



District of Columbia Government
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A
Box 75115
Washington, DC 20013



September 29, 2005

Councilmember Sharon Ambrose
District of Columbia Council
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, #102
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Resolving Ownership of 525 Ninth Street NE and 1341 Maryland Avenue NE

Dear Councilmember Ambrose:

Our Commission is writing to express our concern about the lack of progress in the disposition of 525 Ninth Street NE and 1341 Maryland Ave NE. As you are aware, these properties have sat vacant under DC government ownership for a number of years. We would like to enlist your assistance, as our Ward Councilmember and Chair of the Committee on Economic Development, to resolve the ownership of the properties so that they can be restored and redeveloped.

In March 2004, Mr. Stanley Jackson—then Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development—promised that DHCD would hold community meetings and then issue Requests for Proposals to redevelop the sites. After a number of delays in the promised schedule, DHCD announced in June 2005 that the properties were not within their portfolio as previously thought but actually under the control of the Office of Property Management. Soon after, OPM told us that the properties were to be added to a portfolio of DC properties being traded with the National Capital Revitalization Corporation in exchange for the Southwest Waterfront. Although this larger agreement was announced in May 2004, the Memorandum of Understanding finalizing the deal has not been completed. As a result, our sites are caught in an ownership limbo that prevents any progress in redevelopment.

Our Commission is not pushing for any particular interim ownership arrangement. We simply ask that the question of ownership be resolved as quickly as possible so that the buildings can be redeveloped. Whatever ownership arrangement makes this possible with the least delay is preferable. You must agree that it would be a shame to squander the opportunity that the current real estate market provides to renovate and restore these buildings for productive reuse.

We are also asking that Deputy Mayor Jackson, Councilmembers on relevant committees, and NCRC cooperate to resolve the ownership question so that the properties can be made to contribute to the well-being of the neighborhood and the city as a whole. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

On behalf of the Commission,

Joseph Fengler, Chair
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202-423-8868

cc: Stanley Jackson, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development
Councilmembers Jack Evans, Kwame R. Brown, Vincent C. Gray, Vincent B. Orange, Sr., Adrian Fenty,
Jim Graham, Phil Mendelson, and Carol Schwartz
Anthony Freeman, NCRC President and Chief Executive Officer
Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton