

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: D. C. Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director *JS*

DATE: November 9, 2007

SUBJECT: Preliminary Hearing Report on Zoning Commission Case Number 07-27, a Request Approval of a Planned Unit Development on Property Located 3015 4th Street, NE (Square 3648 Lot 808)

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

APPLICATION

On September 14, 2007, the Office of Zoning received an application from EYA, LLC and the Missionary Society of Saint Paul the Apostle, the applicants, requesting Zoning Commission review and approval of a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related zoning map Amendment to change the zoning of the proposed development site from Residential (R-5-A) with a Mixed Use Diplomatic (D) overlay district to R-5-B district.

The applicants propose to develop a community of 251 row house dwellings on individual lots in two phases

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the Zoning Commission set down this application for a public hearing.

AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject property is the Missionary Society of Saint Paul the Apostle (Saint Paul's College) that occupies an area of approximately 857,300 square feet (19.68 acres). Except for the four-story stone building, parking lots and drive aisles to overall tract is largely undeveloped. Two driveways provide vehicular access into the site from 4th and Hamlin Streets, NE. The proposed PUD site would occupy 444,312 square feet (approximately 10 acres) along the southern and eastern boundaries of the campus.

Surrounding development consists of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops office building to the north; two-story row dwellings to the south; and buildings housing the Religious Order of Mary Immaculate Cent Maria and Holy Redeemer College (The Redempterists), University Hall apartments and two and one-half story row dwellings to the east along 7th Street.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

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CASE NO. 07-27
EXHIBIT NO. 14
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 07-27
EXHIBIT NO. 14

Properties to the west across 4th Street NE are developed with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and Trinity College.

The subject property and properties to the east and west are in a D/R-5-A district. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops site to the north is in a Special Purpose (SP) district with a D overlay district, and properties to the south and further east across 7th Street are in a Residential (R-4) district (refer to Exhibit 1).

ZONING REVIEW

The current R-5-A district and proposed R-5-B allow the following:

Standard	R-5-A Requirement	R-5-B PUD Requirement	Proposal	Required Relief
Minimum Area for PUD	--	43,560 s.f. (1 acre)	444,312 s.f. (10 acres)	None
Height	40 feet/ 3 stories	60 feet unlimited stories	38-48 feet 3-4 stories	None
Floor Area Ratio (residential)	--	3.0 FAR	1.21 FAR 536,800 s.f./251 units	None
PUD bonus density	--	--	2.0 FAR ²	--
Affordable Housing	--	--	23 units	--
Lot Occupancy	40%	60%	33.5%	None
Parking (on-site)	1 space/unit	1 space/2 units 126 spaces	542 spaces (2+ spaces/unit)	None

Thus the map amendment would accommodate the proposed development density. Note the D overlay district does not impact the matter-of-right area and bulk provisions of the base zone district.

The proposal also requires approval of a theoretical subdivision per § 2516 because all the dwellings and residential lots created would lack frontage on a public street. According to this submission, the proposed subdivision meets nearly all the orientation, open space and yard requirements of the regulations, however:

- 14 units (nearly 6%) would lack the minimum open space (equal to a 15-foot rear yard) required under § 404.1; and
- 23 of 251 row houses (9%) would not meet the 8-foot side yard setback required under § 405.2.

¹ based on area calculations in the submitted plans

² the proposal does not take advantage the additional FAR available under the PUD

Based on this information, this development would require relief from the referenced zoning provisions.

Regarding the minimum requirements for a Planned Unit Development, the overall land area of over 10 acres exceeds the minimum 1.0 acre required for a PUD in the proposed R-5-B district under § 250 1.1 (b). The application lists the primary amenities of this proposal as urban design; distinct architecture that would set a standard in the community; home ownership opportunities and affordable home ownership opportunities; site planning that converts the sloped open space into an extension of the nearby residential neighborhood; employment and training opportunities through a Department of Employment Services' First Source Employment and Program agreement and making maximum use of recognized local small and disadvantaged businesses (LSDBs) during the development process.

Additional amenities described as of special value to the community include \$1.25 million worth of improvements to the public infrastructure and \$150-200,000 improvement to the District of Columbia's "Triangle Park" located within 150 feet of the campus.

The Generalized Land Use Map designates the St. Paul's College campus for Institutional use characterized by colleges and university, hospitals, religious institutions and similar facilities, a designation indicative of what currently exists. Properties south of the campus and east across 4th Street NE are designated for Moderate Density residential use characterized by row house neighborhoods and well as low-rise garden apartment complexes. The existing R-5-A district and proposed R-5-B district are designated moderate-density residence districts. *Although this proposal represents a change in use from institutional, this development and the associated zone map change would not be inconsistent with the abutting land use designation.*

The proposal also furthers several themes and policies in 2006 Comprehensive Plan:

- With regard to the Upper Northeast Area Element:
 - Neighborhood Conservation (Policy UNE-1.1.1) emphasizes, "Protect and enhance the stable neighborhoods of Upper Northeast, such as ... *Brookland* *The residential character of these areas shall be conserved, and places of historic significance, gateways, parks, and special places shall be enhanced* [2408.2]."
 - Compatible Infill (Policy UNE-1.1.2) says, "*Encourage compatible residential infill development throughout Upper Northeast neighborhoods ... where numerous scattered vacant residentially-zoned properties exist. Such development should be consistent with the designations on the Future Land Use Map. New and rehabilitated housing in these areas should meet the needs of a diverse community that includes renters and owners; seniors, young adults, and families; and persons of low and very low income as well as those of moderate and higher incomes* [2408.3]."
 - Institutional Open Space (Policy UNE-1.2. 7) emphasizes, "*Recognize the particular importance of institutional open space to the character of Upper Northeast, particularly in and around Brookland ... In the event that large institutional uses are redeveloped in the future, pursue opportunities to dedicate*

substantial areas as new neighborhood parks and open spaces [2409.7]"

- With regard to value of public open space:
 - Maximizing Our Assets (PROS-4.0) states, "The government of the District of Columbia has neither the land nor the dollars to completely meet recreational needs of its residents. *Through collaboration and partnerships, community resources can be leveraged to dramatically improve access to open space and recreational services [815.1]"*
 - Recognizing the Value of Functional Open Space (PROS-4.2) states, "*Functional open space refers to undeveloped land used for purposes other than parks and conservation. Such space comprises hundreds of acres of public and private land in the District, including sites that are valued for their large trees, scenic vistas, and natural beauty. Some of these sites are regarded as public amenities, with features like hiking trails and lawns for picnics and other forms of recreation. Such spaces are particularly important in neighborhoods like Brookland, where conventional parks are in short supply. There and elsewhere in the District, the grounds of seminaries, hospitals, and cemeteries are informally serving some of the functions usually associated with a neighborhood park. [817.1]*

Retaining public access to these assets is important to the well-being of surrounding neighborhoods. Even where public access is not possible, the role of these spaces in improving the physical environment and shaping the visual quality of our neighborhood should be acknowledged. [817.2]"

- With regard to urban design:
 - "*Regardless of neighborhood identity, overpowering contrasts in scale, height, and density should be avoided as infill development occurs. High quality materials that are durable and rich in texture and details should be encouraged. Firmly established building forms and landscape elements should be reinforced. [910.4]"*
 - Areas of Strong Architectural Character (Policy UD-2.2.2) states, "*Preserve the architectural continuity and design integrity of historic districts and other areas of strong architectural character. New development within such areas does not need to replicate prevailing architectural styles exactly but should be complementary in form, height, and bulk [910.8]."*
- With regards to housing:
 - Expanding Housing Supply (Policy H-1.1), explains, "*Expanding the housing supply is a key part of the District's vision to create successful neighborhoods. Along with improved transportation and shopping, better neighborhood schools and parks, preservation of historic resources, and improved design and identity, the production of housing is essential to the future of our neighborhoods. It is also a key to improving the city's fiscal health. The District will work to facilitate housing construction and rehabilitation through its planning, building, and housing*

programs, recognizing and responding to the needs of all segments of the community. *The first step toward meeting this goal is to ensure that an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land is available to meet expected housing needs [503.1].*" Specifically this policy highlights the need for:

- Private Sector Support (Policy H-1.1.1) that, *"Encourage(s) 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 [503.2]."*
 - Balanced Growth (Policy H-1.1.3) that would, *"Strongly encourage the development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land in all parts of the city. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long-term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for higher density housing [503.4]."*
 - Housing Quality (Policy H-1.1.5) that, *"Require(s) the design of affordable housing to meet the same high-quality architectural standards required of market-rate housing. Regardless of its affordability level, new or renovated housing should be indistinguishable from market rate housing in its exterior appearance and should address the need for open space and recreational amenities, and respect the design integrity of adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood [503.6]."*
 - Affordable Housing Production as a Civic Priority (Policy H-1.2.1) in order to, *"Establish the production of housing for low and moderate income households as a major civic priority, to be supported through public programs that stimulate affordable housing production and rehabilitation throughout the city [504.8]."*
- With regards to Citywide Policies, the Comprehensive Plan supports:
 - Development Around Metrorail Stations (Policy LU-1.3.2) that would, *"Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance. Ensure that development above and around such stations emphasizes land uses and building forms which minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas [306.11]."*
 - Infill Development (Policy LU-1.4.1) that, *"Encourage(s) infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create 'gaps' in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street [307.4]."*

The project also furthers the environmental elements through street tree planting and maintenance (Policy E1-1.1.1), retaining the majority of existing mature trees on the site (Policy E-1.1.2), and providing landscaping and other improvement to existing public space across 4th Street, NE (Policy E-1.1.3).

The proposal would support these policies by:

- Providing 251 units of housing and affordable housing opportunities within distance of transit routes and the Brookland-Catholic University of America Metro rail station approximately 1,500 feet from the site;
- Creating a new development that would be an extension of the existing neighborhood fabric and streets including 5th and 6th Streets, Hamlin and Jackson Streets;
- Constructing building facades that would be visible from the street with an distinctive design reflective of the stone collegiate gothic architecture of the seminary; and
- Enhancing the existing underutilize open space in District of Columbia's "Triangle Park across 4th Street NE.

Smart Growth Assessment

This development proposal and zone change would support the following Smart Growth principles:

- Take Advantage of Compact Building Design: Using the requested land use flexibility for a compact development that significantly increases housing density while retaining much of the existing open space;
- Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices: Creating addition housing and affordable housing opportunities in a desirable location to live, work, worship and within walking distance of a Metro rail station;
- Create Walkable Neighborhoods: Adding residential density in the vicinity of a Metro rail and area planned for expanded housing and shopping opportunities;
- Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities: Developing this residential project to reflect the best of the existing architectural character, and as an extension of the existing street network and neighborhood form; and
- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place: Project appears to reinforce the unique qualities of building architecture in the surrounding area.

Based on this information, OP concludes the proposed PUD does not appear inconsistent with Comprehensive Plan and support Plan goals and policies. Therefore, the Office of Planning recommends scheduling this PUD request for public hearing while noting issues that need further examination such as:

- Affordable Housing: The applicant proposed to allocate 23 units of the 251 units to be affordable. OP requested additional information about the size, type (1, 2, and 3 bedroom) and location of the affordable rental units: the total floor area of these units; and whether the variety of affordable unit types is reflective of the overall development;
- Environmental Impacts: How the proposed environmental benefits and building design and systems rate according to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)

criteria;

- Streetscape Improvements: Specifics about whether proposed park improvements, whether these improvements are acceptable to the District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation, and an agreement clarifying the long-term the maintenance responsibility; and
- Other Public Improvements: Further explanation as to how proposed public infrastructural improvements exceed the degree or amount required for this development proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the Zoning Commission set down this application for a public hearing.

Attachments: Exhibit 1 Aerial with Zoning

JS/afj



**Zoning Commission Application No. 07-27
St. Paul's College PUD**



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Legend

-  Tax Lots
-  Record Lots
-  Parcels
-  Zoning Districts
-  Street Centerlines