

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director



ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 04-36
15

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: USC Ellen McCarthy, Interim Director, DC Office of Planning
DATE: March 04, 2005

SUBJECT: Setdown Report for ZC Case Number 04-36
Dorchester Apartments (Ward 1, Sq. 2572, lots 815 & 816)
Application for a Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Map Amendment

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I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

OP recommends that the Zoning Commission set down for a Public Hearing Zoning Commission Case #04-36, Dorchester Apartments expansion on 17th Street NW, for a Consolidated PUD review and zoning map amendment from R-5-B to R-5-D.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

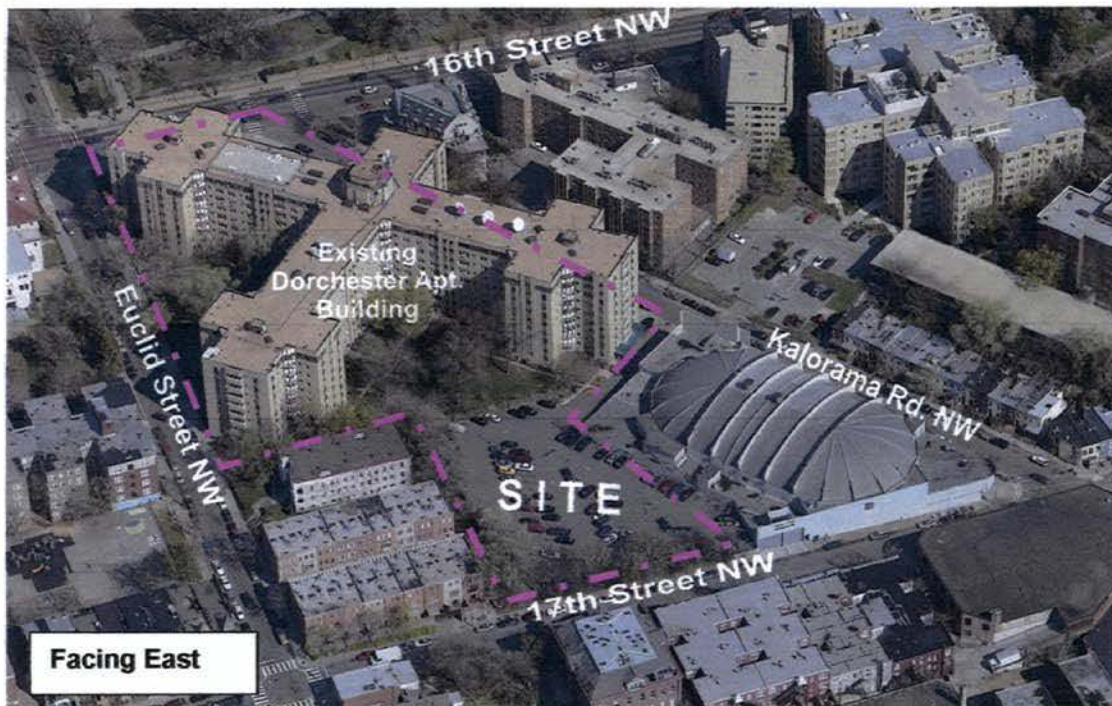
Dorchester House Associates, LLC and Kalorama West, LLC have submitted a PUD and map amendment application to permit the construction of a new 6 to 8 story apartment building located to the rear (17th Street) side of the existing Dorchester Apartments. The new building would be located over the existing surface parking lot. The site is currently split zoned, R-5-D where the existing building is and R-5-B where much of the new building would be. The applicant is also requesting a related map amendment to R-5-D.

The amenity package proffered by the applicant is considered by OP to be acceptable for set-down, consisting primarily of affordable units in the amount of 30% of the density gained through the PUD process. Additional detail and analysis is necessary, and will be provided prior to a public hearing. OP has also discussed with the applicant and the architect ways to improve the visual and functional relationship of the proposed building to 17th Street, given the amount of foot and vehicular traffic that will be generated and the narrowness of the right-of-way and the sidewalk. OP anticipates that this can be accomplished with relatively minor alterations to the facade and streetscape landscape design, with any amendments to the plans provided to the Commission prior to a Public Hearing. OP has no major concerns with the Zoning Regulation relief requested, and the site development generally conforms to the Generalized Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan objectives for the area. As such, the application merits being set down for a public hearing.

