

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: D. C. Zoning Commission

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

FROM: *JS*
Ellen McCarthy
Director

CASE NO. 05-26

EXHIBIT NO. 153

DATE: July 25, 2006

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case Number 05-26 - Supplement

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BACKGROUND

This is the Office of Planning's final recommendation on this application reflecting testimony for the applicant, District agencies, citizens and their representatives presented during public hearings on June 5, and June 22, 2006, and the applicant's most recent planned unit development (PUD) revisions submitted on July 12, 2006. The OP recommendation reflects the following issues and concerns:

- **Density of development:** OP found that the Generalized Land Use Map did not err by including the subject property within a larger area designated for higher-density residential development. At issue is whether this proposal is an appropriate project to take advantage of the planned residential density increase, and whether the community benefits and amenities associated with this proposal are adequate. OP therefore reiterates its finding that the PUD proposal is not inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan, and that it supports more specific housing and urban design goals identified in the Plan.

OP also thinks the proposed amenities and benefits as proposed are sufficient, however more complete information (including specifics about the affordable housing component) should be provided to the Commission prior to final action.

- **Building architecture:** OP found that the overall proposal represents a unique architectural statement that effectively incorporates architectural characteristics of surrounding area. However, the proposed building height does not allay agency concern about the scale of the proposed building, and the proposed bulk would eliminate positive landscaping and design features. OP therefore recommends the design be limited to total of 5-stories, a height no greater than 60 feet, and that mechanical equipment be incorporated into the top-residential floor and the garage levels.

In addition, OP recommends approved plans include:

- a minimum front yard setback of 10 feet;
- a minimum setback of 26 feet from rear property boundary; and
- a rear courtyard 91 feet wide including a rear wall at least 56 feet from the adjacent residential tower on the property at 3883 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., as provided in applicant's modification request dated May 22, 2006, instead of the reduced courtyard provided in the July 12, 2006 submission.

Finally, the landscape screen between the fire lane and rear façade should be provided as previously proposed in the May 22, 2006 modification request.

- Vehicular circulation: OP supports the applicant's proposal to locate the delivery/loading space in front of the building in this case, and the associated special exception relief under § 2116.6 from § 2116.2 that only allows vehicle parking spaces within a garage, side yard or rear yard.

OP also supports the proposed vehicle lay-by just east of the delivery/loading space if approved District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT). To minimize the impact to on-street parking resources, OP recommends the length of the parking area in the lay-by not extend more than the length of one parking space (or 19 feet) beyond the delivery/loading space.

- Applicability of agency comments: OP prepared its final recommendation based in part on DDOT's report on this application, the applicant consideration of a 5-story design option, and review of the draft preliminary construction management plan. Public hearing testimony raised concerns about the timeliness of iterative plans that were the basis for agency reviews.

DDOT and the Fire and Emergency Medical Service Departments (FEMSD) reports based on this evolving proposal lead to assumptions about project vehicular access and traffic flow are no longer be applicable. For example, the DDOT report was based on creation of an additional break in the median that is no longer proposed, and the FEMSD reviewer was unaware that a 20-foot wide fire lane exists along the rear boundary of the subject property. As a result, the FEMSD reviewer did not address the issue raised by DDOT about whether the proposed fire lane (set back) between the proposed building and the building at 3883 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. would be sufficient.

In light of this circumstance, it may be appropriate for the Commission to refer the approved plans *with the associated zoning consultation* back to the commenting agencies to make sure previous recommendations are still valid.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above information, the Office of Planning supports approval of the revised PUD plan only if it reflects the following characteristics:

- A 5-story building with a height no greater than 60 feet that incorporates the mechanical equipment into the top-residential floor and garage levels;
- A minimum front yard setback of 10 feet;
- A rear courtyard 91 feet wide with the back wall at least 56 feet from the adjacent residential tower on the property at 3883 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. as shown in the applicant's submission dated May 22, 2006;
- Landscape screens between rear building façade and existing fire lane, and between the proposed building and adjacent residential building at 3945 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. as shown in the referenced submission; and
- That the proposed lay-by, if constructed, extend for a distance no greater than 19 feet beyond delivery/loading parking space exclusive of the egress driveway.

OP also supports granting special exception relief under § 2116.6 to allow the planned 12x30 foot combined delivery/loading space within the front yard setback.

EMc/afj