

# **ATTACHMENT A**

## **EXHIBIT 8**

**NARRATIVE FOR FURTHER  
PROCESSING APPLICATION  
SUBMITTED BY AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE EAST CAMPUS  
MARCH 18, 2011  
Z.C. CASE NO. 11-07**

## SECTION 9

# FURTHER PROCESSING APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST CAMPUS, THE NEBRASKA HALL ADDITION, AND THE MARY GRAYDON CENTER ADDITION

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### 9.1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE EAST CAMPUS (FORMER NEBRASKA AVENUE PARKING LOT SITE)

#### 9.1.1 Description of East Campus Property and Surrounding Area

The proposed East Campus will be located on an 8.1-acre parcel that is located across Nebraska Avenue from the central campus and is currently used as a surface parking lot with approximately 900 surface parking spaces. Those parking spaces are used by AU faculty, staff, and students and visitors to the campus. The East Campus property is bound by Massachusetts Avenue to the north, the Westover Place townhouse community to the east, New Mexico Avenue to the south, and Nebraska Avenue to the west. The headquarters for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is located to the north of the property directly across Massachusetts Avenue. Numerous large apartment and condominium buildings are located along Massachusetts Avenue to the east of the property. A significant number of AU students live in these buildings and walk along Massachusetts Avenue to the AU campus.

#### 9.1.2 Summary of Proposed East Campus Development

The university proposes to construct six new buildings on the East Campus. These buildings will include: four new residential buildings that will provide approximately 770 new residential beds; a new administrative building that will be located at the intersection of Nebraska and New Mexico avenues; and an administrative and academic building located on the eastern end of the property, which will serve as a buffer between the institutional uses on the East Campus and the Westover Place townhouse community on the adjacent property.

Development of the new East Campus will include a total of approximately 329,000 gross square feet of new space. Of the new building area, 245,100 square feet will be dedicated to student housing. The northern part of the East Campus, with frontage along Massachusetts Avenue and adjacent to Ward Circle, is not included in the Further Processing application. That area will remain a surface parking lot with approximately 200 parking spaces and will be reserved for a future signature academic building, similar to the Katzen Arts Center. The 2011 Plan does not anticipate that such a signature academic building will be constructed in the period of 2011–2020.

#### 9.1.3 Functional, Sensitive, and Appropriate Design

##### (a) Development Goals and Results of Community Dialogue Process

The applicant and its design team have engaged in extensive dialogue with members of the surrounding community, including residents of the Westover Place townhouse community, regarding development of the East Campus. In a presentation at the September 28, 2010, Community Taskforce Meeting, the project architects noted that development of the East Campus will be successful if it:

- promotes student life, success equal to the academic reputation of AU
- identifies the student as the center of the campus success
- contributes to the diversity of housing options on campus
- grows international student accommodations
- is a sensitive neighbor to its surroundings
- embraces a sustainable strategy consistent with the campus initiative
- provides an expanded campus that is safe for students and residents



- provides flexible facilities that can adapt to changing campus needs over time
- promotes an architectural character consistent with the existing campus

The university has sought to address the following community concerns as it has designed and refined the proposed buildings on the East Campus:

- increased noise in the community due to the proposed residential use on the East Campus
- the proposed location of the new residential structures on the former parking lot
- issues related to pedestrian safety for the new students who will be crossing Nebraska Avenue from their residence halls to campus on the west side of Nebraska Avenue and concerns about current patterns of mid-block pedestrian crossings of Nebraska Avenue
- enhanced traffic from personal vehicles and trucks that will be coming to the East Campus
- the amount of density proposed on the East Campus in terms of the number of students to be housed and the size and scale of the buildings proposed
- the visual impact that the proposed development will have on adjacent properties

Specific steps that have been taken by the university in response to these concerns include:

- a significant reduction in the number of beds proposed on the East Campus, from an initial proposal of 1,000 beds to the current proposal for 770 beds
- a re-orientation of the residential buildings in order to lessen the visual impact on the adjacent residential properties and to remove all windows on the residential buildings that would have views toward the adjacent residential properties
- the creation of an academic/administrative building that will serve as a buffer, both visually and in order to block noise, between the residential uses on the East Campus and the adjacent residential properties
- the relocation of the entrance to the underground parking and loading facilities to a point that is further from the East Campus boundary with the adjacent residential property

All of the buildings on the East Campus will

be designed and constructed in order to achieve LEED Gold certification. Plans, elevations, and drawings of the proposed East Campus development, as well as photographs of existing conditions, are attached as Exhibit 21.

#### **(b) Detailed Description of the Proposed East Campus Development**

Entrance to the East Campus will be marked by a new administrative building located at the intersection of Nebraska Avenue and New Mexico Avenue. This administrative building (labeled as Building No. 5 in the site plan provided in Exhibit 21) is intended to house a new visitors center, other administrative offices, and 3,000 square feet that will be reserved for retail uses that are intended to cater to the residents of the East Campus. This building will be four stories tall with a measured building height of approximately 54 feet tall. The architectural character of this building, including its curved entrance features and tower element at the corner of the intersection of Nebraska and New Mexico avenues is intended to evoke the architectural character of the McKinley Building on the campus west of Nebraska Avenue and helps connect the campus as one crosses Nebraska Avenue. The exterior of this building will include glass and light-colored pre-cast in an effort to be responsive to the limestone appearance of the buildings located along the west side of Nebraska Avenue (the Ward Circle Building, Hurst Hall, and the old SIS building).