III. SITE – See Context Map, Attachment I and Site Map, Appendix II

The subject site is located in Square 2572, which, in addition to the subject property, contains a vacant arena (subject of a separate application to permit its conversion for use as a grocery store) and low to moderate rise residential buildings. Meridian Hill Park is located across 16th Street

NW from the site. There is a mixture of low to high-rise residential development in the general neighborhood, with most of the commercial development along 18th Street to the west, in Adams Morgan. In recent years, the neighborhood has received a large amount of infill residential development.



The subject property is just over 3.5 acres in size, and is currently developed with a large high-rise apartment building with 394 units, fronting onto 16th Street NW. Parking access is from Kalorama Road, to a surface parking lot along 17th Street NW.

IV. PROPOSAL

The applicants wish to construct a new 145-unit apartment building over the existing surface parking. The building would be 5 - 6 stories in height along 17th Street, and 8 stories further back onto the site. Two levels of underground parking would be provided; one level accessed from 17th Street would be for the new development, while the other level accessed from Kalorama Road would replace the surface parking for the existing Dorchester Apartment. Access to the new building would be from 17th Street. A landscaped courtyard, partially located over the underground parking, would be installed in the area separating the two apartment buildings.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposal would particularly further the following major themes of the Comprehensive Plan, as outlined and detailed in **Chapter 1 - General Provisions Element**:

- (a) *Stabilizing and improving the District's neighborhoods* – The proposed development would replace a surface parking lot and add a residential face to this section of 17th Street NW.

- (e) *Respecting and improving the physical character of the District* – The project is designed to step down towards 17th Street, to be within the PUD permitted height for the existing zone. The project further steps down towards the lower residential building to the north. OP is working with the applicant to ensure that the façade design and landscape details enhance 17th Street.
- (i) *Promoting enhanced public safety* – OP is working with the applicant to ensure that the proposal enhances 17th Street to make it a more pedestrian friendly and safe street.
- (j) *Providing for diversity and overall social responsibilities* – The applicant is proposing a significant contribution to the District's affordable housing supply.

The Comprehensive Plan also includes a number of specific sections of relevance to this application, including ones related to Housing, Urban Design and Land Use, and the project would further a number of goals and objectives for Ward 1. These sections include:

Chapter 3 Housing Element

- §302.1 *The general objectives for housing are to stimulate production of new and rehabilitated housing to meet all levels of need and demand and to provide incentives for the types of housing needed at desired locations.*
- §302.2 *The policies established in support of the general objectives for housing are as follows:*
 - (a) *Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land-use policies and objectives ...*
 - (e) *Encourage housing on suitably located public or private properties that are vacant, surplus, underutilized, or unused ...;*
- §303.1 *The objectives of the District for low- and moderate-income housing are as follows:*
 - (a) *To provide for the housing needs of low- and moderate-income residents;*

Chapter 7 Urban Design Element

- §701 *Urban Design Goal*
- §701.1 *It is the goal of the District to ... promote a built environment that serves as a complement to the natural environment, provides visual orientation, enhances the District's aesthetic qualities, emphasizes neighborhood identities, and is functionally efficient.*
- §708 *Buildings*
- §708.2
 - (a) *Design residential, commercial, and all other buildings to complement or enhance the physical character of the District; and*
 - (b) *Design buildings to include the use of appropriate arrangements of building materials, height, scale, massing, and buffering to complement the immediate region.*
- §709 *Streetscape*
- §709.2
 - (a) *Develop a unifying system of well-designed streets, sidewalks, parks, and pedestrian ways;*

- (j) *Encourage the planting and maintenance of street trees as the single most important streetscape element along commercial and residential streets to provide shade, design continuity, spatial relief, and a juxtaposition of the natural and built environments.*

§710 Areas Of Strong Architectural Character

- §710.2** (d) *Encourage new development within areas of strong architectural character to contribute to the physical identity and character of those areas;*
- (e) *Encourage building massing and scale of new development to be sensitive to established patterns;*

Chapter 11 Land Use Element

Although the site is not within the Reed-Cooke Overlay District, it is within the Reed-Cooke Special Treatment Area, as defined on the Generalized Land Use Map.

