

REPORT TO THE ZONING COMMISSION

**CASE NO. 05-39
ST. MARTIN'S APARTMENTS**

**STEVEN E. SHER,
DIRECTOR OF ZONING AND LAND USE SERVICES
HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP**

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- I. Introduction
- II. Nature of application:
 - A. Consolidated review of planned unit development
 - B. Map amendment from R-4 to R-5-B
- III. Site location
 - A. East end of Square 3531, bounded by T Street, Todd Place, Summit Place and Lincoln Road, N.E.
 - B. Eckington neighborhood
- IV. Site description
 - A. Mostly rectangular shaped property approximately 192 feet in the north-south direction and 470 feet in the east-west direction (Square 3531, Lots 114 and 115)
 - B. Contains approximately 91,152 square feet of land area
 - C. Has frontage of approximately 466 feet on Todd Place, 192 feet on Summit Place and 479 feet on T Street
 - D. Existing conditions:
 - 1. Four story building on west side of site occupied by the City Lights School, a public charter school

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2. Three story former convent building, now used by Catholic Community Services as a single room occupancy building housing 17 formerly homeless men, on the southeast portion of the site
3. Surface parking lot between the two buildings, accessed from a driveway located on Todd Place just west of Summit Place
4. Site has significant change in topography from street level to grade at the center of the site

E. Abutting streets:

1. T Street – 90 feet wide
2. Todd Place– 50 feet wide
3. Summit Place– 50 feet wide

V. Description of the surrounding area

A. General area: Eckington residential area contains rowhouses and significant institutional and moderate density apartment buildings

B. Remainder of Square 3531:

1. Rowhouses along south side of Todd Place
2. Apartment houses (3 stories) in southwest corner of the square at T Street and Lincoln Road
3. Rowhouse residential development with one commercial structure along Lincoln Road south of Todd Place

C. To the north:

1. Rowhouses along the north side of Todd Place and extending north to Rhode Island Avenue
2. Some apartment houses mixed in

D. To the east:

1. Rowhouses facing T Street and Todd Place Rhode Island Avenue

2. Apartment houses mixed in

E. To the south:

1. McKinley High School and Hyde Leadership Charter School on the south side of T Street extending east to 2nd Street as part of large educational campus
2. Residential (rowhouse and multifamily) along R Street and Quincy Place west of Eckington Place
3. Warehouse and other industrial uses south of R Street east of Eckington Place

F. To the west:

1. Residential (rowhouse and multifamily) west of Lincoln Road
2. Churches and some scattered commercial uses

VI. Zoning

A. Existing zoning: R-4

1. Uses:

- a) Single family detached, semi-detached and row dwellings
- b) Two family dwellings (flats)
- c) Conversion of buildings existing prior to 1958 to apartments
- d) Other institutional uses (churches, hospitals, museums, etc.)

2. Minimum lot size:

- a) Area:
 - (1) Semi-detached dwellings: 3,000 square feet
 - (2) Row dwellings and flats: 1,800 square feet

- (3) Conversion to apartments: 900 square feet per unit
 - (4) Detached dwellings and all other uses: 4,000 square feet
- b) Width:
 - (1) Semi-detached dwellings: 30 feet
 - (2) Row dwellings and flats: 18 feet
 - (3) Conversion to apartments: not prescribed
 - (4) Detached dwellings and all other uses: 40 feet
- 3. Maximum percentage of lot occupancy:
 - a) Row dwellings and flats: 60%
 - b) Conversion to apartments: not prescribed
 - c) Detached and semi-detached dwellings and all other structures: 40%
- 4. Minimum rear yard: 20 feet
- 5. Minimum side yard: none required in most circumstances
- 6. Minimum required parking: one space for each dwelling unit
- 7. PUD guidelines
 - a) Height: 60 feet
 - b) FAR: 1.0
 - c) Yards and courts: as otherwise provided, subject to the Zoning Commission's discretion to approve greater or lesser
 - d) Parking and loading: as otherwise provided, subject to the Zoning Commission's discretion to approve greater or lesser

B. Proposed zoning: R-5-B

1. **General residential district permitting single family, two family and multi-family dwellings, as well as a broad range of institutional uses (e.g., clinic, hospital, museum) as a matter-of-right**
2. **Maximum height: 50 feet**
3. **Maximum FAR: 1.8**
4. **Maximum percentage of lot occupancy: 60%**
5. **Minimum required rear yard – 4 inches per foot of height at the rear, minimum of 15 feet**
6. **Side yard – not required**
7. **Minimum required parking for apartment house use: 1 space for each 2 dwelling units**
8. **PUD guidelines**
 - a) **Height: 60 feet**
 - b) **FAR: 3.0**
 - c) **Yards and courts: as otherwise provided, subject to the Zoning Commission's discretion to approve greater or lesser**
 - d) **Parking and loading: as otherwise provided, subject to the Zoning Commission's discretion to approve greater or lesser**

