
Friends of Francis Field

2501 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

January 22, 2010

Hand Delivered

Clifford Moy, Secretary
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

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D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2010 JAN 22 PM 1:44

Dear Secretary Moy and Members of the Board:

Enclosed please find ten copies of materials in support of our Appeal No. 18029.

We look forward to presenting our case to the Board on February 9, 2010.

If you have any questions, or need further information, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037

email: gary@smart.net

202 659-4561

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18029

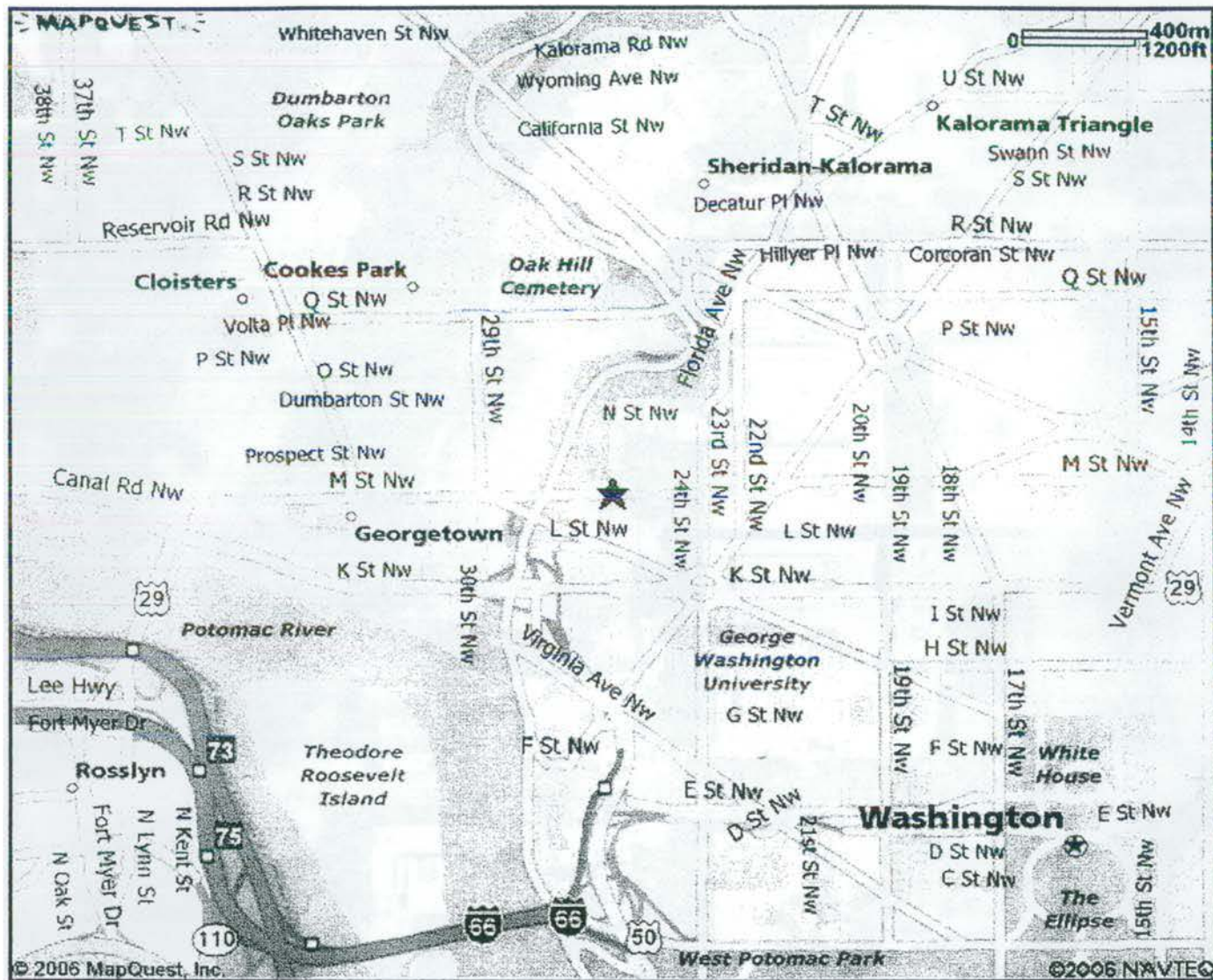
EXHIBIT NO. 13

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.18029
EXHIBIT NO.13A1

Friends of Francis Field

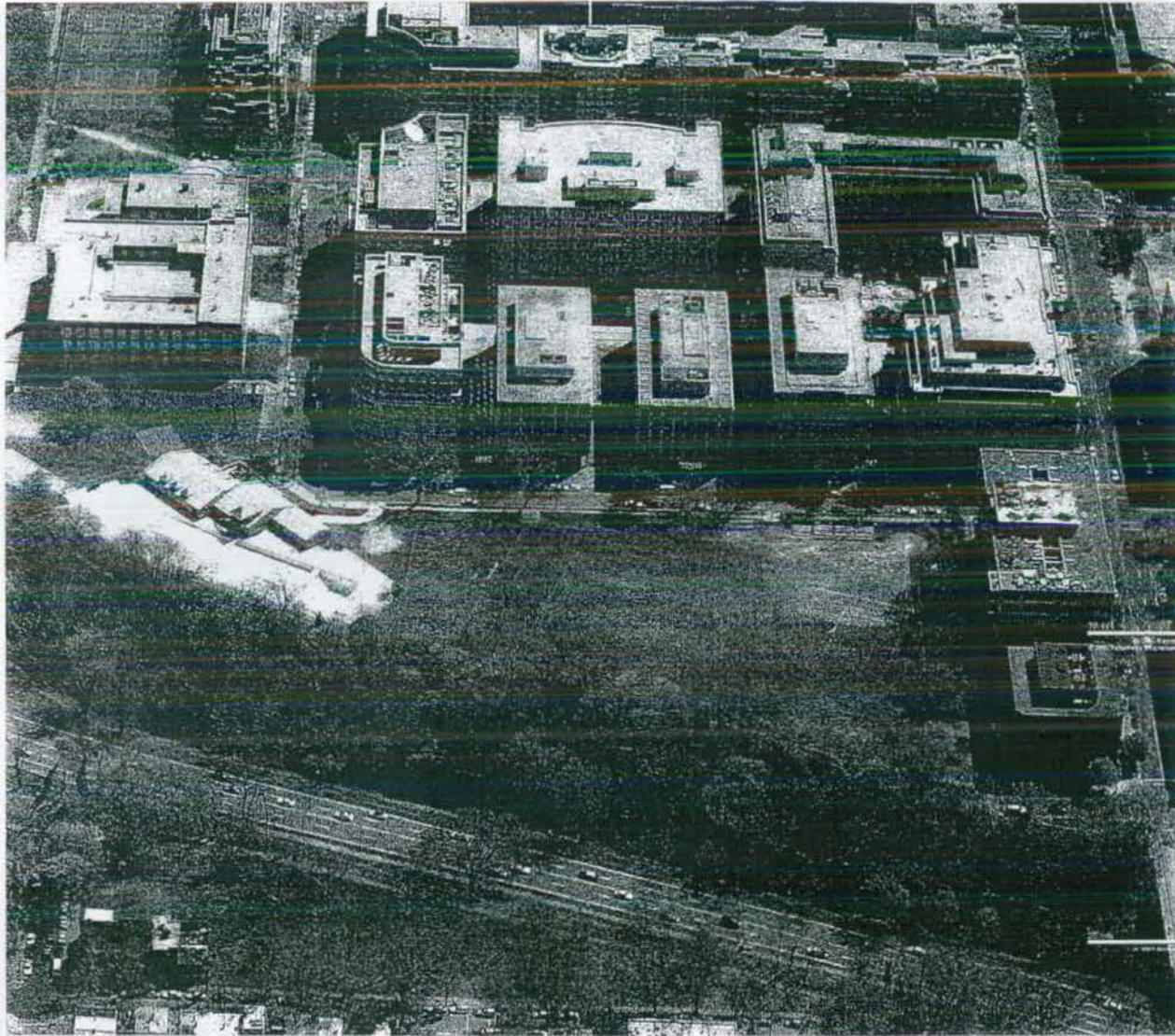
Appeal before the Board of Zoning Adjustment
BZA Appeal No. 18029
February 9, 2010

RECEIVED
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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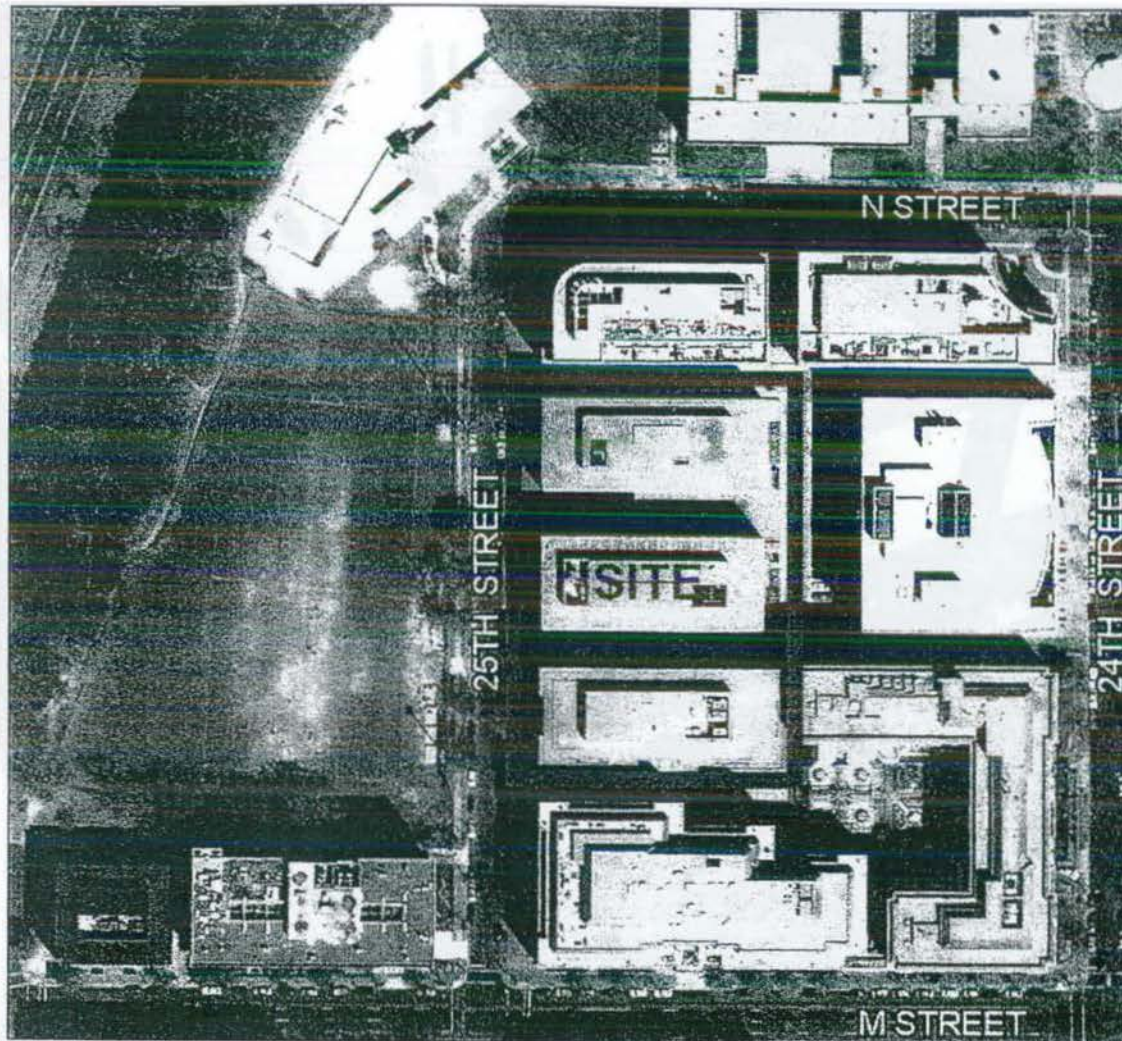


Location of 2501 M Street NW and Francis Field

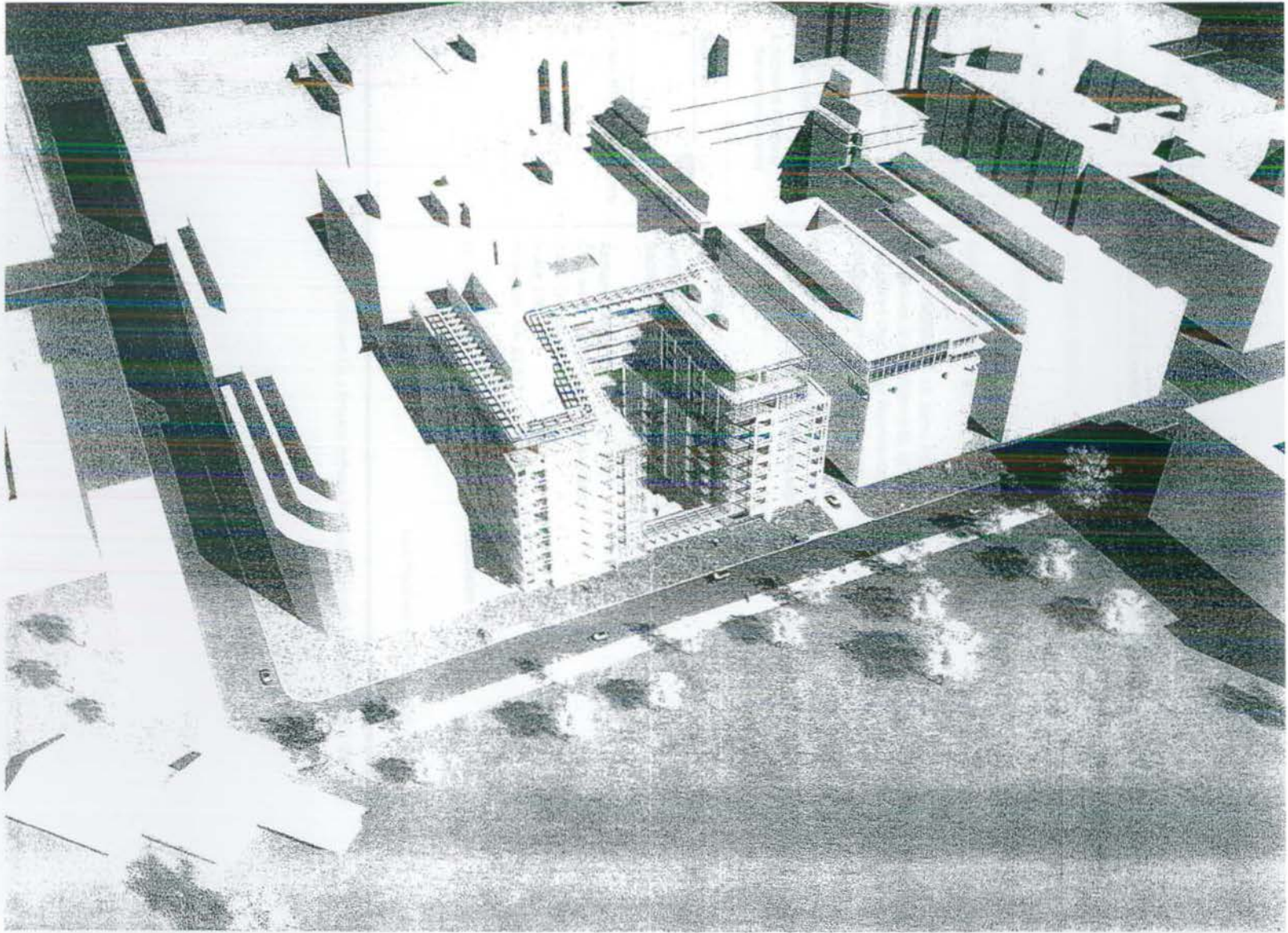




Francis Field in 2003 after re-seeding and one-year closing.



Vornado/Charles E. Smith site in PUD Zoning Case 06-35



Shalom Baranas & Associates rendering submitted to CFA, June 2006.

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23 June 2006

Dear Mr. Smith:

In the meeting of 15 June, the Commission reviewed and approved the concept for the building alterations and additions to 1227 and 1229-1231 25th Street, N.W. (S.L. 06- 101). The Commission supported the use of floor-to-ceiling glazing in the proposed residential buildings as well as the configuration of the massing and design elements.

The Commission requests that all zoning issues be resolved prior to submission for final review. As always, the staff is available to assist you and the design team to help coordinate subsequent submissions.

Sincerely,

/s/Thomas Luebke, AIA
Secretary

Richard Smith
Charles E. Smith Commercial Realty
2345 Crystal Drive
Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22202

cc: Shalom Baranes, Shalom Baranes Associates

Last Modified: June 26, 2006

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1 distributed in the back.

2 MS. STEINGASSER: Clearly, they
3 can't be all on one floor.

4 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I clearly
5 understand that they're not going to be the
6 top floor and so forth.

7
8 MS. STEINGASSER: But we have --

9 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes. Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Oh, Mr. Hood.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Madam Chair,
12 I notice in one of the submissions that the
13 Commission on Fine Arts submitted a letter
14 stating that they want all zoning issues to be
15 resolved before final review in front of them.

16 Is that the normal procedure? I
17 know we had a discussion sometime ago, but is
18 that normal?

19 MR. PARKER: Is that a question
20 for me?

21 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: The
22 Commission on Fine Arts is saying they're

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Nov 13,
2006
Setdown



Francis Field and BNA Buildings, 2006

Direction by Carol Mitten, Zoning Commission Chair
Setdown Hearing for ZC 06-35 on November 13, 2006.

