of the design of that
2 glassy part. It's very similar to the door that
3 you have to the office building, but it just
4 seems a little bit incongruent. But when I look
5 at the renderings that you have, it reads a
6 little differently. So, but I'm still -- I'm not
7 sure what it's going to look like because there's
8 a tree blocking it in that view facing west.

9 I think, if we were to see it in the
10 future, I'm not saying that we necessarily have
11 to, I'll rely on David for that. As he said, he
12 would -- he might want to rely on us for further
13 expertise on some of the issues, especially that
14 part. But, if we were to see it, I would like to
15 see renderings of how -- of what it's like from
16 above because I think that's the critical part
17 where it touches the rest of the building and
18 what you're going to be seeing from the windows
19 above as you look down.

20 And, I think that's pretty much it.

21 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you Rauzia.

22 Andrew -

1 MS. ALLY: Oh, I do have one actual --
2 it's a further question I guess. It's not
3 necessarily a comment but I would like to know
4 how you address sustainability issues, and that
5 wasn't talked about at all.

6 MR. AUERBACH: So I'm pleased to see this
7 chapter of Washington development history come to
8 a finish line. I'm sure you all are even more
9 pleased than I am about it. I do concur with the
10 staff report. I think there's been a lot of
11 great consideration given to where this project
12 is today. I concur with the restudy of that
13 north corner cornice. Personally, I think
14 simpler is better, but I'll defer to you all to
15 come up with a reasonable solution for that.

16 I also wanted to just note, as Rauzia
17 just did, the DCPL comment about green roofs or
18 other sustainability measures and how that
19 incorporates into this, what other LEED points
20 would you be achieving with this project. Again,
21 that could just be a comment into the final
22 submission but I'm just curious about that.

1 And, finally, I'm in agreement that the
2 historicity of the full landmark is compromised
3 by the demolition of the church and thus, would
4 be okay with the demolition of the Monitor
5 Building itself.

6 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thanks.

7 Bob.

8 MR. SONDERMAN: Well, I think it's
9 regrettable that we couldn't keep the height of
10 the building at the 90-foot level or in that
11 range, but -- however, we have practical
12 realities and having sat on the board for 20
13 years, my job has been to be as practical as I
14 can, and I think it's time for us to move
15 forward.

16 I'm looking forward to a new beautiful
17 building and a new beautiful church and I think
18 we can close this chapter. We all put up a good
19 fight and we did it collegially. Mr. Kirkpatrick
20 couldn't be nicer through this entire ordeal and
21 I've been impressed by your calm and cool
22 demeanor.

1 MR. KIRKPATRICK: Thank you, sir.

2 MR. SONDERMAN: And at the same time,
3 we've been pretty calm on this side as well
4 because I still believe the church was deserved
5 of being landmarked. I'm content with where we
6 are right now and I'm pleased that you're getting
7 a new church and I'm pleased that we're getting
8 an addition to the corner that, perhaps, will
9 make more people feel better about it.

10 So, I am going to support the staff
11 report and clearly, with the demolition of the
12 church, the Monitor Building is no longer
13 compatible -- or significant.

14 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thanks, Bob.
15 Joseph.

16 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

17 Let me give you good news up front. This
18 is a handsome building and it would be -- it's a
19 welcome addition at the corner.

20 Having said that -- oh, there's more good
21 news. I like the crystalline expression for the
22 church. I think I said the last time, that's

1 where you want to be with what's expected for the
2 portion of the development that is a church, it
3 says I'm a church or a place of worship. So,
4 you're on the mark there.

5 I'm delighted to hear that, from a long
6 term aesthetic sustainability basis that on day
7 one it will look good and give you that wow
8 factor as you experience -- drive by or stop to
9 look at it. And then long term, the way you're
10 able to maintain it and the agreement on how it's
11 going to be maintained, you have to applaud that.

12 So, that's all well and good but the
13 expression, as I said, the portion that says, I'm
14 a place of worship. Where you need more study,
15 and I'm just saying, you're not there yet. The
16 immediate backdrop to that should be handled
17 differently because now it is an extension of the
18 predominant façade. And then when you get down
19 to street level, again, the portion that says,
20 I'm a place of worship, the backdrop is a
21 continuation and a -- something that's
22 predictable because all the elements are there.