§1127 Reed-Cooke Special Treatment Area

§1127.2 *The policies established for the Reed-Cooke special treatment area are as follows:*

- (a) *Protect current housing in the area, and provide for the development of new housing;*
- (b) *Maintain heights and densities at appropriate levels*

Chapter 12: Ward 1 Plan

§1206.1 *The policies in support of housing objectives are as follows:*

- (a) *To encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future Ward 1 residents at locations consistent with the ward's land-use policies and objectives ...;*

1222.1 *The policies in support of urban design objectives are as follows:*

- (c) *To design Ward 1's buildings to include the use of appropriate arrangements of building materials, height, scale, massing, and buffering to complement the immediate areas;*

1230.1 *The policies in support of land use objectives are as follows:*

- (a) *To promote the conservation, enhancement, and revitalization of Ward 1's residential neighborhoods for housing and neighborhood related uses;*

1231.1 *The actions to implement land use objectives are as follows:*

- (m) *To encourage appropriate height, bulk, and density so that new developments are designed to be harmonious with their surroundings by changes in the Zoning Regulations as necessary to make new development compatible with existing buildings in areas where rehabilitation or moderate density development goals are primary neighborhood goals, such as Sheridan-Kalorama, Woodley Park, Adams Morgan, Mount Pleasant, S to U Streets, 16th Street area, Columbia Heights, and LeDroit Park.*

VI. COMPREHESIVE PLAN GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP

The Comprehensive Plan Generalized Land Use Map shows the site as having moderate density residential and medium density residential. At an overall density of 3.77, the proposal is not inconsistent with these designations.

VII. SNAP – CLUSTER 1

The 2003 SNAP planning process identified near-term goals for individual neighborhood clusters. The site is part of Cluster 1, which includes the Kalorama Heights, Adams Morgan, Lanier Heights neighborhoods. Cluster workshop participants were asked to identify priorities for additional action planning. Area residents listed the retention and addition of affordable housing as the top priority. The proposed rental development would address this provision through the provision of new affordable units as well as funding to the Jubilee Housing.

VIII. ZONING ISSUES – refer also to Project Profile, Attachment III

The site is currently zoned R-5-D along 16th Street, and R-5-B along 17th Street. As part of this proposal, the applicant is requesting a related rezoning of the R-5-B portion so that the entire site would be zoned R-5-D. The project is designed to conform to the PUD permitted height for the R-5-B zone, and would be within the permitted FAR for the requested R-5-D zone district. The site is adjacent to but not within the Reed-Cooke Overlay District.

The applicant has identified the following relief required from zoning regulations:

- **Number of Buildings.** Regulations permit one building per lot; the applicant is proposing to construct a second building on this lot. Although the property would appear to be technically large enough to subdivide, the applicant is proposing that the new building contain the underground parking for both the new and the existing building.
- **Rear yard.** 26 feet is required; 25 feet is proposed. The applicant notes that this is within the amount that the Zoning Administrator is permitted to approve a deviation from required.
- **Roof Structures.** Relief is required for number of enclosures, setback, and wall height.
- **Parking.** Although the project provides more parking than required under the regulations, all standard spaces are slightly smaller than the zoning regulation minimum dimensions.

The Office of Planning does not at this time have any major concerns with the relief requested.

IX. PURPOSE OF A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. The PUD process is “*designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.*” Through the flexibility of the PUD process, a development that provides amenity to the surrounding neighborhood can be achieved.

Pursuant to Section 2402.3, the applicant has elected to file a consolidated PUD. The application meets the minimum area square foot area requirements of Section 2401.1 (c) to request a PUD, for a property zoned either R-5-B or R-5-D. Based on the information provided, OP believes that the project is generally favorable, although additional refinement of the amenity package is required.