12 the Office of Planning knows this. But I just
13 want to emphasize the fact that we discourage
14 open-ended contributions and that we prefer
15 that they be tied to actual delivery of an
16 amenity, concurrently with the issuance of the
17 CFO. So, just want to help with that point.

(Mitten said "C of O" meaning Certificate of Occupancy, not "CFO.")

Gary Griffith

From: Matt Abrams [mjabrams@verizon.net]
Sent: Saturday, October 28, 2006 10:03 PM
To: M Thomas - ANC2A02; Parker, Travis (OP)
Cc: wsalbano@aol.com; asavage@wcanmiller.com; d.lehrman@att.net; dorothonmiller5@aol.com; vnm3@earthlink.net; Gary@smart.net; jglemire@aol.com; jim.oconnell@earthlink.net; James.OConnell@usdoj.gov
Subject: Re: BNA PUD

Michael,

Thanks for info. If in fact project goes ahead and amenities become a consideration, support your thinking that priority should be given to benefits that would in some way compensate for the negative impact of the project on those immediately affected. Maintenance and improvement of Francis Field should be at top of this list. Perhaps I'm missing something here, but not clear to me how improvements to Francis School (or West End library) would have equivalent value to local residents.

/Matt

----- Original Message -----

From: M Thomas - ANC2A02
To: Parker, Travis (OP)
Cc: mjabrams@verizon.net ; wsalbano@aol.com ; asavage@wcanmiller.com ; d.lehrman@att.net ; dorothonmiller5@aol.com ; vnm3@earthlink.net ; Gary@smart.net ; jglemire@aol.com ; jim.oconnell@earthlink.net ; James.OConnell@usdoj.gov
Sent: Saturday, October 28, 2006 9:44 AM
Subject: Re: BNA PUD

Travis,

We had a meeting a couple of months ago, attended by several neighborhood folks, Michele Molotsky of Jack Evans' office, and Allison Prince and her team -- owner, architect, associate. We talked through the project as it then stood, and also went up into one of the condos in Whitman Place, the neighbor of the northern-most of the BNA buildings and the one most immediately (and negatively) impacted. The problem for Whitman Place is that the half of their condos (all on the top three floors of the building) that face south will be hugely damaged by the project as proposed, since much of the charm and value of those units derives from the fact that they have a great southern exposure and broad balconies and patios that are full of plantings. A ten-story building would block off all of that, and have them feet away from windows of other people's apartments. I know that the architects took a lot of photos from the Whitman Place unit and from the roof, and were looking at setbacks, but Allison told me just recently that the setbacks they tried (mostly from the front, or 25th St,

side) didn't do much for the sun or view lines.

Other issues have to do with construction period disruption (Whitman Place has had a perfectly wretched experience with construction noise and other issues from a 24th St project) and amenities. There will be a long list of demands as to construction issues. As to amenities, there are three general sets of ideas, and no firm consensus as yet. The three are improvements to Francis Field and/or Francis School (which DCPS plans to convert from a Jr HS to a K through 9 International Baccalaureate school in 2007); the West End library, and the proposed West End BID. I personally would rank those in the order I set them out, but others have other priorities. Generally, I join those who believe that "public benefits" or amenities have been one of the real problem areas for PUDs, with many amenities being illusory or more trouble than they are worth (the feeding program and the green spaces programs in FB come to mind) or provide real benefits, but on a diffuse, conditional, District-wide basis while allowing impacts that are very real and very local (the SWW and programs for the Mayor's housing fund come to mind).

Allison Prince says that the set-down will be on Nov 13th, and the hearing on the merits not until March. We fully expect to have more discussions on these issues, and I have been keeping other commissioners and interested neighbors abreast as we go. We anticipate a formal presentation to the ANC in January. I'd really like to get early word as to OP's input. Unfortunately, I won't be able to go to the set-down hearing.

Michael

-----Original Message-----

From: "Parker, Travis (OP)"
Sent: Oct 27, 2006 5:01 PM
To: M Thomas - ANC2A02
Subject: BNA PUD

Michael,

Has there been any ANC review of the proposed BNA PUD on 25th Street? Any comments you would like to share on the project? I'm especially interested in your thoughts on amenities.

Thanks and have a great weekend.

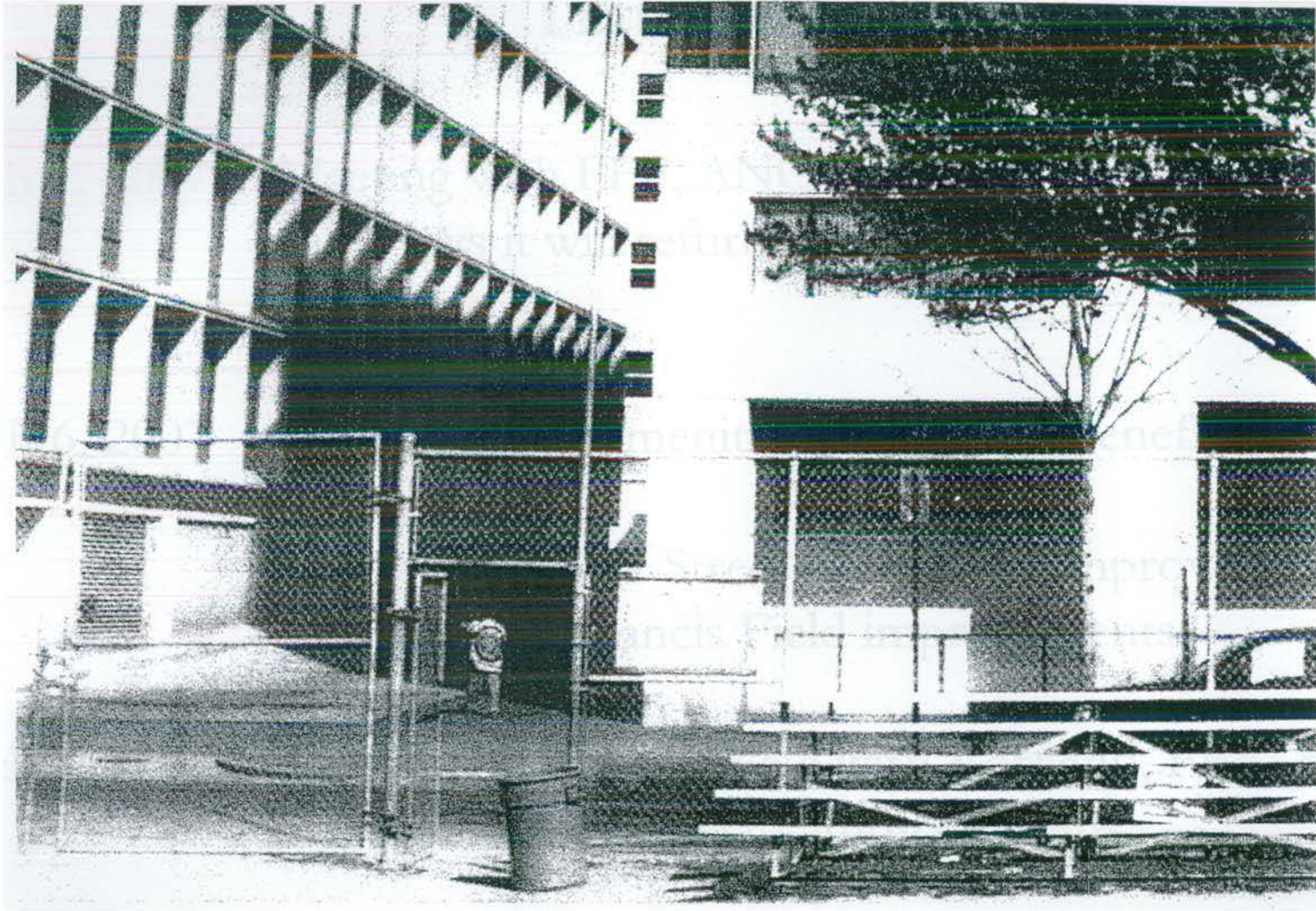
Travis

1 got it nailed down for their final approval.

2 I just want to emphasize a point
3 that I do have the notes accompanying
4 Commissioner Parsons' absentee vote. He view,
5 as it stands now and I understand you're still
6 working on this. That the amenities and
7 public benefits are inadequate. And it hasn't
8 been fully flushed out.

9 I would just add to that comment,
10 which I agree with in the abstract as it being
11 presented in the abstract. And I know that
12 the Office of Planning knows this. But I just
13 want to emphasize the fact that we discourage
14 open-ended contributions and that we prefer
15 that they be tied to actual delivery of an
16 amenity, concurrently with the issuance of the
17 CFO. So, just want to help with that point.

18 And then also Mr. parsons is
19 troubled not that anyone will be surprised by
20 this, by the roof trellis. So, just want to
21 make sure that it's understood that he has an
22 issue with that.



Francis Field and 25th Street “Prison Yard” architectural fabric.

Timeline

- March 1, 2007 Meeting with FFF, ANC-2A, DPR.
DPR says it will refurbish Francis Field in FY 2007.
- March 6, 2007 Vornado files Amenities and Public Benefits

\$200,000 for 25th Street streetscape improvements.
\$150,000 for Francis Field improvements.
- March 7, 2007 Meeting on Francis Field with Vornado, FFF, ANC-2A, and DPR to specify improvements.
- March 26, 2007 Zoning Case 06-35 Public Hearing.

NAME	Phone	Email
GARY GRIFFITH	202 659-4561	gary@smart.net
Michael Thomas	202-997-8654	michael.thomas@auc2a.org
Jackie Stanley	202-544-1259	jackie.stanley@dc.gov
Sharon Dendy	202-673-7692	sharon.dendy@dc.gov
architect DPR	202-491-2518 (cell)	

Stuart Frazier 202.727.5460 stuart.frazier@dc.gov

Tom Wilner

Bryan Martin Firvida 202.671.1462

bryan.martinfirvida@dc.gov

202
671-
0420

gary@
smart.net

202
491-
2518

Sign-in
sheet
March 1, 2007
at DPR

EXHIBIT D

CHARLES E. SMITH COMMERCIAL REALTY: BNA BUILDINGS (Z.C. No. 06-35) PROJECT AMENITIES AND PUBLIC BENEFITS

Below please find a list of project amenities and public benefits for the proposed PUD. These amenities and benefits were selected based on input from and consultation with representatives of ANC 2A and the Office of Planning as well as interested stakeholders in the immediate neighborhood.

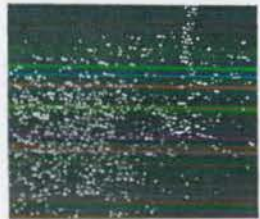
The Applicant believes that the following public benefits are superior features of the proposed PUD that benefit the surrounding neighborhood to a greater extent than would likely result from a matter-of-right development. The proffered amenities and benefits represent a significant contribution to the development of a strong residential community in West End, and vastly outweigh the development incentives and flexibility requested in this matter.

The Applicant is well aware that the Zoning Commission and Office of Planning both strongly prefer that contributions to institutions and organizations be targeted to a tangible item or project, and will continue to work with interested stakeholders in order to flesh out the commitments and finalize the amenities package.

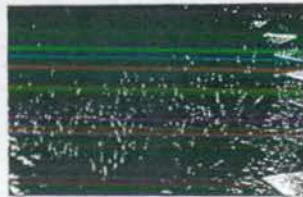
1. Creation of housing units through the conversion of the existing office buildings at 1229 and 1231 buildings to residential use, and inclusion of affordable housing units consistent with the proposed inclusionary zoning regulations.
2. Streetscape improvements along both sides of 25th Street, including sidewalk paving, planting strips, and the creation of tree boxes, consistent with the existing streetscape in front of 1275 25th Street (Whitman Place). These improvements include the removal of the existing chain-link fence around the east and north sides of Francis Field and replacement with an ornamental metal fence. Estimated value: \$200,000.
3. Facilities improvements to Francis Field (e.g. trash receptacles, furniture, improved field conditions). A site visit with representatives of the Department of Parks and Recreation and Friends of Francis Field, as well as a representative of ANC 2A, to discuss specific improvements has been scheduled, and a detailed package will be presented at the public hearing. Estimated value: \$150,000.
4. Improvements to Francis Junior High School, including technological improvements and facilities improvements. The Applicant and a representative of ANC 2A are working with the school's principal to identify specific improvements and, again, a detailed package will be presented at the public hearing. Estimated value: \$150,000.
5. Commitment to sustainable design practices, including a commitment to achieve a minimum of 20 LEED-NC v2.2 points for the residential component and 16 LEED-NC v2.2 points for the office component.

March 6
2006
BECMS
27

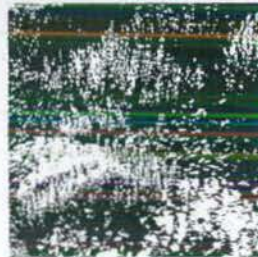
From Exhibit 31



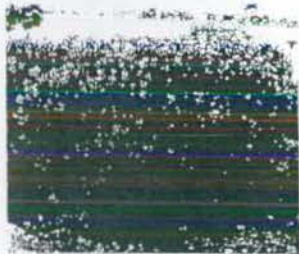
FACHY SANDRA GROUNDCOVER



LIRIOPE GROUNDCOVER



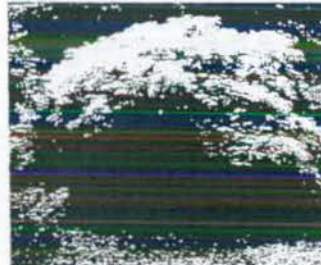
GARDEN PLANTING



INKBERRY HOLLY HEDGE



CRAPE MYRTLE



JAPANESE GREENLEAF MAPLE



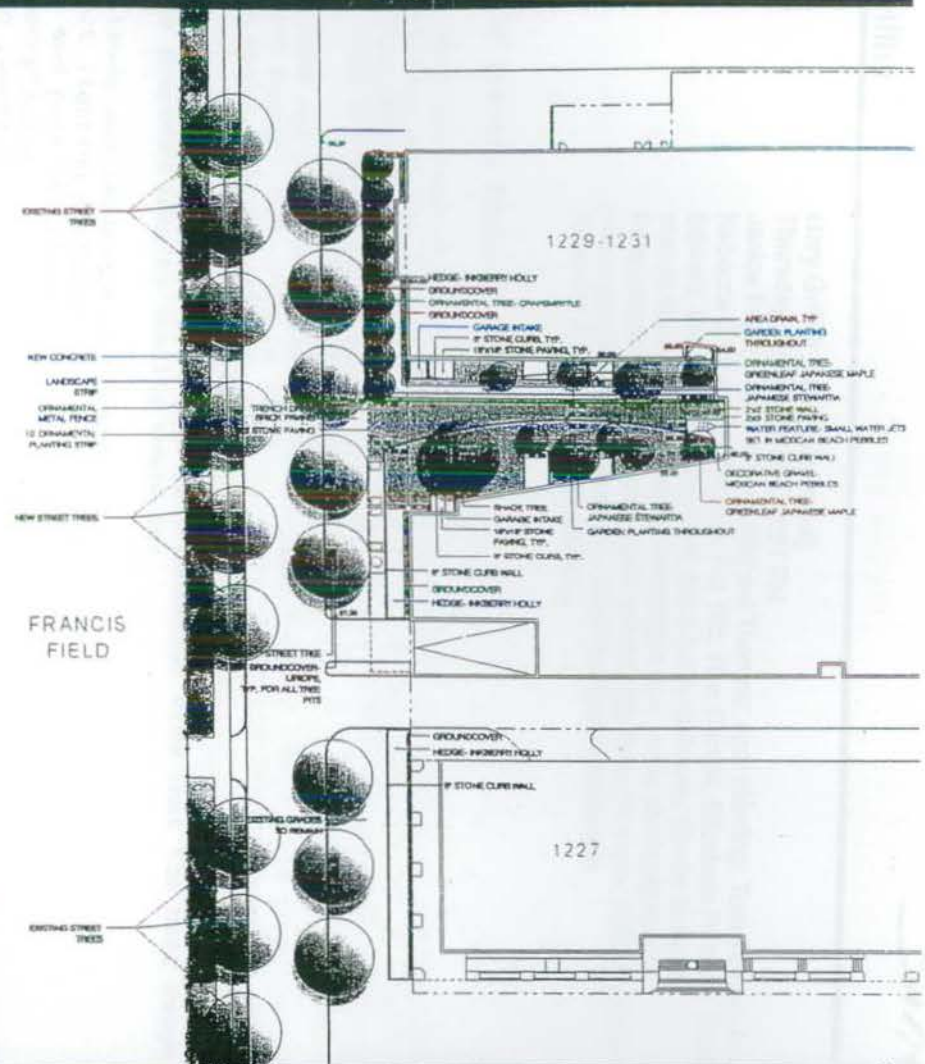
JAPANESE STEWARTIA



HONEY LOCUST SHADE TREE



PRINCETON ELM STREET TREE



Jane - (14)

Gary Griffith

From: Gary Griffith [gary@smart.net]
Sent: Thursday, March 08, 2007 2:31 PM
To: Janice Fugler; Jane Wilner; Michael Thomas; April Harding; Tom Wilner; James O'Connell; Rebecca Coder; Matt Abrams; Pat Tith; Ron Carsell; Elizabeth Falcone; Enid Beaumont; Edward Joseph; Alan Shepherd; Madelyn Appelbaum; Bernie Holland
Cc: sharon.dendy@dc.gov; stuart.frazier@dc.gov; jackie.stanley@dc.gov; Bryan.martin@dc.gov; david.avitabile@pillsburylaw.gov; RSmith@vno.com; allison.prince@pillsburylaw.com; PBurkhart@sbaranes.com
Subject: Report of Francis Field Site Meeting

Friends of Francis Field--

We had a very productive meeting Wednesday with representatives of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the law firm representing the developer, Charles E. Smith Commercial Realty. This meeting began with a site visit to Francis Field and was continued in the lobby of 2501 M Street.

DPR confirmed again that it would be renovating Francis Field this year, (or at least with this year's budget) and would be holding a public meeting this spring to ascertain the needs and wants of the neighborhood.

Given this planned renovation, we came to a consensus view that the best suggestions for use of the proposed amenity funding would be:

- Mature trees and landscape plantings.
- Non-sport lighting fixtures.
- Benches and park furniture.
- Trash receptacles.
- Drinking fountain.

We also agreed that we would use the same landscape architect that the developer is using to design the 25th Street streetscape improvements to design the placement of the above items in Francis Field. This architectural firm is also specifying an "ornamental metal fence" to replace the present chain link. This fence and the 25th Street streetscape improvements are being paid for by the developer and do not come out of the funds earmarked specifically for Francis Field.

We also learned today that the developer filed a new amenities package on March 6 with the Zoning Commission that includes "facilities improvements to Francis Field" estimated at \$150,000. This is \$50,000 more than the developer offered at the ANC meeting of February 21.

Thus, it seems we have made substantial progress.

* * *

We need to have a board meeting (or email vote) soon to:

1. Approve the suggestions made today.
2. Approve our partnership application to DPR.
3. Decide how will proceed at the Zoning Commission hearing on March 26. We presently have an application pending to oppose the project. In view of this cooperation with the developer, we may want to change this to support the project.

* * *

Attendees of today's meeting:

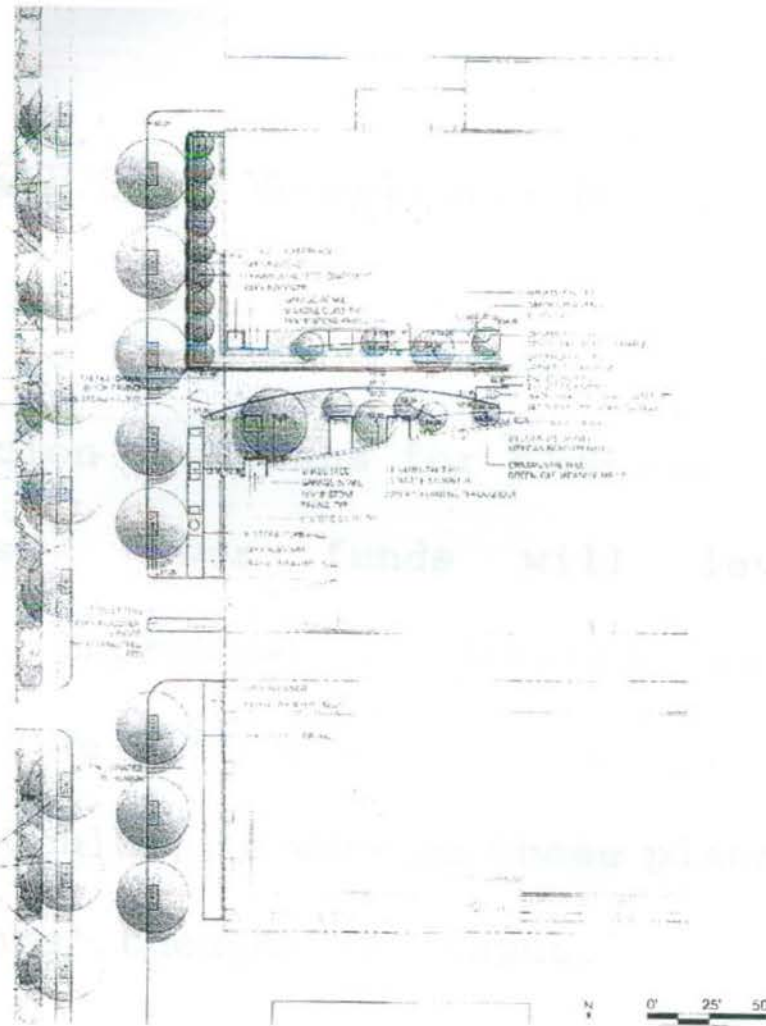
Sharon Denby, DPR architect
Stuart Frazier, DPR maintenance chief
David Avitabile, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman (developer's law firm)
Jane Wilner, FFF president

Gary Griffith, FFF secretary
Michael Thomas, ANC commissioner and FFF member

* * *

Sincerely,

Gary Griffith, FFF secretary
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037
202 659-4561
email: gary@smart.net



Part of Vornado landscape and streetscape submission, March 6, 2007.

Testimony of Richard B. Smith, Vornado, at ZC hearing, March 26, 2007

6 The timing is fortuitous, because D.C. Parks
7 and Recreation has plans for some additional
8 renovations. Our funds will leverage
9 additional improvements desired by the
10 neighbors. We have committed our landscape
11 architect, Oculus, to work on these plans with
12 the neighbors' thought and input.

1 After lots of work, I believe we
2 have achieved a level of support from most if
3 not all of these neighbors. We have received
4 the endorsement of ANC-2A, the Friends of
5 Francis Field, and of the Francis Junior High
6 School. You'll hear more about that support
7 later.

8 At this point, I'd like to just
9 briefly summarize the project and community
10 amenities and turn this over to Shalom Baranes
11 for a presentation on the architecture.

12 The first amenity is the simple
13 fact of the conversion from office to
14 residential. This will serve to further
15 enliven the neighborhood with more pedestrian
16 activity and more life outside the traditional
17 working hours of 9:00 to 5:00.

18 The second amenity is the
19 agreement to fund \$200,000 in streetscape
20 improvements for both sides of 25th Street,
21 including a new fence for Francis Field.
22 These improvements will better tie our

March 26, 2001
Smith

1 buildings into the existing fabric of the
2 street and better tie them to the park.

3 The third amenity is the agreement
4 to fund the design and implementation of
5 \$150,000 in improvements for Francis Field.
6 The timing is fortuitous, because D.C. Parks
7 and Recreation has plans for some additional
8 renovations. Our funds will leverage
9 additional improvements desired by the
10 neighbors. We have committed our landscape
11 architect, Oculus, to work on these plans with
12 the neighbors' thought and input.

13 The fourth amenity is a commitment
14 of \$150,000 to Francis Junior High School.
15 We've worked with the school to identify a
16 list of items necessary for the school to
17 continue to improve its services, including,
18 among others, computers for teachers for
19 classrooms, new library and book resources,
20 among others.

21 The fifth benefit is lead or
22 sustainable development. In addition to the

5m

Testimony of Michael Thomas, ANC-2A, at ZC hearing, March 26, 2007

22 consultation on this. And later this spring

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97

1 DPR intends to hold public meetings in the
2 West End as part of a process of planning
3 larger changes to the facilities and usages of
4 the field.

1 proffered for Francis Field. That made the
2 total proffer nearly equivalent to that of the
3 1143 New Hampshire case. Some part of the
4 landscaping along 25th Street is so directly
5 improving the owned property as to not justify
6 full credit as an amenity as we think about
7 these things, but the ANC is now satisfied
8 that the proffer is at an adequate level.

9 The money allocated for Francis
10 Field would jumpstart efforts to improve that
11 facility considerably. And if you've looked
12 at the photographs that were handed out, the
13 second and third page of those photographs
14 show a field that is pretty bare bones. It's
15 either mud or it's dust. It's chain link,
16 industrial-type fence. It's light poles that
17 come from a far distant decade.

18 A list of specific items -- it has
19 been agreed among the developer, the
20 Department of Parks and Rec, Friends of
21 Francis Field, and the ANCs. We had some real
22 consultation on this. And later this spring

Thompson
March 26
2007

1 DPR intends to hold public meetings in the
2 West End as part of a process of planning
3 larger changes to the facilities and usages of
4 the field.

5 A real bonus brought about by this
6 PUD application, in fact, is the revival of
7 the Friends of Francis Field, a group that was
8 formed several years ago, has been more
9 recently dormant. But it is now an impressive
10 group of interested and engaged neighbors and
11 promises to add to the neighborhood for many
12 years to come.

13 It is engaged in ongoing
14 discussions with DPR. I think it will become
15 a partner in their partnership program for
16 this field.

17 The \$200,000 allocated for
18 streetscape improvements will greatly enhance
19 25th Street, and particularly the Francis
20 Field side. That chain link fence, which now
21 looks like industrial site, will be replaced
22 by decorative fencing, and tree boxes and

Thomas

1 plantings will make a big difference for those
2 using the field and for those residing in the
3 neighborhood.

4 And by the way, I live in that
5 building at 2501, the one that's in one of the
6 photographs, 2501 M.

7 The ANC is also very pleased to
8 support the amenity package for Francis Junior
9 High School. That school is led by a
10 remarkable principal, Stephanie Crutchfield.
11 She has done a great deal with inadequate
12 facilities and a huge and ever-changing
13 mission. She has pulled together tutoring
14 programs with the help of local law firms and
15 companies. She has trained other principals,
16 and she is called on for input by the school
17 district for a wide range of missions outside
18 her school.

19 Tonight she would be here. She
20 had set aside this time, but she is -- she has
21 been called on again to help in the process of
22 selecting administrators for the school

Thomas



Francis Field, July 2007

Zoning Commission Order, July 9, 2007

10. No certificate of occupancy for any building approved by this Order shall be issued until the following amenities have been provided:
 - b. Francis Field: contribution of design, materials, and labor for improvements to Francis Field to (1) prepare a landscape plan for Francis Field that includes the addition of trees, park lighting, furniture, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain and (2) following approval by DPR, install the improvements, consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding included with Exhibit 40 of the record, valued at \$150,000.
 - c. The landscape and streetscape improvements to 25th Street, N.W., in accordance with the plans marked as Exhibits 27, 31, and 40 of the record. These improvements shall include, subject to approval by the appropriate District agency or agencies, the removal of the existing chain-link fence along the west side of 25th Street N.W. and replacement with an ornamental metal fence.

8. The project shall comply with the transportation management plan ("TMP") included with the final Traffic Impact Analysis dated March 5, 2007 and marked as Exhibit 27 in the record. In addition to the carsharing and bicycle parking spaces detailed in Condition 6 of this Order, the TMP shall include the following components.
 - a. All new residents, upon move-in, shall receive a complimentary WMATA SmarTrip card (or its functional equivalent) with a \$20 balance in order to encourage mass transit;
 - b. An on-site business center shall be provided in the Residential Building;
 - c. A member of the Residential Building's management shall be designated as the individual responsible for coordination and implementation of transportation demand management measures; and
 - d. Employees in the Office Building shall be provided carpool spaces for registered rideshare groups. These parking spaces will be assigned and conveniently located as an incentive to form carpools. Additionally, a member of the building management for the Office Building shall be designated as the individual responsible for coordination and implementation of the carpool incentive program.
9. The project shall include the low-impact development features specified in Exhibit 32 of the record, including the following features:
 - a. Provision of a green roof on the residential component, as shown on the plans marked as Exhibits 27 and 31 in the record.
 - b. Sustainable strategies which will achieve the equivalent of a minimum score of 20 points for the residential component and 16 points for the office component under U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for New Construction, version 2.2. For purposes of this Condition, "office component" and "residential component" shall incorporate all shared components of the Project.
10. No certificate of occupancy for any building approved by this Order shall be issued until the following amenities have been provided:
 - a. Francis Junior High School: contribution of computer equipment, library improvements, air conditioners, software, and signage to Francis Junior High School consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding included as Exhibit 25 of the record, valued at \$150,000.
 - b. Francis Field: contribution of design, materials, and labor for improvements to Francis Field to (1) prepare a landscape plan for Francis Field that includes the addition of trees, park lighting, furniture, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain

and (2) following approval by DPR, install the improvements, consistent with the Memorandum of Understanding included with Exhibit 40 of the record, valued at \$150,000.

- c. The landscape and streetscape improvements to 25th Street, N.W., in accordance with the plans marked as Exhibits 27, 31, and 40 of the record. These improvements shall include, subject to approval by the appropriate District agency or agencies, the removal of the existing chain-link fence along the west side of 25th Street N.W. and replacement with an ornamental metal fence.
11. The Applicant shall abide by the terms of the Development and Construction Management Plan included with Exhibit 45 of the record.
12. The Applicant shall have flexibility with the design of the PUD in the following areas:
 - a. To vary the exterior design, signage, and landscaping in accordance with the final plans reviewed by the Commission of Fine Arts.
 - b. To vary the location and design of all interior components, including partitions, structural slabs, doors, hallways, columns, stairways, mechanical rooms, elevators, and toilet rooms, provided that the variations do not change the exterior configuration or appearance of the structures.
 - c. To vary final selection of the exterior materials within the color ranges and materials types as proposed based on availability at the time of construction.
 - d. To make minor refinements to exterior details and dimensions, including balcony enclosures, belts, courses, sills, bases, cornices, railings, and trim, or any other changes to comply with Construction Codes or that are otherwise necessary to obtain a final building permit.
 - e. To make alterations to the parking garage design, which need not conform to the parking garage requirements of the Zoning Regulations regarding aisle width and parking space width, provided that the office parking garage contains approximately 112 spaces and the residential parking garage contains approximately 249 spaces, which requirement may be satisfied with any combination of handicapped, full, compact, tandem, tandem compact, and valet spaces.
13. The Applicant shall enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Small and Local Business Opportunity Commission.
14. The Applicant shall enter into a First Source Employment Agreement with the Department of Employment Services.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Parks and Recreation

April 5, 2007

Mr. Richard Smith
VORNADO/Charles E. Smith
Suite 1000
2345 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA 22202

Re: BNA Buildings PUD, Zoning Commission Case No. 06-35
Memorandum of Understanding – Francis Field

Dear Mr. Smith:

We write this letter to acknowledge VORNADO/Charles E. Smith's offer to provide the design, materials, and labor necessary to provide improvements to Francis Field and to express our willingness to accept this work. Per our understanding, you will arrange for the preparation of a landscape plan for Francis Field that will include the addition of trees, park lighting, furniture, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain. Following review and approval by the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation, you will then install the improvements, which will provide a public benefit to the proposed PUD. We note that the specific features of the improvement were arrived at through discussion and consultation with representatives of ANC 2A and the Friends of Francis Field. The proposed work is valued at \$150,000.

DPR understands that this commitment to provide the work is conditioned on the approval of the PUD. We also understand that the work will be performed only if a building permit is granted for the PUD, and the project commences construction.

Sincerely,

Wanda S. Durden
Interim Director

cc: Carol Mitten, Chairperson, D.C. Zoning Commission
Michael Thomas, Chairperson, ANC 2A
Friends of Francis Field

EX
40

Join in the Fun!

Commission of Fine Arts

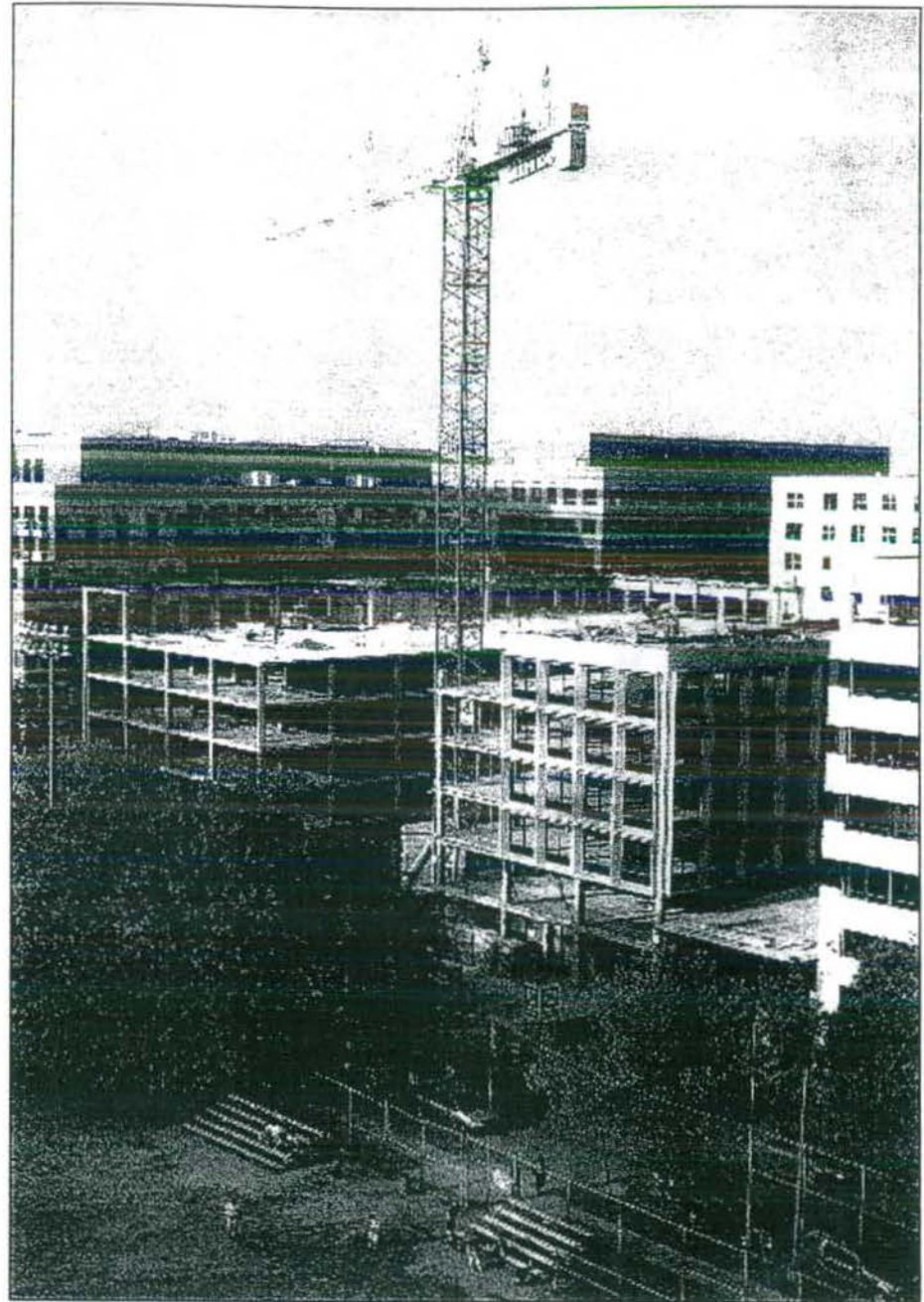
July 5, 2007. FFF letter to CFA asking to be heard.

May 27, 2008. FFF inquiry to CFA about scheduling of Vornado Case.

May 30, 2008. FFF inquiry to developer Richard Smith about CFA scheduling.

June 9, 2008, FFF inquiry to architect Patrick Burkhart about CFA scheduling

June 28, 2008, FFF inquiry to CFA.



Friends of Francis Field

2501 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

July 5, 2007

Kristina Penthoet
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
401 F Street NW, Suite 312
Washington, DC 20001-2728

Re: Case S.L. 06-101

As the Commission considers final review of this project--which involves additions to three buildings on 25th Street NW--we wish to call its attention to the design's impact on the public space it faces, which is known as Francis Field.

This is one of the few open areas that remains within the original L'Enfant plan of the Capital City, and we believe the streetscape and landscaping issues need to be considered in addition to the buildings' designs.

Neither our group nor our Advisory Neighborhood Commission was informed when this project went before your Commission for concept approval, and thus, we have had no previous opportunity to make our views known to the Commission.

However, we have been intensively involved in the zoning issues, and we were made a party to the zoning case. Our group is comprised of 23 residents who live within 200 feet of this project.

We are hereby requesting the opportunity, when the applicant presents his submission for final approval, to make a brief presentation of our views to the Commission on the impact of this design on the immediate area and views of its nearest neighbors.

In support of our position, we are enclosing a copy of the exhibits we filed in the case we made before the Zoning Commission; and we ask in addition that these exhibits be filed with your Commission and be made available to the members before they consider final approval of this project.

Sincerely,

Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field

Gary Griffith

From: Gary Griffith [gary@smart.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 1:26 PM
To: flindstrom@cfa.gov
Subject: CFA Case SL 06-101

Frederick J. Lindstrom
Commission of Fine Arts

Re: SL 06-101

Mr Lindstrom--

As we discussed today, as part of the District's zoning case for the conversion of the BNA buildings at 1227-1231 25th Street, an ornamental fence on 25th Street and other streetscape improvements were ordered by the Zoning Commission in their case No. 06-35.

The CFA case number for the building itself is SL 06-101 we believe.

Has the plan for this fence and streetscape been submitted or approved by CFA?

If not, we'll try to make our case to the CFA and the applicant that it should be submitted for review, as it certainly will be visible from Rock Creek Park and should therefore fall within the jurisdiction of the Shipstead-Luce Act.

Thanks for taking the time to listen to me this morning. I hope to see you again at the CFA sometime soon!

Best,

Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037
202 659-4561

Gary Griffith

From: Gary Griffith [gary@smart.net]
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2008 4:11 PM
To: RSmith@vno.com
Cc: david.avitabile@pillsburylaw.com; allison.prince@pillsburylaw.com; PBurkhart@sbaranes.com; Lauren@oculus-dc.com; lowelldthomas@hotmail.com; Rebecca Coder; Chris Haspel; April Harding; Tom Wilner; Jane Wilner; Michelle Wiltse; Jim O'Connell
Subject: Friends of Francis Field and Vornado/Charles E. Smith
Attachments: case2.doc



case2.doc (80 KB)

Richard B. Smith
Vornado/Charles E. Smith

Mr. Smith--

FFF would like to bring you and your team up-to-date on four important matters relating to the Zoning Commission order in the BNA case (ZC 06-35) and the upcoming review of your 25th Street project by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). These matters relate directly to your certificate of occupancy and building permits, so we're sure you want to be kept informed.

* * *

Earlier this week, I asked a few questions by telephone to David Avitabile, the attorney at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman who represented your firm in some of our crucial meetings with our Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC-2A) and the Department of Parks and Recreations (DPR). He said he would pass these on to Vornado/Charles E. Smith. We have not heard back from anyone yet, and since events are moving swiftly, we thought it prudent to contact you directly and without further delay.

1. We learned in April of this year that representatives of a soccer league and softball teams met with the landscape architect you have hired to implement the zoning order, and that these leagues may or may not have represented themselves as "Friends of Francis Field." We believe we have straightened out that misunderstanding. Those sports leagues are not members of our organization, were not parties in the zoning case, and of course do not have the right to use our legal name or represent themselves as us. In addition, they are lobbying DPR hard for artificial turf on Francis Field, which we believe will only delay the approval of the landscape plan required by the zoning order for your occupancy permit, as we believe the National Park Service--which owns the actual land--will never approve artificial grass, nor would the Commission of Fine Arts, which has architectural review, allow it as part of the landscaping.

2. We met on May 18, 2008, with the new director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, and two other officials. They told us DPR did not know of our existence when they invited the sports teams to meet with your landscape architect; but more disturbingly, DPR told us it had no knowledge of the agreements between DPR, FFF, Vornado/Charles E. Smith, and ANC-2A that led to the zoning case order.

3. Today we mailed to DPR 32 documents relating to that case, with a narrative summary. The documents were bulky, and we are confident that your firm and attorneys are quite familiar with them. But we've attached to this email a copy of the narrative and list, which is extensive, since those may help to refresh your memories about specific dates and meetings. In addition, we think the narrative will be informational to your landscape architect and any other new members of your team who did not participate directly in the zoning case itself. Our representative to ANC-2A is also new and did not participate in the meetings at which these agreements were reached.

4. In another arena, CFA has informed us that you have not yet scheduled a date to submit plans for their conceptual review of the streetscape improvements, ornamental fence, or Francis Field improvements (or for their final review of the building itself). We're glad to hear that, but we would like to get an idea of when you plan to do so. We filed our request with CFA in July 2007 to make a brief presentation on the impact of the design, and particularly the streetscape and field improvements. We've been informed more recently that an oral presentation during the meeting itself is possible and is at the discretion of the CFA's chair, but that even if that is not granted, our written submission, if orderly, will be included in the case file and distributed to the CFA's voting members for consideration. Thus, we've begun work on that presentation and filing, and we'd like to know your thoughts, plans, and suggestions on how we can do this most effectively.

* * *

Please be aware that we support your project and its architecture, which will be a significant improvement to our immediate neighborhood.

We hope to be able to use the CFA review to affect changes in future and existing architectural aspects of Francis Field, most specifically the tall and ugly light stands. A cursory check by CFA of their records at our request shows no indication that these stands (or any other aspect of Francis Field) was ever submitted to CFA for approval, as required by the Shipstead-Luce Act, which gives CFA design review for structures visible from Rock Creek Park and other specific areas.

We will be researching this matter further next week with the records clerk at CFA, and will be consulting with another member of the CFA staff as to how to most effectively file our CFA submission to assure not only that the CFA will read our filing, but that we will be able to make an oral presentation, and perhaps one with graphics. Your attorneys and architect were very helpful in our zoning case presentation, and we hope you will also assist us with our CFA filing.

As part of our preparation, we'd like to meet with your representatives and landscape architect as we prepare our CFA case.

In the zoning case, DPR has no approval rights for the 25th Street streetscape, or for that matter, for the ornamental fence. Thus, we do not feel it necessary or appropriate to have DPR representatives or the sports teams that wish to lobby them and you, participate in this streetscape meeting. We will, however, invite a representative of ANC-2A, which also supported you in the zoning case.

We are not opposed in any way to the sports teams having a major say in the plan for Francis Field itself, for which DPR does have approval rights. FFF has in fact argued all along that the neighborhood-wide meeting on the program issues, or use, of the field, be held as promised by DPR. This was also part of our--and your--agreement with DPR and ANC-2A. David Avitabile attended a meeting on your behalf when we struck this agreement with DPR and ANC-2A.

Could you or your representative tell us how to proceed to set up this meeting on streetscape architecture?

I've copied our board members, and your architects and the attorneys who participated with us in our zoning case submission, so that they too, can understand our reasons for this meeting, and our needs for good information as we prepare our CFA case.

(By the way, we've just filed our incorporation papers as a non-profit organization, and one of your tenants at 1227 25th Street is helping us with our tax exemption as well, on a pro bono basis.)

Sincerely,

Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037
202 659-4561

Gary Griffith

From: Gary Griffith [gary@smart.net]
Sent: Monday, June 09, 2008 6:02 PM
To: PBurkhart@sbaranes.com
Subject: BNA Buildings and Francis Field



apfoto3a.jpg

Patrick--

Perhaps you can help me with a couple of quick questions.

1. Our Friends of Francis Field group is making a presentation to our ANC on June 18 and I want to get some photos mounted on some big boards. I'm sure you folks do a lot of this. Is there a service nearby that you use for this?
2. Attached is a small version of one of the photos you used in the zoning case. There's a date on it, but I can't read it. Do you have a larger copy with a clear date or do you know it? I don't need the photo, just the date.
3. Do you know when you are going back before the Commission of Fine Arts?

Thanks for any help you might be able to give me, and hope to see you again soon.

Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037
202 659-4561

Friends of Francis Field

2501 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

June 28, 2008

Thomas Luebke, Secretary
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
401 F Street NW, Suite 312
Washington, DC 20001-2728

Re: Case SL 06-101

Dear Mr. Luebke:

Please consider this our request for a separate CFA review of the public park area related to case SL 06-101, which is currently before your commission.

Since this case--regarding alterations to buildings on 25th Street NW--was last heard by CFA in June 2006, the District of Columbia's Zoning Commission has ordered the developer/applicant to provide amenities to the surrounding neighborhood which includes an ornamental fence fronting Francis Field, and "a landscape plan for Francis Field that includes addition of trees, park lighting, furniture, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain." (Order ZC #06-35, July 2007).

Francis Field, located on Square 13, is U.S. Reservation 639, a part of Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway. Jurisdiction was transferred to the District of Columbia in 1971 for "recreation and related purposes."

While the applicant in SL 06-101 has agreed to provide a landscape architect to design the Francis Field improvements, the approval of that plan rests with the District of Columbia's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), not with the applicant. Thus, while CFA might give direction to the applicant in SL 06-101 about this landscape plan for Francis Field, the applicant has no authority to compel DPR to follow that direction.

Moreover, we believe that in ordering an architectural plan for Francis Field under the approval of a District agency, the Zoning Commission makes the District of Columbia an applicant subject to CFA review.

Thus, we believe that the architectural plan for Francis Field should fall under the CFA's basic jurisdiction for public parks, not under its Shipstead-Luce jurisdiction for private buildings. Francis Field is clearly public park space in federal ownership.

Our organization, the Friends of Francis Field (FFF) is also requesting hereby to be heard in this case (or cases) and to make a brief presentation at the appropriate time.

FFF was a party in the zoning case referenced above, and argued for the amenities to Francis Field that were ordered.

Over the last several months FFF has been working with CFA staff to research the history of CFA's review of structures on Francis Field, and has attached exhibits and photographs that CFA might find helpful in reviewing this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Griffith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Griffith" clearly distinguishable.

Gary Griffith
Secretary

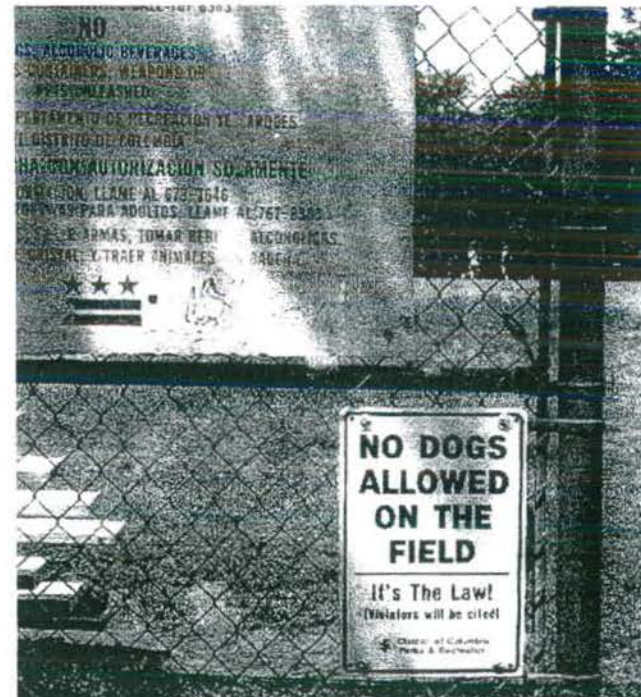
DPR Under Clark Ray

May 8, 2009. By this date Oculus has had four meetings with DPR and Stoddert Soccer to redesign Francis Field.

May 19, 2008. FFF meets with Ray, who states DPR has no funds to renovate Francis Field

June 18, 2008. ANC-2A votes FFF as official partner for DPR partnership.

July 15, 2008. DPR states no federal control of Francis Field and no CFA jurisdiction.



Gary Griffith

From: Jane Wilner [jw@janewilner.com]
Sent: Friday, May 08, 2009 11:10 AM
To: Gary Griffith
Subject: FW: FFF

reply

----- Forwarded Message

From: Lauren Brandes <Lauren@oculus-dc.com>
Date: Fri, 2 May 2008 15:50:02 -0400
To: "Jane Wilner" <jw@janewilner.com>
Subject: RE: FFF

Jane,

Thanks for the information regarding the past work your group has done. Once again I want to apologize if I gave you the impression that I did not want to work with your group. Quite the contrary, I am glad to have a better understanding of who your group is and how eager you are to improve Francis Field.

I have been to several meetings, but they have mainly been between my office and DPR to decide what kind of role my office will have in the process. Here's a recap to give you a history of my firm's involvement:

Dec. 2007 - meeting 1

Attendees: OCULUS - Don Hoover, & Lauren Brandes

DPR - Bridget Stesney, Melissa McKnight, and David Janifer

This meeting was to introduce our firm to the relevant people at DPR and to get share thoughts about Francis Field. From our standpoint, we are obligated to provide the amenities set forth in the PUD for the BNA building. DPR stated that Francis Field was on their list of high priority parks. Rather than only look at the park improvements listed in the PUD, it was decided that it would be best for the park if DPR initiated a process to improve the entire site which would incorporate the promised amenities as well. It was decided that OCULUS' role would be to attend 3 public meetings led by DPR. OCULUS would respond to the community's comments and provide schematic design for the park. At the end of the process, OCULUS would provide DPR with a concept plan of the park. DPR would then use that plan to hire a firm to do construction drawings. Any new improvements to the park will include the requirements set forth in the PUD. DPR stated that they would be reaching out to their contact for Francis Field at that time to touch base. At this time we were told that FFF was in the process of filing for 501c3 Status in order to begin fundraising and that they were still in the process of filing their paper work to become the official friends group.

Jan. 2008 - meeting 2

Attendees: OCULUS- Lauren Brandes
Vornado/ Charles E. Smith - Richard Smith, Michael Harrington
DPR - Bridget Stesney, CJ Lilly

This meeting was to have the developer and Oculus sit down with DPR to make sure we all agreed on the process for Francis Field. At this time we were also told that FFF was still the process of filing their paperwork.

Feb 2008 - meeting 3

Attendees: OCULUS - Lauren Brandes
DPR - Melissa McKnight

Melissa said that she had met with representatives of the friends group and that they were still in the process of filing for 501c3. We also went over again the public meeting and design process reiterating that Oculus would be involved with the 3 community meetings and would provide a final concept plan. Logistics for the right of entry for the civil engineer were also discussed. We decided to meet again in 3-4 weeks to meet with the Francis Field group.

March 2008 meeting 4

Attendees OCULUS - Lauren Brandes
DPR - Melissa McKnight and Bridget Stesney
Francis Field - Tom Gross and Brendan Sullivan

At this meeting I was under the impression that Brendan Sullivan was the rep of the softball league and Tom Gross was the rep for Friends of Francis Field. They discussed fundraising efforts as well as what play fields they would like to have at the site. We also discussed the lights and how to minimize their impact to neighbors. We mentioned that we are still waiting for our civil engineer to get the right of entry from OPM so they can begin survey work. Until then we won't really know what can fit in the park. Since we don't have a survey yet, I met Tom and Brendan a week or so later at the site to briefly go over what kinds of fields may fit. Oculus developed a time line that allowed 10-12 weeks for the design process (beginning with the survey).

This is the point at which I was contact by you. Please note that no design work has been done yet on our part. I am happy to work with your group and all the stakeholders of the park. I was under the impression that the previous meeting was with the Friends group, but it appears that it wasn't. As I stated on the phone, however, I think stakeholder meetings and community meetings should take place with DPR (with Oculus in attendance). We will be working with them through this process, but they will ultimately be the one who serves as the interface with the public. I will get in touch with Melissa McKnight at DPR to see what the next step should be. I was hoping to have a survey by the first public meeting but considering how long it is taking for OPM to process the forms for our civil, that may not happen. Melissa's number is 202-671-1462 if you want to get in touch with her.

Thanks again for helping to clear up some of the misunderstanding. I look forward to working with you.

Lauren Brandes

6/3/2009

OCULUS

2410 17th STREET NW SUITE 201 WASHINGTON,
DC 20009

p 202 588 5454 | f 202 588 5449

www.oculus-dc.com <blocked::http://www.oculus-dc.com/>

From: Jane Wilner [mailto:jw@janewilner.com]

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2008 12:47 PM

To: Lauren Brandes

Subject: FFF

Dear Lauren,

I am glad we spoke Friday and established our intent to work together. As I mentioned, we were a bit dismayed that a meeting concerning the plans to renovate Francis Field was held with DPR and others without including Friends of Francis Field (FFF). I am sorry neither you nor DPR had the information connecting us as major stakeholders in this process. The attached information should solve that problem.

As you can see from this material, FFF were successful in obtaining funds for the renovation of Francis Field from the Charles Smith Realty CO. as one of the major amenities in the zoning case. In that regard, representatives from FFF, DPR, ANC, and Charles Smith met to discuss how to coordinate the project. We all agreed on how to spend the

6/3/2009

funds and to use a single architect for the design . The letter of April 5th, 2007 from the acting Director of DPR to Charles Smith CO. documents the DPR's approval of this plan and our participation in this process. Once construction at the site began, we could be assured that the amenity project would go forward and that we would all work together to finalize the amenities package.

Construction at the site is now well under way. As I mentioned, with subsequent personnel changes in the DPR, there has been no follow up from them. However, our application for a Partnership with DPR is now going forward. Under their new requirements, we need no longer wait until we achieve non-profit status.

Consequently, we should soon achieve official status as the Friends of Francis Field. In the interim, with our application, we should be reconnected with the current personnel at DPR, and thereby working with them to assure that any renovation at Francis Field reflect the interest of the community.

We would love you to participate in our Kick-Off Celebration for the New Francis Field, May 19, 6-8 at Apt 717, overlooking the Field at 2501 M Street NW. We hope to gather the majority of the various stakeholders of Francis Field.

Sincerely,
-- Jane T. Wilner
2501 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
202-256-9380 cell
202-223-6733 home
jw@janewilner.com

----- End of Forwarded Message

Friends of Francis Field

2501 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

May 30, 2008

Clark E. Ray, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
3149 16th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20010

Dear Director Ray:

We appreciated very much your meeting with our representatives last week.

As we were told in that meeting that there was no record at DPR of past meetings between DPR and our group, or of representations made to us about plans to resurface Francis Field, and hold an open public meeting on the related program issues, we are submitting documentation, which is enclosed.

On the basis of plans stated by DPR in March 2007, FFF, ANC-2A, the developer of property on 25th Street NW, and the District's Zoning Commission acted in good faith in accepting those statements as true in making plans, recommendations, and orders in the zoning case in which FFF was involved as a party (ZC 06-35).

Had DPR not told all of us that it planned to resurface the field with its own funds in the near future, our group most certainly would have sought amenity funds in the zoning case to resurface the field itself, rather than for complementary items like plants and a drinking fountain. A green Francis Field was--and is--at the very heart of our efforts.

We hope you and your staff will review this information to further familiarize yourselves with the facts of the 2007 zoning case, and the history of our advocacy for Francis Field, which dates at least to 1998. Our filing also makes several specific recommendations.

We look forward to resolving these issues, and to working with DPR for a much improved Francis Field in our increasingly residential West End neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Gary Griffith
Secretary, Friends of Francis Field
2501 M Street NW #609
Washington, DC 20037

email: gary@smart.net

202 659-4561

THE FOGGY BOTTOM CURRENT

Turf battle rises up over Francis Field

By JESSICA GOULD
Current Staff Writer

Francis Field is an unassuming place. Patches of grass surround an oval of dry dirt. During the day, cars park on a sandy strip near the swimming pool. At night, stadium-style lights shine into the homes of the West End neighbors nearby.

Residents refer to the field as the "dirt ball," the "dust bowl," "ugly" and "dangerous." Everyone agrees that the field — bordered by Rock Creek Park and 25th, M and N streets — needs help. The question is: Who should help it?

Last Wednesday, a group of residents of the Westgate Condominium at 2501 M St. made a presentation to the Foggy Bottom-West End advisory neighborhood commission detailing their longstanding concerns about the field and asking for support in becoming the field's official advocates.

See **Field**/Page 30



Bill Petros/The Current

Neighbors whose homes overlook Francis Field decry its bare appearance, but residents and users are divided over what should be done to the space.

FIELD

From Page 1

"The park, in its current state, is turning out to be a little more of a nuisance than I expected," said Westgate resident Michelle Wiltse. "What we're looking to do is make the park a little more desirable."

Gary Griffith, a Westgate neighbor, said he and his neighbors have been advocating for the field for over a decade. "It was a wreck, and it's still a wreck," he said of the triangular space that Francis Middle School students use for recess and practice but not for league games. "The park doesn't really speak to the residents."

Griffith, Wiltse and Westgate resident Rebecca Coder called on Department of Parks and Recreation director Clark Ray to remove the light posts, tear down a metal gate by the swimming pool and decon-

struct the makeshift parking lot, all of which they say never should have been there in the first place.

They also asked the agency to convene a neighborhoodwide meeting to discuss the field's future use, and they asked the commission to support them in their efforts to become the "Friends of Francis Field."

When it comes to D.C. parks, being a "Friend" has its benefits. The department often partners with community groups to improve parks, playgrounds and recreation centers. The "Friends of" program allows these organizations to fundraise and assist in the department's planning processes.

Griffith, Wiltse and Coder say their group — which grew out of a Westgate Condominium committee and now includes neighbors from another building — deserves the coveted designation. They have remained steadfast supporters of Francis Field for many years, they

say, and were given standing in a 2006-07 Zoning Commission case regarding a new residential development on 25th Street. They call themselves the "real" Friends of Francis. At its June 18 meeting, the neighborhood commission unanimously voted to support them in their application to acquire that title.

But when it comes to the renovation of Francis Field, there are other groups vying for the parks department's attention. D.C. Stoddert League, which serves 5,000 players from ages 5 through 19, and Headfirst, which sponsors sports teams, camps, clinics and leagues for thousands of kids and adults in the D.C. area, are both interested in helping determine the field's future.

Like the West End neighbors, both groups would like to see improvements made to the field. "Francis is a very hard field to use. It's all torn up," said Stoddert administrator Tom Gross.

Stoddert, which used to play at

Francis on weekends, has had to play elsewhere this year. "Right now, it's unusable," he said. "It's rocky and dangerous."

Headfirst, meanwhile, allows only its adult members to play there.

"It's certainly a gem of a location, but it's worn down," said executive director Brendan Sullivan.

But, unlike their West End counterparts, Stoddert and Headfirst are interested in placing artificial turf on the field. Not Astroturf, but "the new generation of artificial grass," Gross said. "That whole industry has been revolutionized."

Sullivan said that "in an ideal world," grass would be best. "But it's not reality." He said artificial surfaces are better investments for the city because they are more sustainable. "I think the artificial surfacing is important in a city with as

"It's certainly a gem of a location, but it's worn down."

— Brendan Sullivan

many active people as D.C. has. ... It allows for play to go on with minimal upkeep."

Griffith, however, says artificial turf goes against the spirit of the space. "We think it's antithetical to the whole park movement that brought about Rock Creek Park and this field," he said, adding, "We wouldn't plant plastic palm trees, even though they would last longer."

Stoddert's Gross said he understands the neighbors' points. "This always happens. People look at an athletic field and they don't have any kids, and they say, 'Oh, that would make a nice park.'"

But using real grass would "be flushing money down a rat hole," he said. Instead, his group would be willing to support other aesthetic improvements. "We're open to doing whatever the community wants to make it more beautiful," he said.

Regardless, Gross said, the sports organizations expect to have their opinions heard, and they, like the West End neighbors, have met

with Ray to express their views. "We're stakeholders. We're the largest users of that field," Gross said. "We've been using it for at least two decades. Whatever happens, we're going to be involved."

But Griffith said the neighbors should be the ones guiding the planning for the park. "The larger point here is the change in the West End neighborhood," he said. He said the field has supported baseball games since the 1960s, but back then, a junkyard occupied the spot where his building now sits.

"As this becomes more and more of a residential neighborhood, Francis Field also ought to change," Griffith said. "We don't have a problem with people using the field for recreation or sports. Our objection is it's being used by people who don't live in the neighborhood."

At last week's meeting, parks director Ray said he was not prepared to make any "snap decisions" about the field's fate. "I am going to work with this group and others," he said. "I want to be fair."



U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1907

NATIONAL OFFICE
100 PATTERSON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20044

TELEPHONE
(202) 696-6000

10 September 2008

Dear Ms. Argo:

It has come to our attention on several occasions recently that the District of Columbia Department of Commerce and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has neglected its formal process for Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) review. These are clearly under CFA jurisdiction, and that DCRA has issued permits for construction work on these projects. As a reminder, all public projects (Subarea and District) as well as all projects within the boundaries defined by the Shipyard-Luce and Old Georgetown Acts are required by federal law to be reviewed by the Commission of Fine Arts.

In addition to bypassing the federally mandated review process, these procedural errors by DCRA lead to unnecessary confusion and delay for the applicants. Occasionally, they also lead to a monetary or legal burden to the government, such as in the unfortunate circumstances resulting from DCRA's premature issuance of a permit in 2006 for the construction of two new residences at 1769 and 1773 North Portal Drive, N.W. (cases #S.L. 05-06 and S.L. 06-082).

Most recently, we note that a large new residential project, 1229-1231 25th Street, N.W. (case #S.L. 05-181) was granted a building permit by DCRA without completing CFA review. This project, which overlooks Rock Creek Park, was approved at the concept level by the Commission of Fine Arts at its June 2006 meeting. However, the project was never submitted for final review. It is now under construction. After learning of the issuance of the permit, CFA staff met with the architect and developer to discuss design modifications since the Commission has declined it. Other than the expected detailed design development, the major changes include setting back the fire lift in the porch level, moving a corner on the first floor elevation, changing the window pattern on all three alley elevations, and modifying the landscape design at the courtyard. CFA staff does not believe that these changes are of a nature to prevent final approval by the Commission. However, we understand that the proposed renovations and addition to the office building at 1227 25th Street N.W., which were also reviewed in concept by the Commission (case #S.L. 06-101), have been delayed in construction and that a permit has not been issued for this building. In addition, we have been informed that improvements to the adjacent Francis Field facilities were promised as part of the Planned Unit Development Agreement. We expect that these parts of the project will be submitted to CFA for a full final review before a permit is issued by DCRA.

In another current example, we met last week with a representative from the District Public Schools about a window replacement project at the former Stevens

September 10, 2008; DCRA is in violation of federal statutes in issuing building permit for Vornado project at 1229-1231 25th Street without required CFA review.

Gary Griffith

From: Frederick.Lindstrom@cfa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2008 1:31 PM
To: Gary Griffith
Cc: SBatcheler@cfa.gov
Subject: Re: Construction - Case SL 06-101



Letter to Argo
10Seo08.pdf

Gary,

We are aware that construction has started on the 25th Street Project. Unfortunately, DCRA issued a permit for the residential buildings without forwarding it to the Commission for review. This is just one of several projects that DCRA has failed to submit to CFA. We have written to Ms. Argo, the Director of DCRA (see attached copy of the letter below) about this problem, but to date we have not had a response from her or DCRA. We also met with the project Architect and a representative from the developer to discuss ways to review the project even though it already has an active permit. While the staff had no objections to the final design of the project, we asked them to return to DCRA and submit the project for review. Again, we have not heard back from them or DCRA on the status of this submission. In addition, the project team assured us that they would make sure the permit for the second half of the project, the office building at 1225 25th Street, would be forwarded to CFA and as well as the upgrades to Francis Field that they agreed to in the PUD, which would be submitted through DC Dept. of Parks and Rec. If we hear that something is coming in for our 16 October meeting, I will let you know.

Sincerely,

Frederick J. Lindstrom
Assistant Secretary

U.S. Commission of Fine Arts
401 F Street, N.W., Suite 312
Washington, DC 20001-2637
www.cfa.gov
Voice: 202-504-2200
Fax: 202-504-2195

(See attached file: Letter to Argo 10Seo08.pdf)

"Gary Griffith"
<gary@smart.net>

09/23/2008 02:00
PM

<Frederick.Lindstrom@cfa.gov>

To

cc

Subject
Construction - Case SL 06-101

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM
401 F STREET, N.W., SUITE 312
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001-2728

202-504-2200
202-504-2195 FAX

10 September 2008

Dear Ms. Argo:

It has come to our attention on several occasions recently that the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has neglected to forward projects for Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) review that are clearly under CFA jurisdiction, and that DCRA has issued permits for construction work on these projects. As a reminder, all public projects (federal and District) as well as all projects within the boundaries defined by the Shipstead-Luce and Old Georgetown Acts are required by federal law to be reviewed by the Commission of Fine Arts.

In addition to bypassing the federally mandated review process, these procedural errors by DCRA lead to unnecessary confusion and delay for the applicants. Occasionally, they also lead to a monetary or legal burden to the government, such as in the unfortunate circumstances resulting from DCRA's premature issuance of a permit in 2006 for the construction of two new residences at 1769 and 1773 North Portal Drive, N.W. (cases #S.L. 06-084 and S.L. 06-089).

Most recently, we note that a large new residential project, WestEnd25 at 1229-1231 25th Street, N.W. (case #S.L. 06-101) was granted a building permit by DCRA without completing CFA review. This project, which overlooks Rock Creek Park, was approved at the concept level by the Commission of Fine Arts at its June 2006 meeting. However, the project was never submitted for final review. It is now under construction. After learning of the issuance of the permit, CFA staff met with the architect and developer to discuss design modifications since the Commission last reviewed it. Other than the expected detailed design development, the major changes include setting back the trellis at the penthouse level, removing a recess on the rear alley elevation, changing the window pattern on all three alley elevations, and modifying the landscape design at the courtyard. CFA staff does not believe that these changes are of a nature to prevent final approval by the Commission. However, we understand that the proposed renovations and addition to the office building at 1227 25th Street N.W., which were also reviewed in concept by the Commission as part of case #S.L. 06-101, have been delayed in construction and that a permit has not been issued for this building. In addition, we have been informed that improvements to the adjacent Francis Field facilities were promised as part of the Planned Unit Development agreement. We expect that these parts of the project will be submitted to CFA for a full final review before a permit is issued by DCRA.

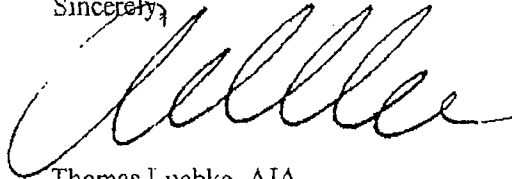
In another current example, we met last week with a representative from the D.C. Public Schools about a window replacement project at the former Stevens

Elementary School at 1050 21st Street, N.W., for which a stop work order was issued by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office. This building, constructed in 1863 as one of the first elementary schools for African-American children, is an individual landmark on both the D.C. Historic Inventory and the National Register of Historic Places. Although the project was never submitted to either the Commission of Fine Arts or the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, a construction permit was issued by DCRA in April 2006. Construction was halted when it was 95% complete. If the project had been presented to CFA and HPO as it has been constructed, it is not likely to have been approved without modifications to the proposed replacement windows—in their color, the treatment of the half-round transoms, and possibly the muntin configuration.

We have tried without success to initiate a conversation with you about our concerns, most recently regarding the Georgetown Harbourside project at 901 30th Street, N.W. (case #O.G. 08-108), where significant modifications to the CFA-approved final design were not submitted for review. We described the details of this case in our letter dated 13 March 2008, to which we have not yet received any response. We believe that it is important for our two agencies to work together to ensure that the review process runs smoothly, and we request that you respond with a proposal for how we can best do so.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we again request the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we may work together to ensure that the appropriate review process occurs as required under federal law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Luebke', written in a cursive style.

Thomas Luebke, AIA
Secretary

Ms. Linda K. Argo, Director
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Government of the District of Columbia
941 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

cc: Daniel Tangherlini, City Administrator
Michael Harrington, Vornado/Charles E. Smith
Allen Lew, Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization

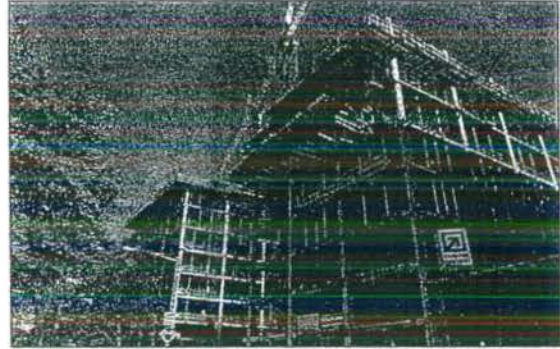
Commission again loses out on review

■ **Development:** Fine Arts official presses for required notice of permit applications

By **ELIZABETH WIENER**
Current Staff Writer

When District permitting authorities allowed a large house to go up overlooking Rock Creek Park two years ago without the required federal review, the city wound up buying the \$1.5 million house on North Portal Drive and taking it down piece by piece. Officials at the D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs vowed the oversight would not be repeated.

But it's happened again, this time with the former Bureau of National Affairs offices at 1227-1231 25th



Bill Petros/The Current

An official with the Commission of Fine Arts says the panel would probably not seek changes to the 25th Street project, but should have gotten notice.

St., which are being converted into upscale residential buildings. That project also overlooks Rock Creek Park, and building permits were again issued without the required federal review.

See **Review**/Page 46

REVIEW

From Page 1

This time around, officials at the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts are upset by the city and developer's failure to present final plans for the project, known as WestEnd25, but say they probably won't request any changes.

A Sept. 10 letter from commission secretary Thomas Luebke says the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs again "bypassed the federally mandated review process" in this and two other recent cases, subjecting the city to "monetary or legal burdens" if the plans must be changed.

Luebke's letter also states that plans for improving adjacent Francis Field, paid for by the developer, also should have gone before the federal commission. Top staffers at Vornado/Charles E. Smith, which is developing the West End project, are now belatedly promising to "involve" the commission in plans for the field.

The snafu has a neighboring civic group, friends of Francis Field, hopping mad. "The developer violated the law by not taking final [plans] to the CFA," Friends president Rebecca Coder wrote in an e-mail to The Current. She said neighbors are especially anxious to weigh in on plans for the field space adjacent to the Francis-Stevens Education Center and swimming pool.

The scruffy field has become the subject of a pitched battle between various park users and residents. Some neighbors want the unkempt green space groomed and landscaped. Some want a dog park, and a youth soccer league is pushing for a better soccer

field. The installation of bright stadium lights and a small parking lot, also apparently without federal review, has only exacerbated the tensions.

A decades-old federal law known as the Shipstead-Luce Act tasks the Commission of Fine Arts with reviewing construction that impacts certain federal enclaves in the city, including the Federal Triangle, National Mall and — notably — Rock Creek Park. The commission's votes are not binding, but the review is mandatory.

In the now-infamous North Portal Drive case, city regulators issued permits for two houses without showing the designs to the federal commission. Neighbors complained, and the commission said one of the houses should not have received approval.

After months of negotiations, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs agreed to reimburse the builder and disassemble the six-bedroom house at taxpayer expense. The department also promised to revise procedures to make sure properties subject to the Shipstead-Luce Act are flagged before building permits are issued.

In the case of the former Bureau of National Affairs buildings, the Fine Arts Commission did review preliminary concept plans two years ago, approving a plan to reface the buildings and add four floors. The commission stated clearly at the time that it would have to review the final plans as well.

The D.C. Zoning Commission then reviewed the project, couched as a planned-unit development, approving some changes. The Zoning Commission also approved an "amenities" package to benefit the surrounding community. It included a landscape plan for Francis Field and a \$150,000 contribution

to pay for the improvements.

Members of the Friends of Francis group said they were looking forward to seeing the final plans for both the buildings and the field so they could comment to the Commission of Fine Arts. But that review never happened.

Instead, last spring neighbors saw con-

"We're not interested in escalating this. We have a long-term relationship. We have to work together."

— Commission secretary Thomas Luebke

struction equipment stripping the façade off the old buildings. Permits had been issued and the reconstruction had started.

"We went through the District's permitting process, DCRA issued the permits, and we began construction," Richard Smith, senior vice president for development at the Vornado/Smith company, said Tuesday.

But after the Fine Arts Commission complained about being left out of the process, "we shared our plans with them, and they were generally in agreement," Smith said. "We are now committed to involving [the commission] and DCRA in our plans regarding the field."

Smith added that he is sure the final result will be a "fabulous project," with 283 luxury rental units and benefits for the community that include not only a landscape plan and \$150,000 for improving the field, but also streetscape improvements for 25th Street and a separate \$150,000 contribution to Francis-Stevens Education Center.

Mike Rupert, a spokesperson for the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, did not respond to a request for comment.

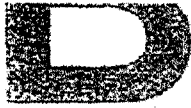
Luebke's Sept. 10 letter also references the historic Stevens school building, where city school authorities began replacing windows in 2006 without consulting the commission or the city preservation office, and the Georgetown Harbour project at 901 30th St., where he said modifications also were made without commission review.

The upshot at the Stevens building was a stop-work order issued when the window work was 95 percent complete, said Steve Callcott of the city preservation office. "A permit was mistakenly issued by DCRA without referral" to the Fine Arts Commission or his office, Callcott said. But the various agencies have since met and worked out a project that was approved "with a few very minor refinements," he said.

At Georgetown Harbour, the completed building has a "much larger mechanical pent-house" than the commission approved. "It turned into more of another story," Luebke said. But he noted that the construction is complete and the commission won't demand changes. "We're not interested in escalating this. We have a long-term relationship. We have to work together."

Luebke's letter to regulatory affairs director Linda Argo simply suggests a meeting "to discuss how we may work together to ensure that the appropriate review process occurs as required under federal law."

"That's how it has worked for decades," he said in the telephone interview. Luebke added he has not received a response to his letter.



Tel (202) 442-4589

Building Permit

THIS PERMIT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE PREMISES
OF THE PROJECT ADDRESS

PERMIT NO. 115948

DATE: 5/19/2008

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 1229-01 25TH ST NW		S 3 L:	SQ: 24	SX: 333	LOT: 433
			WARD:	2 ZONE CR	
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: RENOVATION TO EXISTING 6 STORY OFFICE BUILDING CONVERTING TO RESIDENTIAL WITH 4 STORY ADDITION AND 10 STORY INFILL FOR NEW 10 STORY BUILDING WITH 236 PARKING SPACES IN BELOW GRADE PARKING GARAGE ALL AS PER ATTACHED THIRD PARTY REVIEWED AND APPROVED PLANS.					
PERMIT TYPE: Alteration and Repair	PLANS (Y/N): Y	EXISTING USE: Office		PROPOSED USE: Multifamily (> 2 Units)	
PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO OWNER: VORNADEI CHARLES SMITH				PERMIT FEE: \$497,119.58	
AGENT NAME: JOHN GIUSEPPE 703-934-4606					
CONDITIONS / RESTRICTIONS:					

Detail of \$497,119 building permit issued "in error" by DCRA on June 19, 2008.

Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Permit Center

941 North Capitol St. NE Room 2100
Washington DC 20002

Tel: (202) 442-4589

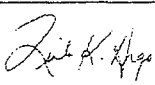
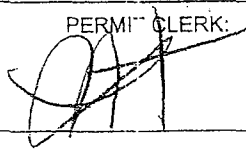
B

Building Permit

THIS PERMIT IS VALID ONLY FOR THE PREMISES
OF THE PROJECT ADDRESS

PERMIT NO. 115948

DATE: 6/19/2008

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 1229-31 25TH ST NW		S S L: SQ: 24 SX: 833 LOT: 833 WARD: 2 ZONE CR	
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: RENOVATION TO EXISTING 6 STORY OFFICE BUILDING CONVERTING TO RESIDENTIAL WITH 4 STORY ADDITION AND 10 STORY INFILL, FOR NEW 10 STORY BUILDING WITH 236 PARKING SPACES IN BELOW GRADE PARKING GARAGE ALL AS PER ATTACHED THIRD PARTY REVIEWED AND APPROVED PLANS.			
PERMIT TYPE: Alteration and Repair	PLANS (Y/N): Y	EXISTING USE: Office	PROPOSED USE: Multifamily (> 2 units)
PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO OWNER: VORNADE/ CHARLES SMITH		PERMIT FEE: \$497,119.59	
AGENT NAME: JOHN GIUSEPPE 703-934-4606			
CONDITIONS / RESTRICTIONS: ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT BUILDING CODES ; ALL CONSTRUCTION DONE ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS ; ALL WORK IN PUBLIC SPACE REQUIRE A SEPARATE PUBLIC SPACE PERMIT. TO REPORT WASTE, FRAUD OR ABUSE BY ANY DC GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, CALL THE DC INSPECTOR GENERAL AT 1-800-521-1639:			
DIRECTOR:  Linda K. Argo		PERMIT CLERK: 	EXPIRATION DATE: 6/19/2009

CONDITIONS: As a condition precedent to the issuance of this permit, the owner agrees to conform with all conditions set forth herein, and to perform the work authorized hereby in accordance with the approved application and plans on file with the District Government and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations of the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia has the right to enter upon the property and to inspect all the work authorized by this permit and to require any change in construction which may be necessary to ensure compliance with the permit and with all the applicable regulations of the District of Columbia. Work authorized under the Permit must start within one (1) year of the date appearing on this permit or this permit is automatically void. If work is not started, any application for partial refund must be made within six months of the date appearing on this permit.

THIS PERMIT MUST ALWAYS BE CONSPICUOUSLY DISPLAYED AT ADDRESS OF WORK UNTIL WORK IS COMPLETED.

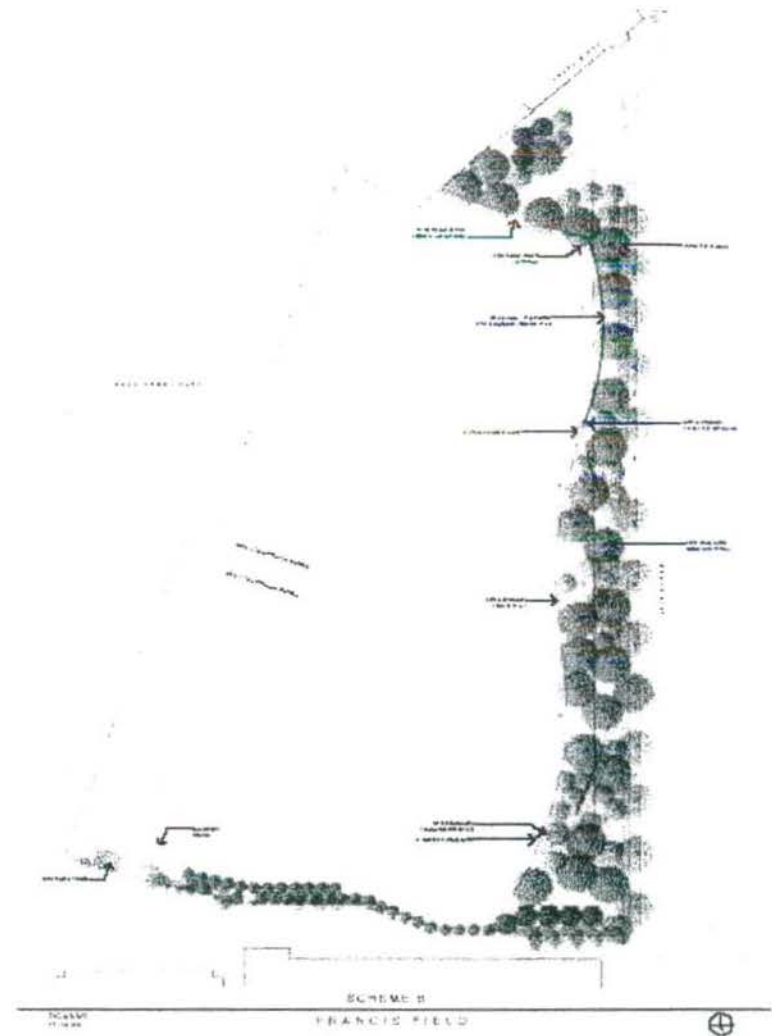
NOTIFY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR THE DAY THE WORK STARTS. PHONE (202)442-9557 at 941 NORTH CAPITOL ST NE WASHINGTON DC 20002

Separate permits are required for all Plumbing, Refrigeration, Gas Fitting, and Electrical Work.

PUD Evaluation Standards

11 DCMR Sec. 2403.7

A project amenity is one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience, or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors.



2403 PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

- 2403.1 The Commission will evaluate and approve, disapprove, or modify a PUD application according to the standards in this section.
- 2403.2 The applicant shall have the burden of proof to justify the granting of the application according to these standards.
- 2403.3 The impact of the project on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to be unacceptable, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project.
- 2403.4 The Commission shall find that the proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with other adopted public policies and active programs related to the subject site.
- 2403.5 In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, the Commission shall also evaluate the specific public benefits and project amenities of the proposed development, which features may in some instances overlap.
- 2403.6 Public benefits are superior features of a proposed PUD that benefit the surrounding neighborhood or the public in general to a significantly greater extent than would likely result from development of the site under the matter-of-right provisions of this title.
- 2403.7 A project amenity is one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience, or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors.
- 2403.8 In deciding a PUD application, the Commission shall judge, balance, and reconcile the relative value of the project amenities and public benefits offered, the degree of development incentives requested, and any potential adverse effects according to the specific circumstances of the case.
- 2403.9 Public benefits and project amenities of the proposed PUD may be exhibited and documented in any of the following or additional categories:
- (a) Urban design, architecture, landscaping, or creation or preservation of open spaces;
 - (b) Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization;
 - (c) Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access, transportation management measures, connections to public transit service, and other measures to mitigate adverse traffic impacts;
 - (d) Historic preservation of private or public structures, places, or parks;
 - (e) Employment and training opportunities;
 - (f) Housing and affordable housing;
 - (g) Social services/facilities;
 - (h) Environmental benefits, such as:
 - (1) Storm water runoff controls in excess of those required by Stormwater Management Regulations,

DPR Meetings for Francis Field

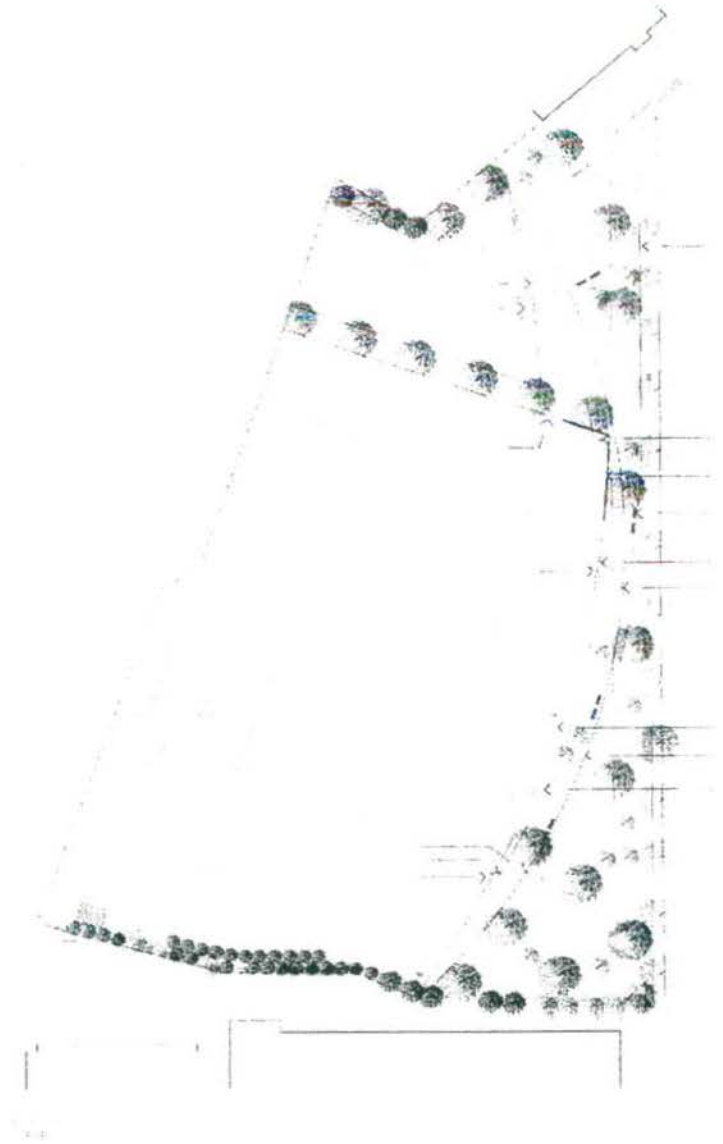
Stakeholder I, July 15, 2008

Stakeholder II, Sept. 11, 2008

Stakeholder III, Oct. 7, 2008

Public, November 11, 2008
(Plans A and B)

ANC-2A, December 17, 2008
(Plan C approved, but with no
stadium-style lighting.)



October 11, 2008

Dear Director Ray:

We want to record our disappointment with the meeting held Tuesday, October 7, to discuss the architectural plans for the improvements to Francis Field and, more generally, to the way that this matter seems to be progressing. We seem to have moved backwards considerably from the general consensus we thought had been achieved at our first meeting in July, 2008, with representatives of DPR and the sports interests, and from the first set of landscape plans presented at the second meeting in September, 2008, which more accurately reflected the consensus that had been reached.

As we pointed out at the July meeting, improvements to Francis Field must comply with the dictates of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia, which became law in March 2007. The Comprehensive Plan makes clear in numerous places that existing parks are to be updated and improved “in response to changing demographics . . . , community needs and preferences,” so that they “are responsive to the preferences and needs of the neighborhoods around the parks.” (See policies PROS 1.2.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.2.1).

Probably no neighborhood in the city has changed more over recent years than the neighborhood around Francis Field. The area has gone from industrial and commercial, dominated by auto body shops, a junkyard and a few offices, to primarily residential today. The West End neighborhood – and specifically Precinct 2 of Ward 2 – has added 1,366 new residential units in the last eight years. But Francis Field has not changed substantially since 1963, when it was in the center of an industrial area. It is still used principally as a sports field by people from outside the neighborhood.

In accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, it is time to change the uses of the park to reflect the preferences and needs of the neighborhood around the park, as it has essentially become the front and back yards for over a thousand D.C. residents. The increase in residents has also increased the number of pets in the area and the need for a park along the lines of the Rose Park, used for dog walking, sports playing, kite flying, reading and Tai Chi, not an athletic field like the Montgomery County Sports Plex.

As you know, the Friends of Francis Field (FFF) represent the interests of the neighborhood, and it has been officially designated by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A as the community representative for Francis Field.

We must also point out again that the immediate reason that we are meeting together – the contribution of a landscape plan and \$150,000 for improvements by the developer of 1229-31 25th Street – is because of the residents in the area. FFF and residents of Whitman Place attended all the zoning hearings on the development and agreed to the development, including the increase in height for the buildings and the inconvenience attendant to the construction, in return for the commitment from the developer to make those contributions to improve the neighborhood by fixing up the park for the residents. In other words, the residents, not out-of-

neighborhood sports interests, are responsible for the contributions we are now discussing how to spend.

As we made clear at the first meeting in July, stadium-style sports lighting at the park is simply not acceptable to the residents. It is a nuisance to the residents around the park and inconsistent with residential use of the park. Also, as we pointed out, those lights are illegal, never having been approved by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts.

At the first meeting, the representatives of the sports interests were asked and made clear that nighttime lighting for sports events was not important to them. And, Director Ray said he heard the group on the lights and would address the issue.

Based on that understanding, the representatives of FFF indicated that they were not opposed to the daytime use of the field for organized youth sports, so long as those uses could be accommodated with sufficient passive recreational space for residential use. We agreed that the architect should try to draft plans to balance the athletic and passive uses. The architects did so, and presented their preliminary plans at our second meeting in early September. As we indicated at the September meeting, we believed that the plan drawn up by the architects showing one field properly balanced those uses. We were therefore extremely disappointed by the most recent plans presented at the October 7 meeting. Those plans tip the balance heavily away from residential uses to active sports uses, increasing the size of the fields and retaining stadium-style lighting for nighttime sports. We find both plans unacceptable.

Thus, after discussion, the FFF board has adopted the following positions with regard to the two landscape architecture plans that were presented at the October 7 meeting.

1. FFF remains opposed to any plan that includes stadium-style sports lighting and to the use of the field for nighttime (after dark) sports. We cannot be in favor of any plan that continues to show these sports lights, which were erected illegally in the first place.
2. FFF is opposed to the plan that shows two soccer fields, each 50x75 yards. This plan does not allow sufficient space for passive recreation, and would further contribute to the parking and noise nuisances that already exist.
3. FFF supports a plan with a single, multi-use field, but not of the 58x100 yard dimension shown on the architect's second drawing. We note that this field is substantially larger than the existing soccer field at the park. We would support a single playing field of approximately 50x75 yards, or of the size similar to the one shown in the architect's one-field plan presented at the September meeting. This would allow a fair balance between active and passive uses, would fully satisfy the needs of the schools, softball and youth soccer.

We support and look forward to a community-wide public meeting in late October. We believe that the plan we support – that is, the one-field plan from the September meeting – should be presented for the community to consider at that meeting. We would appreciate hearing more about the date, time, place and ground rules for this meeting, including the amount of time individuals and groups would have to speak or present their positions.

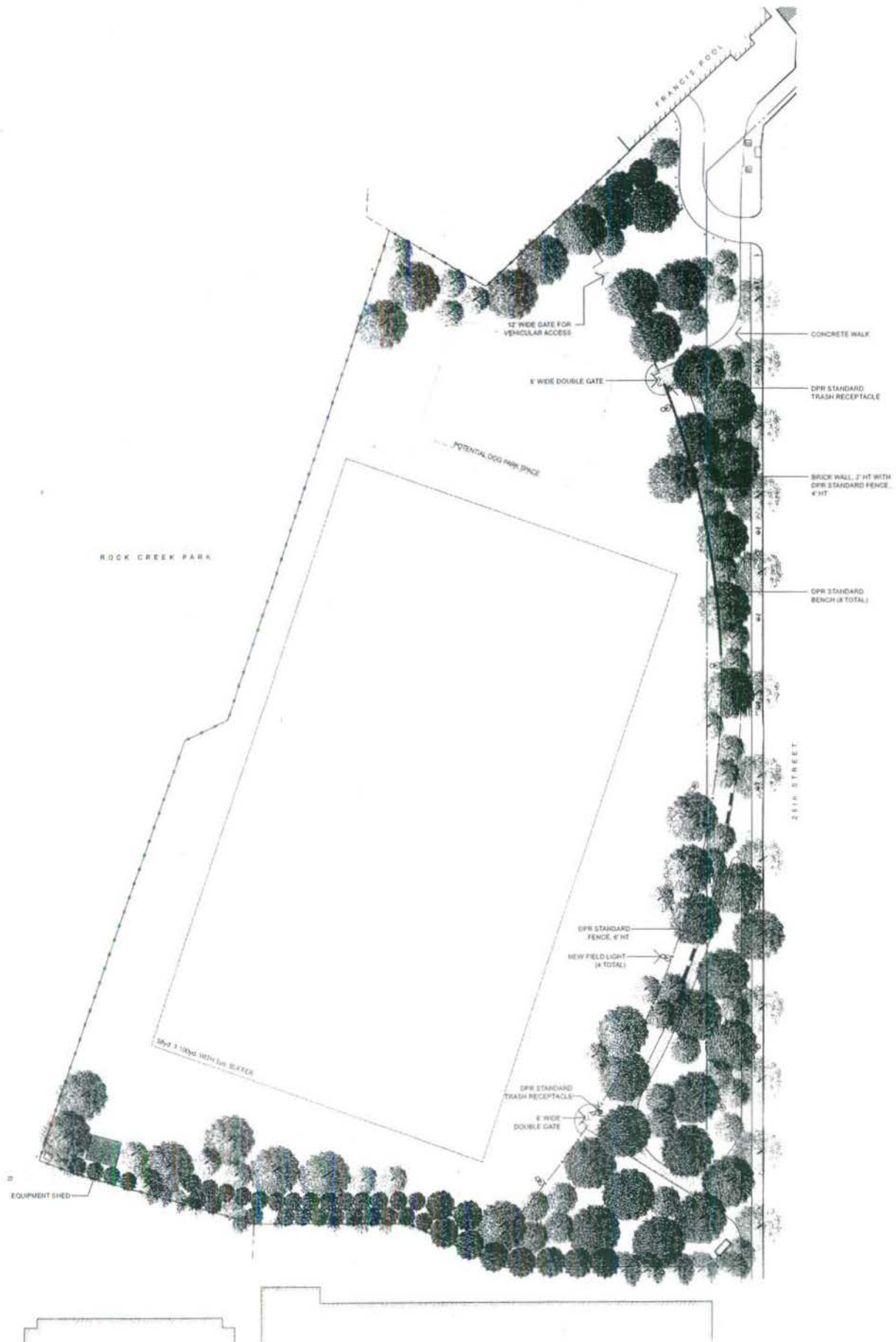
We also recognize the timing to keep the developer on schedule for its Certificate of Occupancy and will do our part to help make this happen and moving it through the ANC process. In that regard, we have learned that the developer and his architect intend to appear before the CFA on their project at the CFA's meeting of January 22, 2009. We believe it would be appropriate to present the plans to the ANC in January as well.

We have held from the beginning that developing a plan for Francis Field would take some discussion and compromise, and we continue to approach this plan with that realization. But we cannot compromise on the central requirement that the design must respond to the changed needs and preferences of the residential neighborhood around the park.

Sincerely,

Rebecca

Rebecca Coder
President
Friends of Francis Field



SCHEME A
FRANCIS FIELD



SCHEME B

FRANCIS FIELD

Letter of Mchael Thomas, the ANC-2A02 commissioner who negotiated the March 2007 agreement in the zoning case, in OPPOSITION to the DPR plans presented on Nov 11, 2008.

November 14, 2008

Dear Director Ray and Ms Stesney,

Thank you for the opportunity to add my comments to the record relating to improvements to Francis Field.

During 2006 and the first several months of 2007, I served as the ANC commissioner for ANC2A02, which includes Francis Field. In that capacity I participated in a series of meetings with the developer of the apartments now being built on 25th Street, with senior members of DPR staff, with interested members of the community, and with the ANC. I wrote the ANC resolution that supported the development on certain conditions, and I carried the ANC position to the Zoning Commission. It was at my urging that the developer added \$50,000 in amenity money to an initial offer of \$100,000, to be spent on physical upgrades of the field.

Our discussions with DPR staff in 2007 were very cordial, and we reached two basic understandings: First, that the neighborhood was in the process of changing to a predominantly residential neighborhood, and wanted to have amenities that corresponded with that change, to include trees, seating, activity areas including dog runs, and the like; and second, that DPR would, in April 2007, hold one or more public scoping meetings to get input from the neighborhood. That was pretty much required by the new Comprehensive Plan, which requires recreational facilities to reflect the needs and desires of the neighborhoods in which they are located. No final plans were agreed to, but on the basis of the encouragement I felt from the meetings with DPR, I was happy to press for more money from the developer and carry the case for the package to my fellow commissioners and to the Zoning Commission.

In the event, the planned public meeting was not held last year, you became the new director of DPR, all DPR records and memory of our meetings were apparently lost and forgotten, and you set out to upgrade Francis Field, but in a very different way: as a facility dedicated to league athletics, to include stadium lighting. Needless to say, that is a plan contrary to both the

understandings I thought we had reached, and to the strong preferences of a majority of the residents of West End from whom I have heard, both last year and this.

No one I know wants to eliminate league use of Francis Field. But the two plans you presented at the meeting on November 10 both substantially enlarge the percentage of land dedicated to athletic field, and contemplate new stadium lights. The lights that are presently on the field have been the cause of disruption, both by dint of the floodlighting itself and the noise of the activities illuminated, for the existing residences facing the field. New lights would have similar effect, but now would disturb the residents of 225 new apartments for whom the field will be a front yard. Your Scheme A would allow a small area that could be used for a dog run but would enlarge the current field from about 50x75 yds to 58x100 yds, squeezing out other possible uses. Scheme B, which uses all the available land left after landscaping to athletic fields, essentially hands what could be a multi-use neighborhood park over to leagues made up predominantly of folks who don't live in the neighborhood. Again, we want to encourage athletics, but (a) the Comp Plan gives priority to the needs and wishes of the immediate neighborhood, and (b) because these leagues have to transport people from outside the neighborhood, parking will be impossible.

I have a copy of the letter Rebecca Coder (our new ANC commissioner) sent you on behalf of Friends of Francis Field on 10 October. I concur in that position.

In the end, diverse needs can be accommodated in an improved Francis Field. The major changes that have to be made, if we start from your Scheme A, is to cut the field back to what it currently is, and eliminate the stadium lighting. To be frank, I would not have supported amenity money going to the field if it was to be spent on larger athletic fields and stadium lights, and I would have encouraged the neighborhood to organize to stop that plan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Michael Thomas

THE FOGGY BOTTOM CURRENT

ANC backs revised plan for Francis Field update

By IAN THOMS
Current Staff Writer

At one point during the Foggy Bottom-West End advisory neighborhood commission's Dec. 17 meeting, after a commissioner suggested that narrow interest groups should not decide the future of Francis Field, the discussion dissolved into angry exchanges and defensive declarations.

But by the end of the debate, residents cheered for the commission — twice.

First they applauded after commissioners voted unanimously to oppose lights for Francis Field, at 25th and N streets. And they cheered again when the commission voted in favor of a plan offered by the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation that includes an upgraded youth soccer field and a 10,000-square-foot dog park, the proposal preferred by neighborhood groups like the Friends of Francis Field.

"I'm moved by the fact that we have four neighborhood groups here tonight who all completely agree," said commission chair Asher Corson.



Bill Petros/The Current

Neighbors of the West End park fought against plans that called for new lighting and larger fields.

The parks department is currently developing plans to upgrade Francis Field. Funding for the project is partly coming from an amenities package brokered between the community and Vornado/Charles E. Smith as part of the company's planned-unit development at 1227 25th St.

Vornado/Charles E. Smith agreed to provide a landscape architecture plan and \$150,000 to pay for improvements to the field.

Though the developer's contribution will not cover the entire cost of the project, and though the parks

See **Francis**/Page 19

FRANCIS

From Page 1

department does not currently have any funding in its budget for the field, officials decided to take the opportunity to plan a more complete overhaul.

To make up the funding gap, "DPR is looking forward to working with community partners," according to spokesperson John Stokes.

In part for that reason, and because some of them negotiated with Vornado/Charles E. Smith for the amenities, many in the community are particularly passionate about the project and its potential impact on the neighborhood, such as increased traffic and noise.

"We're not going to raise money for a semi-professional soccer field," said Gary Griffith, secretary of Friends of Francis Field.

The parks department initially presented two concept plans to the community, one with a 55-by-100-yard soccer field and a dog park, and the other with two 50-by-75-yard youth soccer fields and a softball diamond. During the neighborhood commission's meeting, however, the agency offered a third option: a 58-by-100-yard soccer pitch and a 10,000-square-foot dog park. Softball could also be played on the field. All three of the agency's proposals showed lights for the playing field.

Residents immediately professed greater support for the new option,

though sans stadium lighting and, if possible, with a smaller playing field. They praised the large dog park, saying many residents are hard-pressed to find places to walk their dogs.

The neighborhood commission ended up voting in favor of the new option, without the stadium lighting. It did not comment specifically on the size of the field.

Rebecca Coder, president of Friends of Francis Field and a neighborhood commissioner-elect, said neighbors always backed a playing field for children, with priority going to those from nearby Francis-Stevens Education Center and School Without Walls, but they did not want the parks department to turn Francis Field into a sports complex for all ages.

"It's not to become what we've described as a mini-Nationals Stadium," Coder said.

Some residents were concerned the city was giving equal or greater consideration to youth leagues, which are struggling to find playing space in the city.

"We're all for this," said Griffith, "except the sports leagues think this is their field."

But the sports leagues were noticeably absent from the neighborhood commission's meeting, aside from Stoddert Soccer, which was represented by Len Oliver, the league's director of coaching.

Oliver took a nonconfrontational tone during the meeting, saying simply that the field would be adequate

for younger players — though not teenagers — and that Stoddert is happy to see any new field in the District. He did say, however: "It's a shame we have to drive 50 miles" back and forth to play at a large soccer complex in Germantown.

The only real fireworks erupted when outgoing commissioner Lowell Thomas, who represents the single-member district that includes Francis Field, suggested that the commission consult with area residents to gauge broader community opinion about the field.

"Your group has been so narrowly focused that ... you've taken to characterizing it as your backyard," Thomas said. "I want to ensure that everybody has equal access ... and the field is not limited by a narrow interest group."

Several residents took exception to Thomas' comments. They said the neighborhood is simply ensuring its views receive consideration.

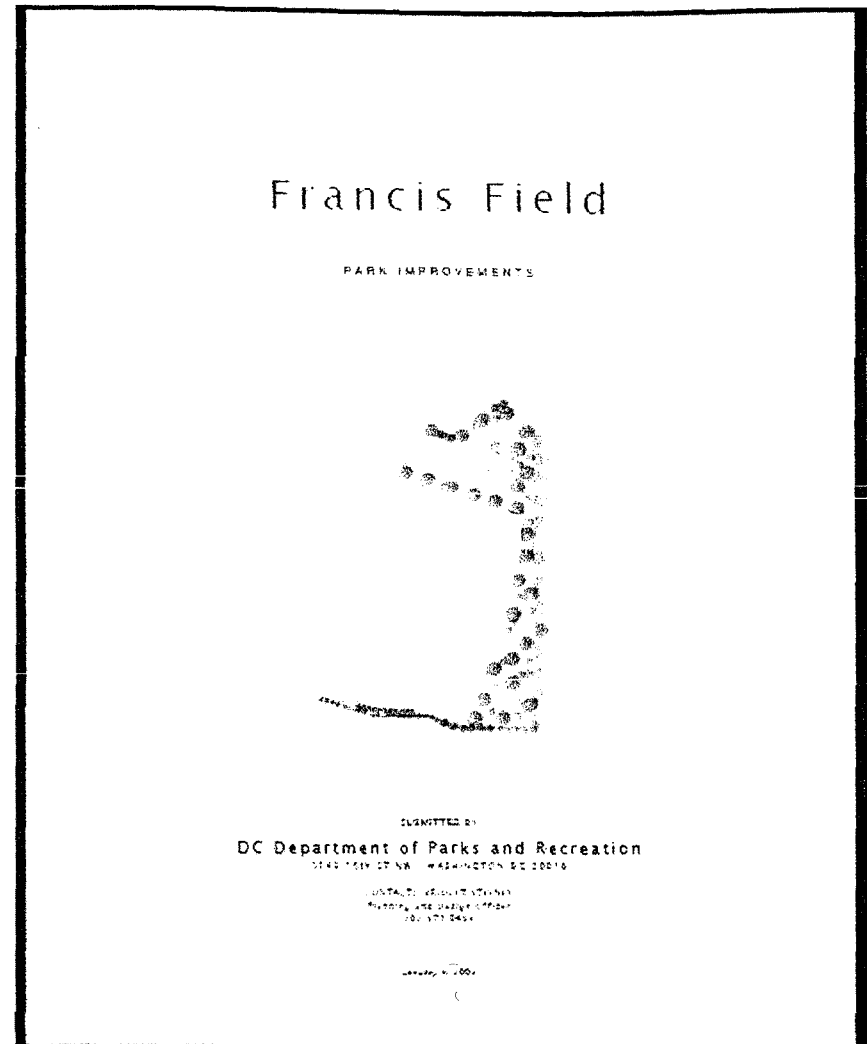
"The whole idea of a PUD amenity is not to be good for the city in general," said Griffith. "The idea has to be to compensate the immediate neighbors."

Thomas then defended his work as a commissioner. "I have not been an absentee ANC," he said. "I haven't been sitting on my rump. I've been walking these streets."

In the end, however, Thomas and the neighborhood groups found themselves on the same side — in favor of a youth-sized soccer field and a dog park, and against the lights.