The first student housing building on the East Campus (identified as Building No. 1 in the materials included in Exhibit 21) is located along Nebraska Avenue, to the north of Building No. 5. This building will be six stories tall, with a measured building height of approximately 62 feet. The height, mass, and setbacks of this building (along with Building No. 5) have been carefully studied to assure that the appearance of this building is consistent with the appearance of the buildings along Nebraska Avenue on the campus west of Nebraska Avenue. The goal has been to maintain the character of this part of Nebraska Avenue as a leafy, broad avenue. As shown in a site section through Nebraska Avenue, included in Exhibit 21, Building No. 1 on the East Campus will be setback from the Nebraska Avenue curb approximately 70 feet. The buildings along the west side of Nebraska Avenue are setback approximately 85 feet from the curb along Nebraska Avenue.



The streetscape treatment of Nebraska Avenue on the East Campus has also been carefully studied in order to create an inviting and active pedestrian experience, while also creating landscape and hardscape barriers to prevent mid-block pedestrian crossings of Nebraska Avenue. As shown in a section along Nebraska Avenue in Exhibit 21, the existing row of mature street trees that currently shield the existing parking lot on Nebraska Avenue will remain in a six-foot planting strip. Adjacent to the planting strip is an eight-foot sidewalk and then a vegetative buffer of approximately 38 feet. This vegetative buffer will include enhanced understory planting that will provide views to the first floor uses in Building No. 1, but will also restrict pedestrian movement from the sidewalk to the 24-foot-wide promenade area that is adjacent to Building No. 1. The existing roadway lighting will be replaced with 14-foot-tall ornamental lights that are more in scale with the pedestrians walking along on the adjacent sidewalk.

**Building No. 1** will include approximately 280 residential beds. The ground floor uses will include approximately 11,000 square feet of retail space. There will be no central cafeteria in any of the residential buildings on the East Campus. The first floor of Building No. 1 also includes meeting space for residential life activities, which will have direct access to the promenade along Nebraska Avenue, and faculty and staff apartments that will face a landscaped quad that is bound by the other residential buildings on the East Campus. The residential units on floors 2–6 will be a mix of unit types.

**Building No. 2** is located behind Building No. 1 (the administrative building located at the intersection of New Mexico and Nebraska avenues). Building No. 2 will be five stories tall, with a measured building height of approximately 54 feet. This building will include approximately 140 residential beds. Building No. 2 has frontage along New Mexico Avenue and will define the southern border of the East Campus. The proposed streetscape treatment along New Mexico Avenue has also received significant attention from the university's design team. In response to concerns raised during the community dialogue process, the university has removed the university-related retail uses that were initially proposed in the street level of Building No. 2. In addition, the university has re-designed the New Mexico Avenue elevation of Building No. 2 so that the vehicular entrance to the below-grade parking and loading can occur in the same location

as the existing curb cuts on New Mexico Avenue.

**Building No. 3** is a five-story residential building, approximately 54 feet tall, that is located in the center of the East Campus. It is flanked by courtyards to the south and to the north that are 165 feet wide and are intended to provide active and passive recreation spaces for the residents of East Campus. The ground floor of this building will include meeting space and staff/faculty apartments. In total, the building will include approximately 157 residential beds. In response to concerns that were raised by the Westover Place residents, the orientation of this building, as well as Building Nos. 2 and 4, has been shifted so that all windows from dormitory rooms now face into one of the courtyards and not toward the Westover Place community.

**Building No. 4** is also a five-story residential building, approximately 54 feet tall, that is located on the northern end of the residential core of the East Campus. This building will include approximately 195 beds with faculty and staff apartments on the ground floor. Just as in Building No. 3, all windows from the dormitory rooms will face the courtyard and the surface parking lot to the north.

**Building No. 6** is an administrative/academic building that has been sited on the property in order to provide a physical buffer between the residential uses on the East Campus and the Westover Place community to the east. Building No. 6 will be two-and-a-half stories tall, with a measured building height of approximately 34 feet. The proposed height of Building No. 6 is approximately the same as the height of the townhomes in the Westover Place community. The intended uses of the building will include meeting space, residential life activities space, offices, and academic space. In response to comments from OP and the Westover Place residents, Building No. 6 has been set back from the property line with the Westover Place community a minimum distance of 40 feet, but the majority of the setback ranges from approximately 55 to 78 feet.

The appearance of Building No. 6 from Nebraska Avenue is intended to convey that the use of this building is not residential, so the materials on the west façade of the building are similar to those found on Building No. 5. The entrance to Building No. 6 also appears to peek out from behind Building No. 2, in order to announce to students, faculty, and staff the location of this administrative/academic building. The university