C. History – R-4 since 1958

D. Zoning of the area: R-4

VII. Description of the proposed project

A. Apartment house with 178 units

B. Convent relocated to corner of T Street and Summit Place and

incorporated into development

- C. Height: maximum of 56 feet
- D. Floor area ratio: 2.64 (240,940 square feet of gross floor area)
 - 1. 220,747 square feet of residential (including former convent)
 - 2. 20,193 square feet of public charter school
- E. Parking:
 - 1. Propose to provide 120 to 140 spaces
 - 2. Garage plan shows 109 spaces plus 19 tandem spaces in underground garage accessed from west end of site on T Street
- F. Loading: 1 berth @ 30 feet accessed from west end of site on T Street
- G. Comparison to matter-of-right and PUD standards for R-5-B
 - 1. Uses: residential and charter school permitted as a matter-of-right
 - 2. Height:
 - a) Matter-of-right: 50 feet
 - b) PUD guideline: 60 feet
 - c) Proposed: 56 feet
 - 3. FAR:
 - a) Matter-of-right: 1.8
 - b) PUD guideline: 3.0
 - c) Proposed: 2.64
 - 4. Proposed total gross floor area of 240,940 square feet is increase in total GFA of approximately 76,866 square feet

VIII. Compliance with PUD evaluation standards of §2403

- A. Impact of project shall be favorable, capable of being mitigated or acceptable (§2403.3)**
 - 1. Project is new residential construction in a residential area**
 - 2. Traffic will have no unacceptable impact on levels of service at build-out, per report by O.R. George & Associates**
 - 3. Proposed height is acceptable and not significantly different from what could be built as matter-of-right**
- B. Project is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan (§2403.4): see section IX, below**
- C. Commission shall “judge, balance, and reconcile the relative value of project amenities and public benefits offered, the degree of development incentives requested and any potential adverse effects” (§2403.8)**
- D. Public benefits and project amenities**
 - 1. New residential development of over 76,000 square feet more than the existing matter-of-right**
 - a) 5 efficiency units**
 - b) 44 junior 1 bedroom units**
 - c) 40 1 bedroom units**
 - d) 86 2 bedroom units**
 - e) 3 3-bedroom units**
 - 2. All of the units will be affordable**
 - a) 50 units will be for very low income households**
 - b) 128 units will be for households making up to 60% of the area median income**

3. Preservation and adaptive reuse of former St. Martin's convent building
4. On-site amenities for building residents, including meeting rooms, computer labs exercise rooms, etc.

balanced against

E. Development incentives:

1. 6 foot increase in height over proposed matter-of-right
2. Increase in total density of approximately 76,866 square feet

F. Areas of flexibility from R-5-B or PUD standards:

1. Lot occupancy

a) Maximum allowed: 60%

b) Provided:

- (1) 74% at ground floor (where most of the building is a parking garage and all residential units face Summit Place and T Street)
- (2) 60% at all upper floors where most of the residential units are located

2. Loading berth:

a) Required: 1 berth @ 55 feet and 1 service/delivery loading space

b) Provided: 1 berth @ 30 feet

IX. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

A. The District Elements

1. The District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Act of 1984 (D.C. Law 5-76, March 9, 1984)

2. The District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Act of 1984 Land Use Element Amendment Act of 1984 (D.C. Law 5-187, February 15, 1985)
3. The Comprehensive Plan Amendments Act of 1989 (D.C. Law 8-129, January 5, 1990)
4. The Comprehensive Plan Amendments Act of 1994 (D.C. Law 10-193, October 19, 1994)
5. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps Approval Resolution of 1996 (Resolution 11-313, May 7, 1996)
6. The Comprehensive Plan Amendments Acts of 1998 (D.C. Law 12-275, April 27, 1999)
7. The Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2006 (D.C. Act 16-637, signed December 28, 2006, pending NCPD review and Congressional layover)

B. Interpretation of the District elements

1. “The primary dynamic of the District elements of the Plan is the overlapping of its elements’ goals. This overlapping is intentional.” (§112.1)
2. “District elements of the Plan should be studied and executed in concert with each other and should be interpreted broadly.” (§111.(a))
3. “The interpretation and implementation of any element should necessarily rely upon, and be respectful of, the objectives and policies of other elements.” (§112.1(b))
4. “An element may be tempered, even defined, by one (1) or more of the other elements. This may occur within one (1) element and between elements. Since the Land Use element integrates the policies and objectives of all other District elements, it should be given greater weight than the other elements.” (§112.1(c))

5. **“The interpretation of the District elements of the Plan should also be guided by the major themes set forth in §101.1, which establish the overall priorities of the District elements of the Plan.” (§112.2)**

C. Major Themes

1. **Stabilize and Improve the District's neighborhoods (§102)**
2. **Respect and improve the physical character of the District (§106)**

D. Land Use element

1. Maps

- a) **Existing Generalized Land Use Map: moderate density residential**
- b) **Proposed Future Land Use Map: moderate density residential**
- c) **Proposed Generalized Policy Map: Neighborhood Conservation Area**
 - (1) **Areas with very little vacant or underutilized land**
 - (2) **Primarily residential in character**
 - (3) **Maintenance of existing land uses and community character anticipated over next 20 years**
 - (4) **Where change occurs, it will be modest in scale and will consist primarily of scattered site infill housing**
 - (5) **Major changes in density not expected but some new development and reuse opportunities are anticipated**
 - (6) **Diversity of land uses and building types should be maintained**
 - (7) **New development should be compatible with existing scale and architectural character**