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1 I think that's where you can take license
2 and say, let's do something different as a
3 backdrop to that and maybe have glass and
4 spandrel materials that do a better job of
5 supporting it and say that I'm a better backdrop
6 for the crystalline feature piece at the ground
7 level, at the entry level to the church portion
8 and then, everything else goes back to being the
9 office building proper although it's all one
10 development. That's where -- there's something
11 on stage and there's something against the
12 backdrop that only occurs for that entire column
13 and as you leave the first two stories, you go
14 off to the top of the building doing what you
15 would do if it was an office building. But
16 because you start at the base with something
17 that's very, very special, that particular band
18 or bay as a column, I think should be studied a
19 little further to make a little different
20 statement there. So, that's point number one.

21 Next point is that, the corners on the
22 office building façade where you've introduced

1 the glazing and the bronze metallic material as a
2 spandrel, there again, more study is required
3 there because, and this is concept but it's
4 saying that, for now, I'll just put this here
5 because it rounds off the corner and it's going
6 to feature the corner and make it different. But
7 there again, what struck me is that for those
8 corners that are different, it calls for the
9 plans to be more all glass where you have glass
10 with vision and light and then spandrel glazing.
11 So I think it's not enough glass there, just at
12 that corner feature. I understand that it's part
13 of the material palette that bronze comes from,
14 what you're doing on the retail base level and
15 then you're bringing it up. For your glass
16 corners of the façade, more study there.

17 And then, I agree with Donald Myer's
18 comment that you're developing the site and in my
19 practice, when I'm talking to the young
20 architects in the office or in the studio,
21 they'll refer to it as the building, building,
22 building and I say no, it's the project. Because

1 the building has a property and there's the site
2 and then there's the responsibility of the design
3 team, from the curb to the building's skin and
4 then up, and with sustainability issues to the
5 roof so, that's all part of your landscape
6 vocabulary. So I'm delighted to hear you talk
7 about that. That will stay -- that will have a
8 prominent spot in your agenda as you develop and
9 segue from the concepts, schematics and design
10 development.

11 Where I have a problem, and I -- when the
12 staff report comes to us and I'm reading through
13 it preparing for today's session, the one line
14 that hit me was that, and I'm quoting here, still
15 rises three point seven feet above the 90-foot
16 cornice height, which they passed before. And
17 then I'm listening through the testimony today
18 and I'm looking at the section, the building
19 sections illustration and if you can briefly
20 respond to this point. Between the office lobby
21 elevation which is minus one point five, and I
22 have my reading glasses on so, this is small, and

1 the ninth floor which is the 93.7. Are you
2 saying to me that there's no way that we can
3 reduce that so that we're not approving a scheme
4 that is 90-footish, that we are at 90 feet?

5 I know that zoning is coming after this
6 and that's not our purview but I will be more --
7 that's the bad news about how I'm feeling about
8 this.

9 I like everything else. I like your
10 explanation about the uniform height of the
11 penthouse and I applaud you for having researched
12 beyond concept with the mechanical content so you
13 can have some assurity that, while the roof will
14 be this, and you have your elevators pushed back
15 so the override -- the visibility will be at
16 zero.

17 So, I'm not going to the penthouse for my
18 comments. It's just that of all things that I
19 read and I've stated, what I like about it and
20 where you need more study, I'm not taking the
21 position that you're wrong in those areas, but my
22 expectation is that we would be at 90 feet.

1 And then, the beauty that you bring with
2 the limestone and your materials palette, I think
3 that's all fine and it's a gorgeous building but
4 we are above 90 feet. And, I get the feeling
5 that unless I'm missing something, perhaps
6 structure and with plenum and with the
7 mechanical, sometimes we call it the mechanical
8 spaghetti that's running there. I know what you
9 have to pack in that plenum and I know -- floor-
10 to-floor and ceiling height and if you say to me
11 that, to have this number of levels, we have to
12 be at 90 feetish, then I'll say, okay, because I
13 know David and these guys, staff, they set it up
14 nicely for us.

15 That's one of the good things I like
16 about this gig. The staff report gives us a lot
17 of insight. I just -- I'm only hearing that
18 we're above 90, we exceed 90 feet as before. But
19 I don't hear the argument that it was absolutely
20 impossible to be at 90 feet.

