



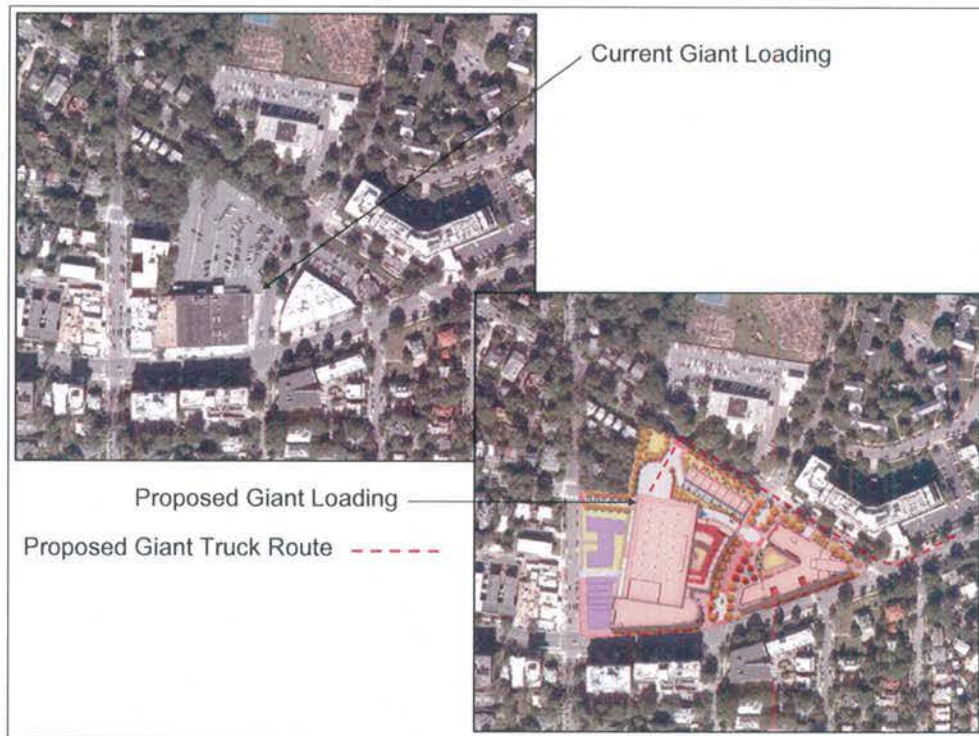
3300 Idaho Testimony

Zoning Commission Case 08-15

April 6, 2009

Good evening. My name is Tom Haines and I am speaking on behalf of the 3300 Idaho party, which represents all the homes on that block of Idaho .

We oppose the unconditional approval of the proposed Giant PUD. We support the goal of a redeveloped Giant store and revitalized neighbourhood-serving retail stores, consistent with the intentions of the Comprehensive Plan. This proposed **PUD** exceeds the guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan in terms of scale and density. Also, it **unnecessarily imposes adverse impacts** on our neighbourhood which far outweigh any ability of the applicant to mitigate them.



The loading operation is in the portion of Giant property which is deepest inside the residential neighbourhood and over 650 ft. from the main corridor (i.e., from the Wisconsin/Idaho intersection).

These changes will remove the buffer that exists between our homes and the Giant loading operation, which today is substantial because the current R-5-A parcel creates a large distance as well as space, light, and air. As the Rock Creek West element of the Comprehensive Plan notes, even surface parking lots provide significant buffer (1) . We will also lose a substantial amount of dense natural vegetation and mature trees.



2) The location and scale of the truck entrance/loading dock is simply incompatible with the residential character of Idaho avenue. Here is a rendering which includes Philip Montalto's house at 3321 Idaho avenue. Bisecting a residential street with a truck entrance/loading dock is **not a sensible transition** between commercial and residential uses, and sets a **poor planning precedent**. The physical incongruity of this is obvious.

The proposed PUD loading plan will **denigrate** the **use**, **quiet enjoyment**, and **resale value** of our

properties – **effectively transferring equity from us to the applicant**.