2. Objectives/Policies for Residential Neighborhoods (§1102)
 - a) "Conserve and enhance the essentially satisfactory qualities of the District's many stable residential neighborhoods" (§1102.1(a))
 - b) "Promote the conservation , enhancement and revitalization of the residential neighborhoods of the District for housing and neighborhood-related uses" (§1104.1(a))

E. Housing element

1. Major policies
 - a) Central theme to "stimulate a wider range of housing choices and strategies through the preservation of sound older stock and the production of new units" (§300.2)
 - b) Housing viewed as "key part of total urban living system that includes access to transportation and shopping centers, the availability of employment and training for suitable employment, neighborhood schools, libraries, recreational facilities, playgrounds, and other public amenities" (§300.4)
2. "Encourage the private sector to meet housing needs through the development of infill housing" (§302.2(f))
3. "Provide zoning incentives, as appropriate, to developers prepared to build low- and moderate-income housing, such as permitting additional densities in exchange for incorporating low- and moderate-income housing in development projects ... " (§303.2(d))
4. "Use Planned Unit Developments ... to encourage the construction or rehabilitation of additional single and multi-family housing at suitable locations" (§306.2(i))
5. "Promote the conservation, enhancement, and revitalization of the residential neighborhoods of the District for housing and neighborhood-related uses" (§1104.1(a))

F. Urban design element:

1. "Preserve and enhance the outstanding physical qualities of District neighborhoods" (§702.1(b))
2. "Design residential, commercial, and all other buildings to complement or enhance the physical character of the District;" (§708.2(a))
3. "Design buildings to include the use of appropriate arrangements of building materials, height, scale, massing, and buffering to complement the immediate region." (§708.2(b))
4. **Areas in Need of New and Improved Character (§712):**
 - a) Objective to "encourage new development or renovation and rehabilitation of older structures in areas with vacant or underused land or buildings to secure a strong, positive physical identity" (§712.1)
 - b) "Encourage well designed development in areas that are vacant, underused or deteriorated. These developments should have strong physical identities." (§712.2(a))
 - c) "Encourage in-fill development of attractive design quality in deteriorated areas to stabilize the physical fabric and to encourage renovation and redevelopment" (§712.2(b))
 - d) "Establish a new physical identity in areas having a strong negative image ..." (§712.2(e))
 - e) "Utilize large-scale development or capital improvement projects as opportunities for establishing a positive image or redirection in deteriorated areas" (§712.2(g))

G. Historic Preservation element

1. "Preserve the important historic features of the District while permitting new development that is compatible with those features (§801.1)

2. Policies for protection and enhancement of historic properties:
 - a) "If the original use or a reasonable intensification of the original use is no longer feasible, appropriate adaptive uses consistent with applicable land use regulations should be encouraged." (§805.1)
 - b) "Historic buildings ...should be moved only when there is no feasible alternative for preservation. If an historic building must be moved, its new setting should complement its historic orientation, and previous sense of place and integrity." (§805.14)
 - c) "The distinguishing original quality or character of historic properties should be protected." (§805.15)
 - d) "New construction on historic landmarks ... should be compatible with the historic architectural character or cultural heritage of the landmark." (§805.16)

H. Ward 5 element

1. Planning focus

"Emphasize development and rehabilitation measures that contribute to an orderly process of neighborhood stabilization" (§1601.1(b))
2. Housing
 - a) "Protect and preserve the ward's stable neighborhoods and its sound housing stack" (§1608.1(a))
 - b) "Stimulate the production of new housing ... to meet the needs of all the ward's residents" (§1608.1b))
 - c) "Reduce the overall cost of housing for low and moderate-income Ward 5 residents" (§1608.1(e))
 - d) "Encourage new and rehabilitated affordable housing for area residents" (§1609.1(a) and (c))

3. **Urban Design**
 - a) "Promote a physical environment that upgrades the ward's aesthetic qualities, enhances neighborhood stability [and] emphasizes neighborhood identity and function" (§1620.1(a))
 - b) "Give special design attention to those areas within the ward that have a poor physical image, where new development can improve the neighborhood's visual qualities ..." (§1621.1(b))
4. **Historic preservation: "Identify, designate, protect and enhance the ward's historic resources" (§1623.1(a))**
5. **Land Use: "Protect and enhance the stability of residential neighborhoods" (§1629.1(a))**

X. Conclusions

- A. **Project is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan**
- B. **Project is within the applicable height and bulk standards of the Zoning Regulations**
- C. **Project provides an appropriate balance between the development proposed, the flexibility requested and the benefits and amenities provided**
- D. **PUD allows the Zoning Commission to condition approval to what is specifically proposed, without allowing more density or uncontrolled development**
- E. **Project should be approved**