GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Arthur Jackson
Development Review Specialist
Office of Planning

THROUGH: Lawrence C. Cager, Jr.
Deputy Director for Development Finance

FROM: James Thackaberry
Supervisory Project Manager

DATE: May 12, 2005

SUBJECT: Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Review of Zoning Commission Case No. 04-24 – Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development (PUD) on Property Located at the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station (Parcel 131, Lot 233 and Portions of Lots 234 and 235)

[redacted] District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-24
[redacted] 33

DHCD has reviewed the above referenced Zoning Commission Case you sent by fax on May 4, 2005. This memorandum offers comments on the Zoning Commission Case. After staff review of the application materials, DHCD is supportive of the proposed mixed-use PUD (PUD) development at the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station and change of zoning from Industrial (M) to Community Business Center (C-2-B) as proposed in Zoning Commission Case No. 04-24 for the following reasons:

1. The PUD will create a new commercial "Main Street" that will have the smaller scale of neighborhood restaurants, services and shopping located directly adjacent to the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station entrance. These neighborhood specialty and service retailers will attract customers from both the Metro system and adjoining neighborhoods which will help the viability of the retailers.
2. The new "Main Street", with its retail tenants, is directly adjacent to and in line of sight of the "big box" retail shopping center directly to the east of the PUD site. The "Main Street" will provide a direct pedestrian connection from the Rhode Island Metro Station to the big box shopping center. The big box shopping center

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EXHIBIT NO.33

and the new "Main Street" will together create a larger commercial critical mass that will assure the viability of this new larger commercial area.

3. The 451 parking spaces in two concealed parking garages will provide more than double the required parking spaces needed to serve the new retail tenants and the 271 apartment units in the PUD project. An additional 41 curb side parking spaces on "Main Street" will provide short term parking for the "Main Street" retail tenants.
4. The PUD developer will build a 200 space parking garage, directly adjacent and to the south of the PUD site, to replace all Metro car parking that will be displaced by the PUD development. The 200 space garage is not part of the PUD submission because it is a matter of right construction under current M zoning that will be built simultaneously with the PUD development. Bus and commuter car traffic will go directly to the parking garage and not use the new "Main Street".
5. The 271 apartment units proposed in the PUD will consist of approximately 106 one bedroom units, 148 two bedroom units and 17 three bedroom units. Twenty percent of the apartments (54 units) will be made affordable to low and moderate income households, thereby helping meet the need for more affordable housing units for low- and moderate-income households. DHCD requests that the affordable units be focused primarily on households between 40% and 80% of Area Median Income (a group that constitutes the primary low- and moderate-income workforce in the District). The 271 units will add to the District's total housing supply and help increase the total District population.
6. The new reduced C-2-B zoning for the PUD site will still permit the construction of 585,000 square feet of gross floor area (including the two on-site garages) that will have an FAR of 1.83. The 1.83 FAR is less than the 6.0/2.0 that is allowed for residential/commercial development under the C-2-B/PUD scenario. The height of the proposed PUD construction will be 81 feet which is less than the 90 feet allowed under the C-2-B/PUD scenario.
7. The proposed mixed use building fronting on Rhode Island Avenue (and screening the northern parking garage) will have first floor retail spaces and three stories of apartments above. The retail spaces will be primarily for destination businesses that do not require foot traffic (professional offices, realty firms), reduced rent business incubator spaces and neighborhood arts spaces.
8. The PUD proposal has been presented to Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5B (ANC 5B). Members of ANC 5B are quite receptive to the PUD although they have not as yet taken a vote on the PUD.0