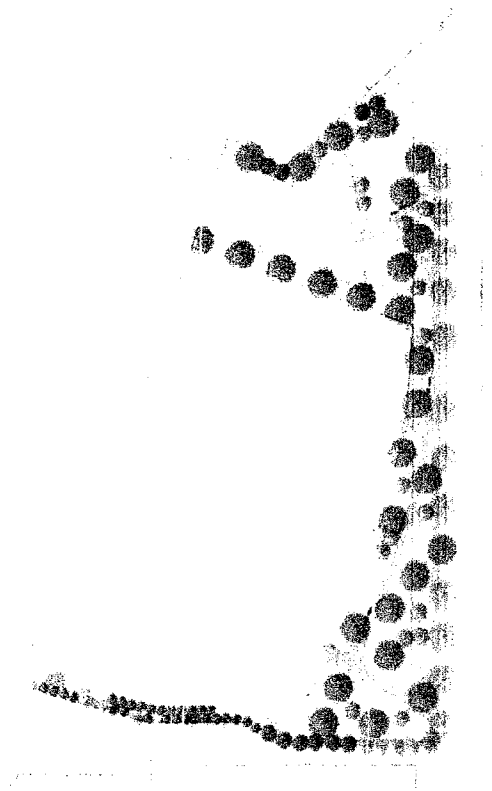
DPR Submission to CFA January 2009

“DPR has developed a master plan that will guide the use of Francis Field for the next 10-15 years. The master plan will be implemented in phases as Agency resources become available.”



Francis Field

PARK IMPROVEMENTS



SUBMITTED BY

DC Department of Parks and Recreation
3149 16th ST NW WASHINGTON DC 20010

CONTACT: BRIDGET STESNEY
Planning and Design Officer
202.671.0453

January 8, 2009



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Parks and Recreation



January 8, 2009

Earl A. Powell, III
Chair
U. S. Commission of Fine Arts
National Building Museum
401 F Street NW, Suite 312
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners:

The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) requests the Commission of Fine Art's review of our master planning efforts at Francis Field, located at 25th and N Streets, NW. Over the last six months, DPR developed a master plan which balances the needs for recreational space in the District, with the needs of surrounding community.

This master plan, implemented in phases, will guide future improvements at Francis Field. At your January 2009 meeting, DPR is requesting three actions for Francis Field:

1. the review of the concept master plan;
2. the review of interim, phase one improvements of the master plan; and
3. Commission approval of all future Francis Field improvements, including construction documents and specifications, be conducted at the staff level.

Information about both the master plan and the first phase of improvements are included in the attached booklet. We look forward to discussing the project with you later this month.

Sincerely,

Jason E. Turner
Chief, Planning and Capital Projects

FRANCIS FIELD MASTER PLAN

Introduction

Francis Field, adjacent to the Rock Creek Park, was a transfer-of-jurisdiction to the District of Columbia from the National Park Service in 1951 for recreational purposes. In 2008, the District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) launched a master planning effort for Francis Field. Located in the District's west end at 25th and N Street, NW, the field is one of the only large open spaces in this area of the city. Francis Field must meet dual purposes: the needs of the surrounding neighbors as well as the need for outdoor athletic space for District-wide residents and activities. The 2008 master planning efforts have resulted in a new master plan for Francis Field which will meet both these needs and guide future development at this critical open space by improving the athletic fields and adding open space.

Background and Existing Conditions & Facilities

The District of Columbia is blessed with more open space than most other major cities in the country. However, the District is last in athletic field space, and each year the District has a difficult time meeting the field needs of its residents.

Francis Field is a heavily used recreation space. Currently, there is a softball field and multi-purpose athletic field which are used by field neighbors and District residents. In 2008, more than 200 permits were issued for Francis Field. Uses of Francis Field included youth soccer leagues, practice space for Francis Junior High School, adult softball, frisbee, and rugby.

The fields are extremely deteriorated and are not in optimal playing condition. The field surface is compacted, resulting in poor drainage and difficulty in maintaining the grass. Improving athletic fields across the District for all residents is a high priority of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Concept Master Plan

The master plan concept is the result of a collaboration between DPR, west end residents, and recreational users of the field. The design evolved through a series of working group meetings and community meetings. The working group worked hard to achieve consensus as to the acceptable ratio of passive space to field athletic space.

Francis Field plays a critical role in meeting recreation needs of the District of Columbia. DPR's goal for Francis Field is to meet District needs for athletic space, as well as the desires of the surrounding community for more passive open space. DPR has developed a master plan that will guide the use of Francis Field for the next 10-15 years. The master plan will be implemented in phases as Agency resources are available.

Features of the Master Plan Include:

- Streetscape and landscape improvements along 25th Street, NW that include an enhanced pedestrian area;
- A 58x100 yard multi-purpose athletic field;
- A softball field (that does not have a skinned infield);
- Approximately 10,000 square feet for a future determined use, such as a dog park;
- New, state-of-the-art ballfield lighting along the 25th street, NW side of the field; and
- New park amenities such as streetscape lighting, trash cans, a drinking fountain, and new steel picket fencing.

U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

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29 January 2009

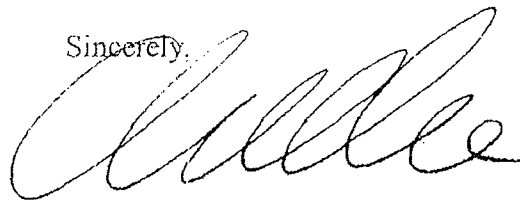
Dear Mr. Ray:

In its meeting of 22 January, the Commission of Fine Arts reviewed the master plan for improvements to Francis Field, located at 25th and N Streets, NW, as well as the concept design for Phase I of the improvements. The Commission approved the master plan and the concept design for Phase I with recommendations as described below.

The Commission members commented that the effect of the proposed improvements will be to create a green buffer surrounding an active playing field; they asked that more attention be given to the design of these areas as a neighborhood park. In particular, they recommended that the wider part of the south end be developed as a gathering space, perhaps by creating an open lawn ringed by trees and benches; and that the north end be fully integrated into the design of the site as part of the neighborhood park.

The Commission looks forward to seeing the further development of the design in the next submission, which should include a site lighting proposal prepared in consultation with affected parties such as the National Park Service and the local community. As always, the staff is available to assist you.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Luebke, AIA
Secretary

Clark E. Ray, Director
D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation
3149 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010

cc: Jason Turner, D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation
Don Hoover, Oculus
Peter May, National Park Service
Gary Griffith, Friends of Francis Field
Richard B. Smith, Vornado/Charles E. Smith

Editorial, Current Newspapers January 28, 2009

“But to use money designed to compensate a neighborhood for overdevelopment to prepare a field opposed by its neighbors is patently inappropriate.”

10 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2009

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THE FOGGY BOTTOM CURRENT

Davis Kennedy/Publisher & Editor

Chris Kain/Managing Editor

Community amenity?

Planned-unit developments get some wiggle room in following the city's zoning regulations; in exchange, they offer some community amenities to their development's neighbors — to the immediate community and often to the city as a whole.

Ideally, those interests are shared. But in the case of Francis Field in the West End, immediate neighbors are losing out to city-wide interests. The developer of a condominium on 25th Street offered \$150,000 in improvements to the field, including a landscape plan, trees and park furniture. Great, said neighbors, who requested some green space and a dog park — as well as the removal of controversial field lights — to suit the increasingly residential neighborhood. But the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation has configured its landscape plan in a way that nullifies the wishes of the immediate community — expressed in a unanimous advisory neighborhood commission vote — in order to fill a citywide need for youth sports fields.

The department's plan, agency officials contend, does not use the agreed-on \$150,000 to pay for field improvements or lights; that funding will come later.

But the plan squeezes the amenity-funded improvements into a tiny strip in order to make room for two fields, though neighbors supported just one field, a combined soccer/softball space. Members of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts even refused to call the funded space parkland, dubbing it a “green edge” to the athletic fields.

There is a citywide shortage of useful fields available for youth sports, and the Foggy Bottom-West End advisory neighborhood commission has supported a plan with a field in recognition of that scarcity. But to use money designed to compensate a neighborhood for overdevelopment to prepare a field opposed by its neighbors is patently inappropriate. We urge Council member Jack Evans to intervene to ensure the neighborhood commission's plan is adopted.

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Government of the District of Columbia
Foggy Bottom and West End
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A



c/o West End Library

1101 24th Street NW

Washington, DC 20037

February 5, 2009

Clark E. Ray, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
3149 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010

VIA: Electronic Mail to clark.ray@dc.gov (Hard Copy to Follow)

Dear Director Ray:

In further consideration of the DC Department of Parks & Recreation's presentation to this Commission on December 17, 2008, our Commission requests and advises that the existing stadium lights on Francis Field, located on 25th Street NW between M and N Streets, 1) be removed, 2) not be turned on until they are removed, and 3) not be replaced by other stadium-style lights.

This request supports, enlarges upon, and provides a more complete rationale for the resolution passed by a unanimous vote, 6-0, by this Commission at a duly noticed meeting with quorum present, on December 17, 2008, when the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) requested to present plans for the improvement of Francis Field as required under § 1-309.10(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Code. This requires DPR and other DC agencies to submit "comprehensive plans" and "public improvements" affecting our neighborhood to our Commission for review and advice.

This current resolution, which is presented in the form of this letter, was passed, at a duly noticed meeting with quorum present, by a unanimous vote of our Commission, 5-0, on January 28, 2009. It follows logically and is directly related to the resolution of December 17, 2008, which stated that no new stadium lights be erected as part of any of the three plans submitted by DPR for the improvement of Francis Field as required by the order of the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia in case ZC 06-35.

This Commission's resolution of December 17, 2008, and today's enlarging resolution was and is based on consideration of extensive testimony by members of four separate neighborhood organizations, statistics, historical research, and recent testimony from DPR in another public venue.

1. Nuisance Issues. There was extensive testimony from residents that the night lighting of the Francis Field was a long-standing nuisance issue in the community. The current stadium lights shine in residents windows, and provide for the late-night use of the field by adult groups who are often boisterous and inebriated. Some of these groups are organized by an out-of-district for-profit corporation.

According to the testimony, this noise, parking pressure, and most of all the intrusive lights, affect the quality of life of the neighborhood including the peace, quiet, and tranquility of residents. There was unrefuted testimony that the present lights can only be turned off by the physical presence of a National Park Service ranger, and the lights are often left on long after sports play has concluded, adding not only to the nuisance, but to energy waste and inefficiency.

Testimony, which was unrefuted, stated that the night use of the field was not primarily by school groups or children, key constituencies supported by the ANC. Instead, the use was mainly by adult softball leagues, whose season extended far into the fall, much later than National League baseball. Several nearby neighbors testified that these leagues create not only a noise and light pollution issue, but also parking pressure on the neighborhood, which grown by more than 1,300 residential units in the last five years, more than 700 of these units within one block of Francis Field.

New testimony in another venue, by a DPR official before the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) on January 22, 2009, provided Departmental confirmation of the knowledge and veracity of this situation as a neighborhood nuisance. In presenting DPR's plans to the CFA, Jason Turner, a DPR official, testified that there had been "miscues" with the neighborhood in relation to the existing stadium lights, and described the new lights that DPR would like to install as "more community-sensitive." This statement on its face indicates that the existing lights are less community-sensitive than desired.

2. Neighborhood Will. Representatives of four different neighborhood groups, representing a wide cross-section of the Foggy Bottom and West End community, testified during the December 17, 2008, meeting. Each opposed stadium lights.

Several representatives of the Friends of Francis Field (FFF) testified, both to the nuisance factor of the existing lights and the neighborhood's desire to have no sports lights in the master plan. FFF was a party in the zoning case that ordered this new landscape plan for Francis Field, and with ANC-2A, jointly negotiated the amenity package that mandates this master plan that was the subject of the DPR presentation.

Also testifying in opposition to the lights was the Foggy Bottom Association (FBA), the largest community group in our neighborhood. FBA, with more than 300 members, is well known and respected by our Commission, and its opinions have an excellent history of representing the sentiment of the neighborhood.

A representative of the West End Citizens Association, another organization well-known and respected by our Commission, provided historical perspective indicating the West End neighborhood has had a long history of opposition to the stadium lights on Francis Field; and this group's representative also opposed any plan for continued use of stadium lights.

The fourth neighborhood group testifying in opposition to a new plan incorporating stadium lights was the West End Dog Group. Its representatives presented survey information indicating a large number of dog owners in the West End, and joined the other three groups in opposition to stadium lights.

As additional confirmation of this unified neighborhood testimony, *The Foggy Bottom Current*, in reporting this December 17 meeting in its issue of December 31, 2008 (Volume IV, No.3, Page 1, 19), quoted Asher Corson, then the chair of our Commission, as stating, "I'm moved by the fact that we have four neighborhood groups here tonight who all completely agree."

3. Absence of Support for Stadium Lights. During the testimony at the December 17, 2008, meeting, there was no testimony in support of stadium lights. The two representatives from DPR, Bridget Stesney and Melissa McKnight, made no statements or arguments in support of the existing or planned stadium lighting. Nor did Len Oliver, a representative of DC Stoddert Soccer, who testified, in fact, that night lighting was not necessary for youth soccer play.

4. The 2006 Comprehensive Plan and Current Neighborhood Demographics. During the testimony on December 17, 2008, several residents and representatives of interest groups mentioned the 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the District of Columbia, and cited and submitted the text of four sections, specifically stating the recreational facilities in the District must change as neighborhood demographics and needs change. These are policies PROS-1.2.3; PROS-2.1.4; PROS- 2.1.5, and PROS-2.2.1.

The growth and transformation of the West End from a light-industrial to residential neighborhood is well-known to our Commission. A minimum of 1,360 new residential units have been added, or were under construction in the West End, during the period from 2000 to the present, and 806 of these are within one city block from Francis Field.

5. Majority Opposition to Stadium Lights during DPR "Comment Period." On November 10, 2008, DPR held a public meeting at the West End Branch Library to unveil its proposed landscape plans, and announced a seven-day comment period, during which residents were invited and allowed to state their views on the plans by email, telephone, traditional mail, or fax. Two plans were presented, Plan A, with a single field, and Plan B, with two soccer fields.

Copies of these comments were obtained under a Freedom of Information Act request by the Friends of Francis Field, who presented an analysis showing that the DC Stoddert Soccer league launched an email campaign among its teams, resulting in 74 votes for Plan B, while the neighborhood effort in support of Plan A received 65 favorable comments. However, of the 74 comments for Plan B, only 44 mentioned lighting in any way, while 50 of the comments for Plan A specifically mentioned an opposition to stadium lighting.

Thus, even with an out-of-district email campaign by soccer interests, DPR cannot claim majority support for stadium lighting. In fact, the comments against stadium lighting were in the majority, 50 to 44; and many of those who made comments in support of lights or "improved lighting" identified themselves as living outside Ward 2.

6. Lack of Statutory Review for Existing Lights. Supporting our request to remove and extinguish the existing lights is evidence showing that the lights now in place never underwent the required architectural review by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA).

As a letter of November 26, 2008, from secretary of the CFA shows, the CFA has had jurisdiction over public parks in the District for more than 100 years, and federal law required and continues to require all major construction or plans affecting public parks to be submitted for review.

CFA staff states that the plan to erect the existing lights on Francis Field never was submitted for this statutorily required review, nor were the lights and lightstands themselves. FFF, in another request made under the Freedom of Information Act, has shown that DPR is also unable to show evidence to the contrary.

Conclusion on Stadium Lights

Given this evidence and testimony that, 1) the existing lights were never properly permitted, 2) that they were erected in contravention of federal law on federally owned land, 3) that they are a nuisance to residents and out of character with the changing nature of the neighborhood, 4), that they are admitted by DPR to be resident-unfriendly, 5) that comments solicited by DPR show that a majority of respondents oppose these lights, 6), that testimony heard by this Commission shows that the will of the neighborhood is to have no stadium lights on Francis Field, 7) that the Comprehensive Plan requires that recreational facilities must change with the changing demographics of neighborhoods, and 8), that the

existing lights would not be replaced if DPR honored the previous resolution of our Commission, we respectfully ask, request, and advise that the existing lights be removed as soon as possible, and not again be turned on prior to their removal.

Our Commission requests that for all of the reasons cited and explained above, that this Commission's resolution of December 17, 2008, be honored by DPR, and that no new stadium lights be erected on Francis Field as part of the new master plan.

Dog Park

The new master Plan C for Francis Field, submitted by DPR on the evening of December 17, 2008, and approved by our Commission's resolution--specifically without stadium lights--also showed an area that was described by DPR representatives and the developer's architect as a "dog park," and this Commission's approval of that plan was based in part on the representation that a dog park would be an integral part of the master plan.

Our Commission is concerned that when your representative presented a master plan to CFA, no mention was made of this dog park area, and in fact, your representative described this area in answering a CFA commissioner's question as an "unprogrammed" area.

This decision by our Commission was also reached after careful consideration of neighborhood recreational needs, and hearing testimony from the West End Dog group and statistics presented by the chair of the Columbia Condominium board, indicating the high percentage of new residents who own dogs and the need for related recreational space.

The same four policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as stated above in Section 4 concerning stadium lights--that is, that recreational facilities must change in relation to neighborhood demographics--also apply here to the need for adapting Francis Field in relation to neighborhood needs.

ANC-2A respectfully asks, requests and advises that the master plan for Francis Field include a dog park area.

On behalf of the Commission,


Armando Irizarry, Chair

NPS to CFA
February 2009

“The singular and most important issue ... is that DPR is considering improvements on National Park Service property. It appears they did not do a thorough land record search.”

Adrienne Coleman
Supt, Rock Creek Park