X. STANDARDS FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The application meets the minimum area requirements of Section 2401.1 (c) to request a PUD for either the R-5-B or R-5-D zones, as the subject PUD site area is over 3.5 acres in size. The PUD standards state that the *“impact of the project on the surrounding area and upon the operations of city services and facilities shall not 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.”* (§2403.3)

Based on the information provided, OP believes that the project will not have an unacceptable impact on the neighborhood and the District as a whole. A more detailed analysis of the proposal against specific PUD standards and requirements will be provided prior to a Public Hearing.

XI. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

Sections 2403.5 - 2403.13 discuss the definition and evaluation of public benefits and amenities. In its review of a PUD application, §2403.8 of the Zoning Regulations states that *“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”*. To assist in the evaluation, the applicant is required to describe amenities and benefits, and to *“show how the public benefits offered are superior in quality and quantity to typical development of the type proposed...”* (§2403.12).

Amenity package evaluation is based on an assessment of the additional development gained through the application process. Additional development, in this case, is based on permitted height and density on the existing split zoned site, compared to the height and density proposed: The additional FAR to be gained through this process is just under 100,000 sq.ft.

	R-5-B	R-5-D	Proposed
Max Height	50' max.	90' max.	57'8" on 17 th St.; 78' behind
Max. FAR	1.8	3.5	3.77
Max. Square Footage:	496,378 sq.ft.		595,664 sq.ft. total
Difference:			99,286 sq.ft.

The proposed amenity package as proposed by the applicant includes:

- **Affordable Housing:** The provision of affordable or subsidized housing is now a common amenity item for PUD applications. An amount of approximately 15 - 20% of the density gained through the PUD / rezoning process is standard. The applicant is proffering 30% of bonus density, or double the standard amount, equivalent to 30,000 sq.ft. or about 30 units to be located in the new and the existing building. The applicant has not provided details at this time. OP is supportive of this amenity item in concept, and will work with the applicant to provide additional detail prior to a public hearing. The applicant notes a contribution of \$100,000 to Jubilee Housing's efforts to restore its residential property on 17th Street.

- Urban Design and Site Planning: OP is supportive in concept of the design and site planning. It will be of benefit to the neighborhood to replace the surface parking area with housing, and OP will continue to work with the applicant to ensure that the proposal provides maximum benefit to the character of 17th Street and the neighborhood in general.
- Vehicular and Pedestrian Access: The applicant's Traffic Impact Analysis notes that the proposal will not have a noticeable affect on the operation of nearby intersections. OP will request District Department of Transportation review of this study and the proposal prior to the public hearing, as DDOT is currently studying traffic patterns in this area. OP is also working with the applicant to provide better pedestrian access along what is now a very narrow sidewalk on 17th Street, which could raise this item to "amenity" status.
- Environmental: As noted by the applicant, the proposal will reduce the amount of impervious surface, through the replacement of paved surface parking with landscaped courtyard and new building with a green roof. OP is supportive of this amenity item, and has encouraged the applicant to investigate more "green building" practices, leading to possible LEED certification.
- Revenue: The applicant notes that the development will add tax revenue to the District.
- First Source Employment: The applicant has agreed to enter into the necessary agreements with the Department of Employment Services First Source Employment Program.
- Local Business Opportunities: The applicant has agreed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Local Business Opportunity Commission to utilize local business enterprises.

OP generally supports the intent and direction of the proposed amenity package, given the amount of relief requested through this PUD application. Additional clarification and definition is required, particularly related to the affordable housing and front facade design.

XII. AGENCY PRELIMINARY COMMENTS AND REFERRALS

This application will also now be referred to the following District agencies for review and comment:

- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA);
- Department of Employment Services (DOES);
- Department of Health (DOH);
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD);
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR);
- Department of Public Works (DPW);
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS);
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD); and
- DC Public Schools (DCPS);

- DC Water and Sewer Agency (WASA).