21 So that's where I am.

22 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Maybe Graham, if

1 you could just make a brief statement about that,
2 it would be helpful.

3 MR. WYATT: Yes, I can comment on that.
4 It is very much a desire to have a reasonable
5 ceiling height in these buildings. And I know
6 that in Washington, D.C. that's a perennial
7 problem with the height limits, especially as
8 office ceilings become higher in other parts of
9 the world, they don't here. And we've looked to
10 squeeze to the maximum extent possible, what
11 we're assuming is the ceiling, to the point where
12 we can't even have ducted ceilings around the
13 perimeter of this building. It's that tight
14 already.

15 That did -- that sandwich of floors led
16 us to the desired height; however, it's not just
17 to say, well it's functionally driven by the
18 inside ceiling heights. If you will remember
19 from the previous presentation, the buildings
20 that are further south actually do have higher
21 cornice heights than this, but they have higher
22 cornice heights by virtue of the slope in the

1 site. And the staff, in discussions with staff,
2 it was their desire that this not be -- I can
3 paraphrase what I heard from them, rigidly driven
4 by a number but rather driven by an overall urban
5 composition on 16th street with an understanding
6 that there is a drop of some six feet in grade
7 from Lafayette Park down to 16th street.

8 So, we looked and worked with them very
9 carefully, looking at the Hay-Adams, the AFL-CIO
10 building, looking at the International Laborers
11 and the hotel, looking at 1600, looking at the
12 Motion Picture Association and how all of those
13 buildings relate to each other in composition, to
14 come up with an understanding of what was an
15 appropriate building height from an urbanistic
16 perspective.

17 I guess the very short answer is, it was
18 driven from the inside and it was driven from the
19 outside, in parallel, and those two worked very
20 closely with each other.

21 MR. TAYLOR: And David, I seem to
22 remember or recall that we had some discussion

1 about the alignment along 16th street which -- so
2 we left it with the 90ish, 90 footish, and then
3 if we could hit 90 we'd be fine; but, the plenum
4 and the floor-to-floor requirements in terms of
5 the building height instead of by the interior
6 and then, what's adjacent to the alignment. All
7 that would be conflated into a decision about
8 height and if so, if we'd have seen it at 90.
9 We'd be close to 90. Am I getting it right?

10 MR. MALONEY: Well we did hear different
11 points of view from the Board on that. The
12 question of 90 feet last time, whether it needed
13 to be exactly 90 or 90ish. And I think Graham
14 and his team did make the case to us that they
15 have looked as extensively as they feel they can
16 and, in order to get the mechanical equipment,
17 the structure, a reasonable ceiling height in it,
18 this is what they end up with.

19 So, that is what led us to the position
20 that we took, that this is a reasonable thing to
21 compromise on. The idea that it would be 90ish.

22 MR. TAYLOR: So it's 93.7. All right,

1 thank you both.

2 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you, Joseph.
3 Graham.

4 MR. DAVIDSON: First with respect to
5 zoning and all of those other issues that have
6 been discussed and raised, clearly there are a
7 number of places where the, strictly speaking,
8 the building doesn't conform to zoning. And if I
9 were on the Zoning Board, you'd have a lot of
10 explaining to do about that.

11 But, we're not the Zoning Bboard and so,
12 I look at the issue of the height of the building
13 and what's in the penthouse, whether it's
14 actually used or not, and how far back the
15 penthouse is set, only in terms of what the
16 building actually looks like on 16th Street.
17 And, therefore, the fact that -- and so to me the
18 building that sits on this site should be at,
19 what is perceived to be the same height as the
20 dominant crest line along 16th Street, which is
21 at 90 feet. And it probably is going to have a
22 rooftop appendage of no more than about 18 and a

1 half feet, and sometimes that's decorated but
2 certainly, it's always beneficial to have that
3 integrated into the building.

4 And so, that's what your design does.
5 Yes it's not 90 feet, but when you run the
6 numbers, well -- so the other thing is that I --
7 it seems to me that on 16th Street particularly,
8 we should have a class A building. We shouldn't
9 start off with a building a class B building.
10 And the only way to do that is to build at 93
11 feet tall. I mean, if you run the numbers that's
12 what you get.

