

**Advocacy for Building Assets & Affordable Housing · Anacostia Community Land Trust, Inc · Anacostia RIVERKEEPER · Anacostia Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee · Anacostia Watershed Society · Audubon Naturalist Society · ARCH · Capital Area Asset Building Corporation · Casey Trees · Chesapeake Climate Action Network · Clean Water Action · Coalition for Smarter Growth · Covenant House Washington · DC Affordable Housing Alliance · DC Appleseed Center for Law and Justice · DC Environmental Network · DC Fiscal Policy Institute · D.C. Greenworks · DC Habitat for Humanity · DC Jobs with Justice · Earth Conservation Corps. · Friends of the Earth · Goodwill of Greater Washington · GreenHOME · JOBS Coalition, Inc. · Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia · Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO · Natural Resources Defense Council · NCB Capital Impact · Opportunities Industrialization Center of Washington, DC · Perry School Community Services Center, Inc. · Sierra Club Washington DC Chapter · Statehood Green Party · Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless · Washington Parks & People · Watts Branch Community Alliance**

April 10, 2007

Mayor Adrian Fenty  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Adrian Fenty:

RE: Anacostia Waterfront Corporation Mandates

We write to express our support for the mission of the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation to coordinate the environmental restoration of the Anacostia River and revitalize the lands and communities along it, which includes increasing the affordable housing stock and creating job opportunities for D.C. residents.

As you know, there is legislation currently pending in the D.C. Council that would repeal the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation Act of 2004, effectively dissolving the AWC. If any such action is taken, we urge you to ensure that the affordable housing, jobs creation, and environmental elements of the AWC Act of 2004 remain intact for all development projects within the geographic area defined by the Act that either receive public assistance or are sited on publicly controlled land.

Whatever the D.C. Council ultimately decides to do with respect to the structure of the AWC, we believe its environmental and community development objectives **must** remain intact to ensure that its mission is carried out.

### **Affordable Housing**

AWC's enabling legislation includes a requirement that 30% of the housing built on any land controlled by or disposed of by AWC must be affordable to low- and moderate-income families. This very progressive standard was endorsed by the recommendations of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy Taskforce and was a meaningful step toward addressing the well-documented affordable housing crisis in the District. No matter who controls the publicly owned land within the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative areas, the District Government should continue to require developers to add to the dwindling stock of affordable housing in the District when negotiating development on publicly owned land by ensuring that at least 30% of the new units built are affordable.

### **Jobs for DC Residents**

The D.C. Code has long required employers who receive assistance from the District to hire District residents for at least 51% of the new jobs that they create. The AWC's legislation adds a requirement that employers in the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative area give priority to Ward 8 residents for 20% of the new jobs they create. To achieve this goal – which has not often been achieved in the time that the existing laws have been in place – the AWC has begun the process of creating a Workforce Intermediary (WI) that would coordinate the needs and capacity of employers, potential employees, and workforce development organizations. We hope that the steps to create this innovative new structure will not be cut short and that the WI for the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative area can become a model for the rest of the District, if it proves to be successful.

### **Restoration of the Anacostia River**

The AWC is the only governmental or quasi-governmental entity in the entire Anacostia Watershed with a specific mission to restore the Anacostia River. Environmental and other organizations worked with the D.C. Council to craft the legislation that set up the AWC and to include in that legislation the provision that the core mission of the AWC include restoration of the Anacostia River. That core mission should be reaffirmed.

In addition, the District should reaffirm its commitment to implement the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Framework Plan as required by the AWC Act. The AWC is the only entity currently responsible for implementing the vision outlined in the Anacostia Waterfront Framework Plan. The Framework Plan sets out a vision for the completed restoration and revitalization of the river and surrounding communities and lands. The Plan also defines specific actions for environmental remediation, which we believe must be retained for the health of the surrounding neighborhoods and the River itself. We hope that you will endorse and reaffirm the important goals that the Framework Plan set out.

Finally, AWC has recently proposed draft environmental standards for the development within its jurisdiction, which should be carried forward, once adopted, no matter which agency oversees the development along the Anacostia. In accordance with the statutory provisions that require AWC to restore the Anacostia River, the AWC Board had the foresight to pass a resolution last summer requiring the AWC to set environmental standards for all of its developments that would serve as a model for others throughout the watershed. Since that time, a committee of the AWC including water pollution experts, green building experts, and developers, has been working to develop standards that will minimize stormwater pollution into the river, protect wetlands, forest, and other green space in AWC projects, and ensure public access to and enjoyment of the river. These standards are important, fundamental requirements that will make the AWC geographic area a leader in environmental design nationwide. The reception these proposed standards have received has been very favorable, with most commenters indicating their strong support for their finalization.

All of these requirements – environmental, workforce, and affordable housing – are essential for development along the Anacostia River to ensure that the development will contribute to the river’s restoration and benefit the communities most affected, as well as the District as a whole. Revitalization of waterfront neighborhoods and revitalization of the river go hand in hand. In fact, the AWC has already successfully negotiated implementation of these requirements in contracts with developers. In addition, many of the AWC staff have been instrumental in developing standards to carry out the requirements and are working to make sure these standards are implemented. If the administration takes over implementation of these environmental and community requirements, it should do so by adhering to the same standards for excellence that the AWC has been and currently is required to apply.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director,  
DC Appleseed Center for Law and  
Justice

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Advocacy Coordinator,  
Advocates for Building Assets &  
Affordable Housing (ABA AH)

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1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
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