XIII. RECOMMENDATION

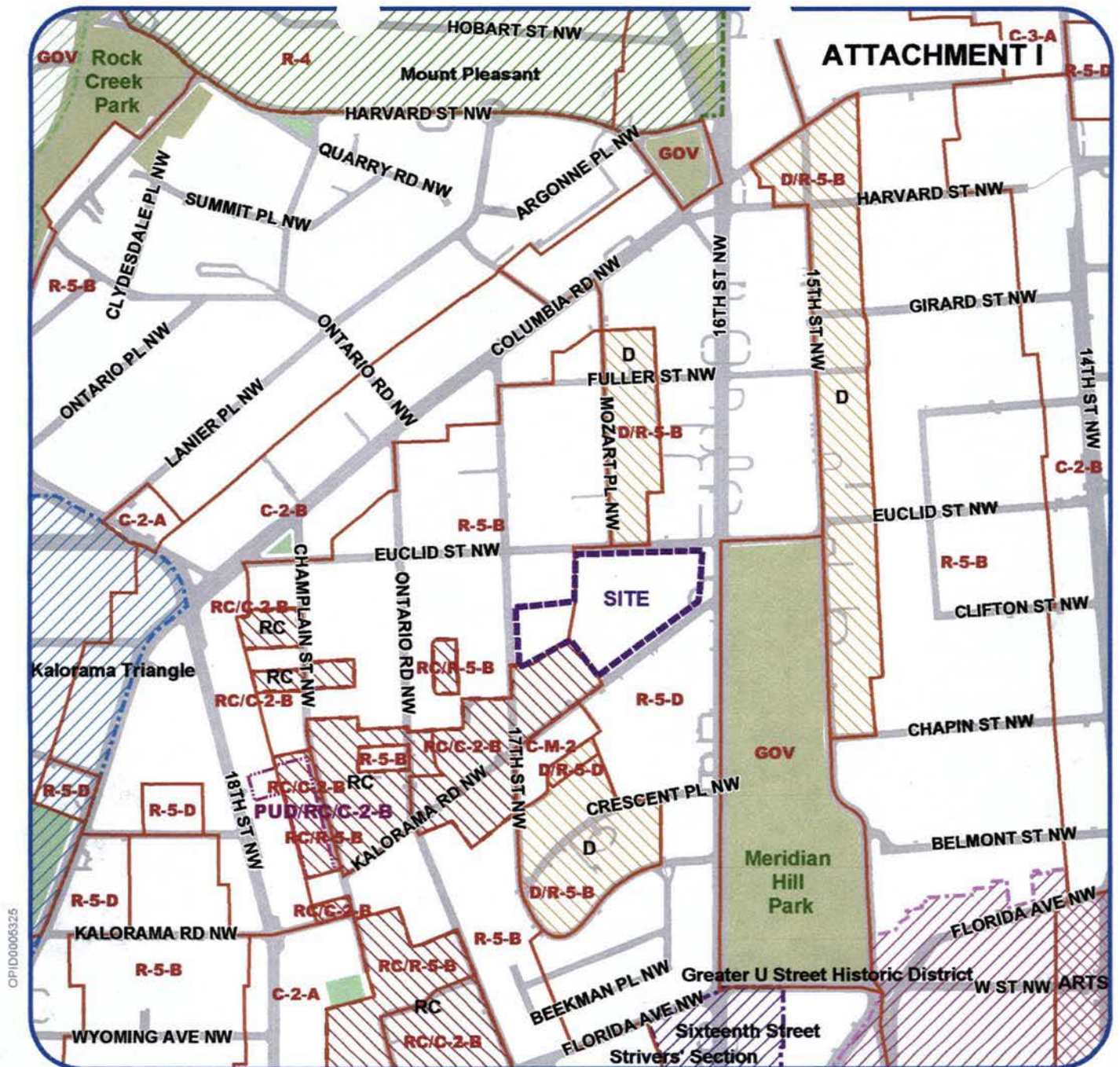
The Office of Planning recommends that this application be set down for public hearing. OP concludes that the project is generally consistent with the goals and objectives outlined for the area in the Comprehensive Plan and with zoning for the area.