13 So it looks -- when you look at it, it
14 looks like it's at 90 feet. I think it's going
15 to be very difficult to tell that it's not
16 exactly 90 feet. The penthouse isn't set back
17 exactly as it should be, in all locations but, on
18 the other hand, it's well integrated into the
19 building. And, to some extent it's decorative on
20 top so, I think, that that -- all of those
21 factors make me okay with the fact that you're
22 slightly in excess of the technical height limit.

1 The one -- I know -- I think everybody is
2 a little concerned about the terrace and the
3 expression of the trellis on the north but, you
4 can work that little detail -- it's a little
5 fussy but and -- could it be that the building
6 would be better if you set the penthouse and the
7 trellis back another ten feet? Maybe, but I
8 also, sort of like the fact that it is close
9 enough to the façade so that it is actually is
10 integrated into the façade. So, the entirety of
11 the structure is really one design.

12 However -- and that's true for the zoning
13 height and penthouse portion of the building.
14 That's not necessarily true for the rest of the
15 building. The rest of the building, the façade,
16 is kind of schizophrenic. You have the office
17 building portion which is the stone. And then we
18 have the corner pieces which are of the glass
19 with different modules. And then we have the
20 base which is a different module again, and a
21 completely different material which exacerbates
22 the change of design. And then, of course, we

1 have the church, which out of necessity, should
2 have its own expression.

3 And so, I would hope that moving forward
4 that, as you get to this concept that the design
5 of the glass pieces on the corners and the design
6 of the stone pieces and the design of the base
7 could be much more highly integrated so that the
8 building appears to be more of one hand.

9 And that leads also the question of
10 materials. I think, the Cherokee Marble is a
11 beautiful white stone, and limestone, of course,
12 is the material of choice in most Washington
13 buildings. It's a little odd to me to put white
14 on the bottom and a dark material on top. But, I
15 don't know, maybe it will work.

16 But I think the choice to sharply just
17 bring the slightly darker material down to the
18 second floor level or the third floor slab and
19 then change both the design of the base to a
20 completely different module with big cutouts,
21 which is all bronze, which makes the whole very
22 clear and set back. And then, change the

1 material also, really, makes the sharp contrast
2 between the base and the rest of the building
3 very apparent.

4 So, with respect to the office building
5 that currently exists on the site, the remainder
6 of the Christian Science Building, I think it's -
7 - I agree that once or if the church portion of
8 the building is taken down, then the space
9 between the two structures is destroyed and the
10 relationship between the two structures is
11 destroyed, and the office building portion no
12 longer has any -- the building as a whole has
13 lost its integrity and I -- there's no reason not
14 to demolish the office building portion of the
15 site.

16 But, regardless of what else one might
17 think of the existing building, it's a -- it's
18 two different uses and two very different parts
19 of a building that still work very well together.
20 They look like they're one structure and one
21 building. And, it would be a shame to me to put
22 back a building that doesn't at least have that

1 quality of looking like a coherent composition.

2 And so, not only does the office building
3 need to pull itself together, but then, somehow,
4 while the church certainly needs its own
5 expression, I don't know about proposing
6 solutions like my colleagues have, about
7 integrating the church into the façade. But, it's
8 still -- there's something wrong with the way
9 that even the church expression is just sort of
10 glommed onto the office building at the last
11 moment.

12 You know, the only example I can think of
13 this is the new Shakespeare Theater downtown,
14 which is very transparent. Now, that has the
15 advantage of being a nice square piece of façade,
16 a curtain wall, and it has the other advantage of
17 being on a nice square piece of office building,
18 so that the two expressions aren't so disparate.
19 But when you walk along the street, you really do
20 know that that is the theater. And I understand
21 it's not quite the jewel-like expression that you
22 talked about but it does work very much better

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1 than, I think, your combination is working at the
2 moment.

3 So, I think we can find more examples to
4 work with to help tie the two together and yet,
5 each have its own expression. That would be very
6 helpful so that we have a building that really
7 does meet the expectations of 16th Street.

8 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thank you, Graham.
9 Nancy.

