

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Office of the Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser *JSS*
Deputy Director

DATE March 3, 2008

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO 05-24B

SUBJECT: Minor Modification - Zoning Commission Case No 05-24 EXHIBIT NO 50
Eastgate Family Housing – Single Family Detached Units
Square 5318, Lots 9-20, Square 5319, Lots 20-36, and Square 5320, Lots 29-36

PROPOSAL

The District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) and A&R/THC II, LLC (applicant) seeks approval of a minor modification to its consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) (Zoning Commission Case #05-24) for the development known as Eastgate Family Housing. The applicant proposes to eliminate the twenty (20) single-family detached units and replace them with forty-five (45) rowhouse units

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed modifications will affect the approved number of units and unit types approved by the Zoning Commission. The Office of Planning (OP) does not believe the proposal is a minor modification and that the applicant should address

- 1 Other alternatives to the rowhouse including smaller single-family detached units or duplexes
- 2 The reduction in the lot occupancy, rear yard, and FAR
- 3 Resolution of the driveway placement with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)

APPROVED PROJECT

The approved development consists of a mix of housing types including single-family detached dwellings, row houses, and multi-family dwellings. New streets and alleys, open space and recreational space would be provided within the new development. The residences would consist of 186 dwelling units consisting of twenty (20) single family detached units, one hundred and fifty eight (158) townhouse units and two (2) grand houses with four (4) units each. The development would include assisted rental units, affordable and market rate rental units, and assisted and market rate

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EXHIBIT NO.6

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homeownership units The units would provide a mixture of household incomes throughout the community

MODIFICATION

The applicant is requesting to modify Zoning Commission Order 05-24 which approved 20 single-family detached residences and replace them with 45 rowhouses. The applicant states that the requested change is because the single-family detached units are no longer marketable in the mid - high \$400,000 range but these units, as a result of the softening housing market and the subprime crisis, Zoning Commission Order 05-24 (page 11, DECISION, 7 (b)) granted the flexibility to vary the mix of uses within the unit type by up to 10 percent (10%) and the applicant is requesting a 100% change.

The Office of Planning has concerns regarding the requested minor modification. The applicant is proposing to completely eliminate the single-family detached units and essentially creating a very large rowhouse development with little variety. A significant feature of the approved Eastgate Family Housing development was that it would have a mix of incomes and unit types. The applicant has not provided any analysis that addresses the scenario of having smaller single-family detached units or duplexes that could be sold at a lower price range and would retain the mix of unit types. During the public review of the project, the community was quite emphatic about the mix of unit types as well as affordability. Completely replacing the single family detached units could undermine the facts on which the development was approved. Further, the applicant has not stated whether the proposed rowhouses will be affordable or market rate.

The applicant has stated that the proposed rowhouses would be similar to those approved. OP would suggest that if the minor modification is granted that another architectural type be considered in order to retain some semblance of variety within the development. A large percentage of the proposed lots do not meet the lot occupancy, rear yard, and FAR requirements and would therefore need flexibility.

The applicant is also requesting flexibility from the requirements of Section 2117 8(d) to reduce the requirement that driveways be located at least twenty-eight (28) feet apart. The Public Space Permit Section of DDOT continues to strongly express concerns regarding the number of curb cuts as well as the fact that they driveways did not meet the separation distance. To date, DDOT has not made a decision as to whether they will grant the request by the applicant.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed modifications will affect the approved number of units and unit types approved by the Zoning Commission. The Office of Planning does not believe that this is a minor modification and that the applicant should address

- 1 Other alternatives to the rowhouse including smaller single-family detached units or duplexes
- 2 The reduction in the lot occupancy, rear yard, and FAR
- 3 Resolution of the driveway placement with the District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)