EM/jl

ATTACHMENTS:

- I. Context Plan
- II. Site Plan
- III. Project Profile

ATTACHMENT I



Legend

Zoning Districts

Overlay Zones

Uptown Arts

Diplomatic

Reed-Cooke

National Parks (NPS)

DC Parks

Historic Districts

Greater U Street Historic District

Kalorama Triangle

Mount Pleasant

National Zoological Park

Shaw Historic District

Sixteenth Street

N

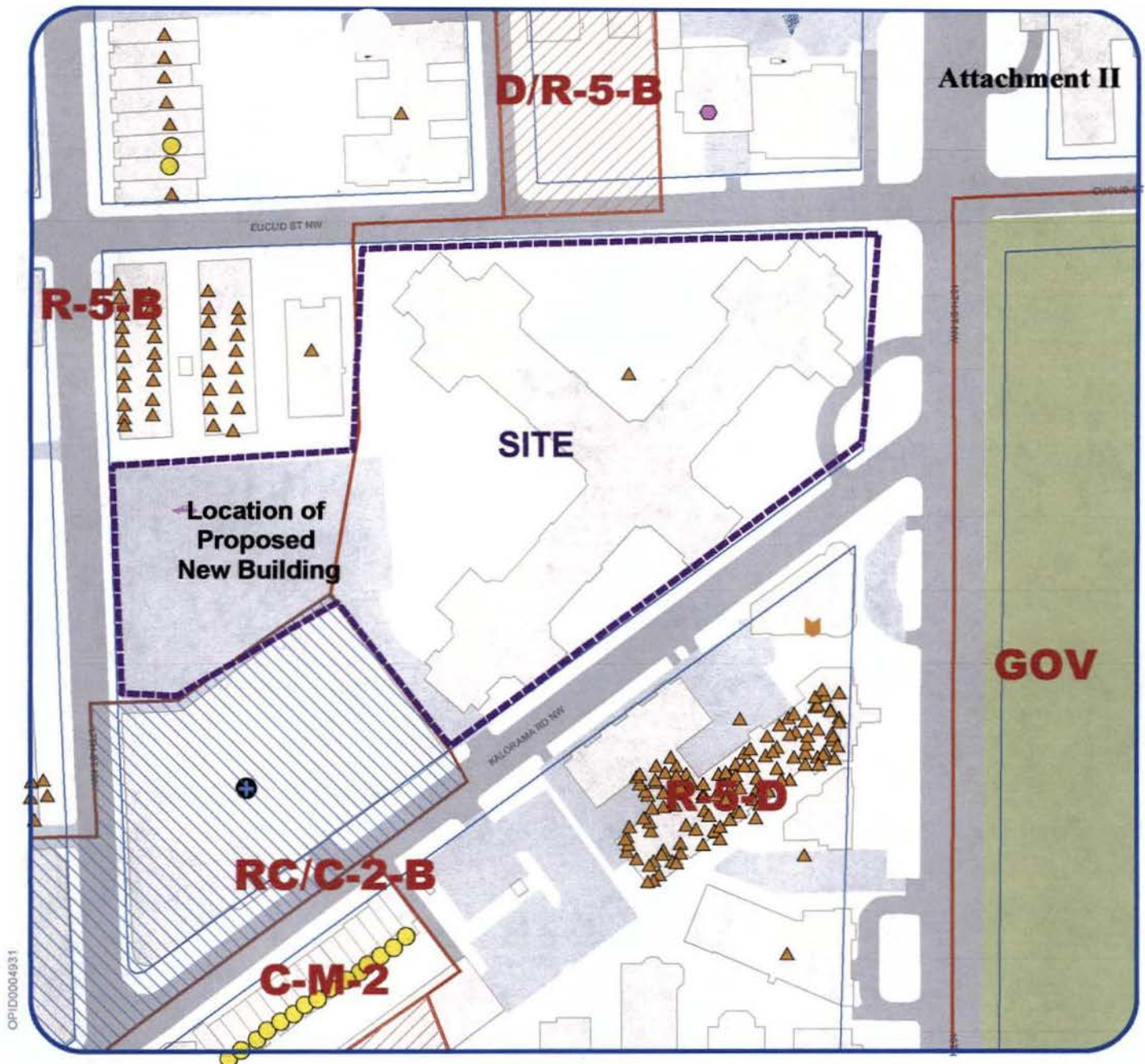
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ZC Case 04-36, Dorchester House Context Plan

★ ★ ★ Government of the
District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

Office of Planning - March, 2005

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.