10 MS. METZGER: Well, at this point, I
11 think I'll just say, Graham said it all. So, I
12 will continue -- I'm not saying anything and I do
13 think that the Christian Science Building,
14 without the church is nothing much. So, it has
15 lost its -- would lose its integrity on that.

16 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Thanks, Nancy.

17 I think I might have been one of the more
18 vociferous people at the last hearing that we had
19 that 90 feet is 90 feet. It's a very specific
20 dimension. Right? That's why it's 90 feet.
21 When you measure something, it's not 90ish feet,
22 it's 90 feet.

1 And my reaction to that was due to many
2 factors. One, the additional floor, the
3 proximity of the penthouse and, just from the
4 view of this too, you didn't provide a view of
5 the longer vista from Arlington House, the
6 Eternal Flame, the Air Force Memorial, but this
7 building, we'll be able to see it from there.
8 You see the tower now lit.

9 So when I looked back and I went out to
10 Arlington Cemetery, I went up there just to think
11 about it a little bit. And I think that the
12 solution mitigates a lot of what was previously
13 proposed by having the simplicity and working
14 with David on the simplicity of the penthouse,
15 reducing a floor, so there's not so much
16 variation in the geometry, it allows that tower
17 to just be the tower. Before, there was a little
18 competition that was going on with the geometry
19 and the organization of your building in
20 relationship to the adjacent building which is
21 just outside the historic district.

22 So, for me what this does, although it's

1 not 90 feet, it does align with the cornice lines
2 and the perception of the cornice lines in the
3 area. And that would be the only way I could get
4 to be comfortable with the 90ish feet.

5 I think 90 feet is 90 feet, however, I
6 think that the intent of 90 feet is to maintain
7 the uniformity and understanding of a singular
8 cornice line. As it reads, in addition to
9 providing clear views, had an understanding of
10 some of the major monuments within the District
11 of Columbia so we don't end up with a Trinity
12 Church situation, to cite an extreme case, like
13 they have in Boston.

14 I agree and I think that my colleagues
15 have said it clearly, so I won't reiterate
16 comments that they've said relative to the
17 massing, the palette, the restraint of the
18 design, the porch resolution, the backdrop of the
19 façade behind the church entrance, and the
20 perception of the height of the cornice line.

21 I would propose to my -- and I agree with
22 the Monitor Building no longer retains its

1 integrity once the church is demolished, nor does
2 the parking structure. I think the loss of the
3 church, because that composition is so tightly
4 knit, once the church goes, we've -- the battle
5 is lost and I'll leave it at that.

6 But, one of the things that I'd like to
7 propose to the Board, instead of the final review
8 delegated to the staff completely for the design,
9 because of the strength of the expression of the
10 façade for the church entrance and the importance
11 of keeping that dimension -- if this is the
12 concept that's being developed and the
13 dimensionality of that -- I don't think I said
14 that word properly but -- and the detailing,
15 because it is so different. If you're going to
16 be so apart and different from -- which I think
17 can fit in a district and that those kind of
18 design solutions can be very strong and powerful
19 and cohesive, to help knit a district together
20 even more strongly to be set apart from it, yet
21 respectful to it.

22 I'm wondering if it's possible that we

1 could see the design as it evolves on the consent
2 calendar so it could come before us, rather than
3 having it simply resolved with the staff.

4 Although I do agree with, and I think the Board
5 is interested in participating in future design
6 conversations as they evolve with that.

7 So, my colleagues are amenable to that, I
8 would propose that as the motion. So, rather
9 than fully delegate the entire design review to
10 the staff, that we'd ask to see, in particular,
11 the 16th Street church entrance.

12 MS. ALLY: Yup.

13 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Great. All those
14 in favor.

15 (ALLY, AURBACH, DAVIDSON, METZGER,
16 PFAEHLER AND TAYLOR RAISE THEIR HANDS IN SUPPORT
17 OF THE MOTION)

18 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Opposed.

19 (NONE OPPOSED)

20 CHAIRWOMAN PFAEHLER: Passes unanimously.
21 Thank you. Thank you for your time. And thank
22 you again for everybody's time and effort. I

1 know I'm on the trail end of a very involved
2 conversation on many fronts, so, thank you again
3 for everybody's time.

4 [Whereupon, at 2:50 p.m., item #12-344
5 concluded.]

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