ZC Case 04-36 Dorchester Apartments SITE PLAN

★ ★ ★ Government of the
District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

Office of Planning ~ February 2005

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Legend

	Property Squares		Multi-family
	Zoning Districts		Store
	Diplomatic		Office
	Reed-Cooke		Parking - Special Purpose
	National Parks (NPS)		Religious
	Metro Station Entrances		Educational
	DC Parks		Embassy/Chancery
	Rowhouse		Special Purpose

1:1,500

Standard	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Proposed Development	
			New ¹	Total
Zoning:	R-5-B	R-5-D		
Use:	Moderate density apartment	Medium – high density apartment		Medium – high density apartment
Height: (§§400.1, 2405.1)	50' max. 60' with PUD	90' max. 90' with PUD	57'8" on 17 th ; 78 ft. behind	
Stories:	not prescribed	not prescribed	8	
Lot Area: (§401.3)	33,616 sq.ft.	124,534 sq.ft.		158,150 sq.ft.
# buildings / lot:	1		1 plus existing	2 – relief per §2516
Floor Area Ratio: (§§402.4, 2405.2)	1.8 max. 3.0 PUD max.	3.5 max. 4.5 PUD max.	1.14	3.77
Square Footage:	496,378 sq.ft. sq.ft 661,251 sq.ft. PUD		180,200	595,664
Unit Count:	n/a		145	539
Lot Occupancy: (§403.2)	60%	75%	16%	45%
Rear Yard Setback: (§404.1)	4" / ft. of height; 15' min. if provided = 26' min.		25'	25'²
Side Yard Setback: (§405.6)	Not required		Not provided	conforming
Courts: (§406)	As per zoning regulations		undefined	Assume conforming
Roof Structure:				
No. enclosures (§411.3):	1 max 1 max		2	Relief required
Height (§400.7c.):	18.5 ft. max 18.5 ft. max		10'; 18.5 ft. ft.	Conforming
Setback (§400.7b.):	= to height = 10' / 18.5' ft. min.		12.1'; 16.7'	Relief required
Wall Height (§411.5)	must be of equal height		10 – 18.5 ft.	Relief required
Area (§411.7)	.37 FAR max.		Approx. 1,930 sq.ft. total	assumed conforming ³
Parking: (§2101.1)	1 / 3 units = 179 for entire dev't ⁴		179	299 ⁵
Aisle Width: (§2117.5)	20' min.		Not provided	to be determined
Stall size: (§2115.1)	Standard = 19' X 9' min. (§2115.1); Compact = 8' X 16' min. (§2115.3);		varies, std = 8.5' X 18'; comp=8'X16/18'	Relief required for size of all standard spaces
Small Car Spaces:	40% max. (§2115.2)		100%?	approx. 31% ⁶
Loading: (§2201.1)			1	2
Loading berths:	1 @ 55' deep per building		1	2
Loading platform:	1 @ 200 sq.ft. per building		?	?

¹ Information provided by applicant.

² Applicant indicates that the difference is within the amount that can be approved by the Zoning Administrator.

³ Unknown because area of roof structure for existing building is unknown. Based on just the R-5-B portion of the lot, however, the FAR of roof structures for the new building is about .07 FAR.

⁴ 48 for the new building and 131 for the existing building are required; 138 for the new building and 161 for the existing building are proposed, although all standard spaces are non-conforming for parking stall size.

⁵ Plus 8 tandem spaces

⁶ Although the standard spaces do not meet the size requirement so could be considered "small car" space