The proposed PUD provides no documentation for projecting the number of trucks which will use

the new facility. The applicant asserts (2) that the Giant is served by "5-6 tractor trailer trucks and 25-30 single-unit vendor trucks per day", and claims that the new Giant, although nearly three times the size, will be served by the same number of trucks. The Traffic Study Peer Review conducted by PSI, estimates 8 tractor trailer trucks for this size grocery store. Even without more truck deliveries, which are likely, this is unacceptable on a residentially zoned street.



3) The Idaho avenue loading dock is for the grocery store only. Deliveries for other parts of the SP are to be made through a public alley accessed from Macomb street, which also handles trash for the adjacent apartment building and restaurant. This loading berth off Macomb alley is inadequate, and will likely result in overflow problems on Macomb and Idaho, exacerbating an existing problem.

ANC3C recognized this in their resolution.

Comparing north parcel (NP) and south parcel (SP) loading is helpful here.

- For 31K s.f. of retail in the NP, regulations require 1 30-ft. and 1 55-ft. berth (3) . Instead the proposed PUD proposes 2 30-ft berths to serve the retail and the 124 residential units there. The applicant and DDOT recognize this might not be sufficient (4) .

- Similar to the NP, there are 32K s.f. of non-Giant retail on the SP, for which regulations require 1 30-ft and 1 55-ft berth to service (5) . For this commercial space, the PUD provides only 1 30-ft berth which would also service 17K s.f of office/flex space and 14 apartments.





How, exactly, will the Macomb alley be “managed”?

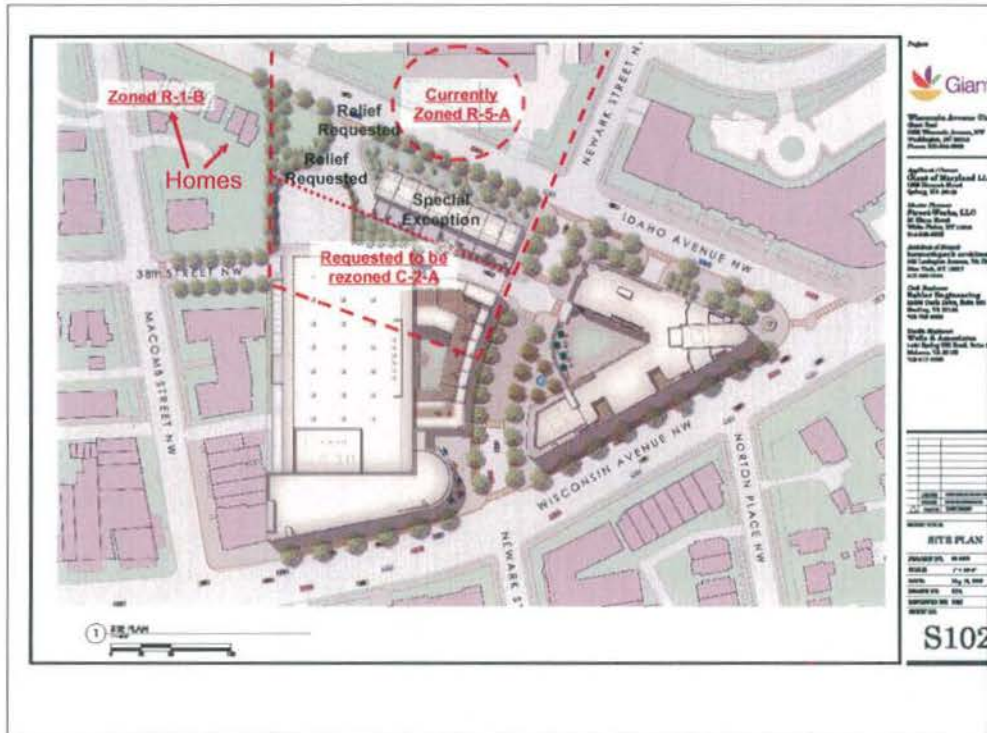
– The proposed PUD claims to make up for the shortage of non-Giant SP loading berths by putting twice the amount that regulations require for the grocery store itself (6). But this does not solve the capacity problem off Macomb, because the grocery store loading facility has no physical connection to other SP space, so Giant’s loading facility is of no use to non-Giant SP retail and apartments.

The Traffic Study Peer Review by PSI estimates the daily capacity of the dock to be for 28 trucks and the demand is predicted at 68. This constitutes a 143% overflow!



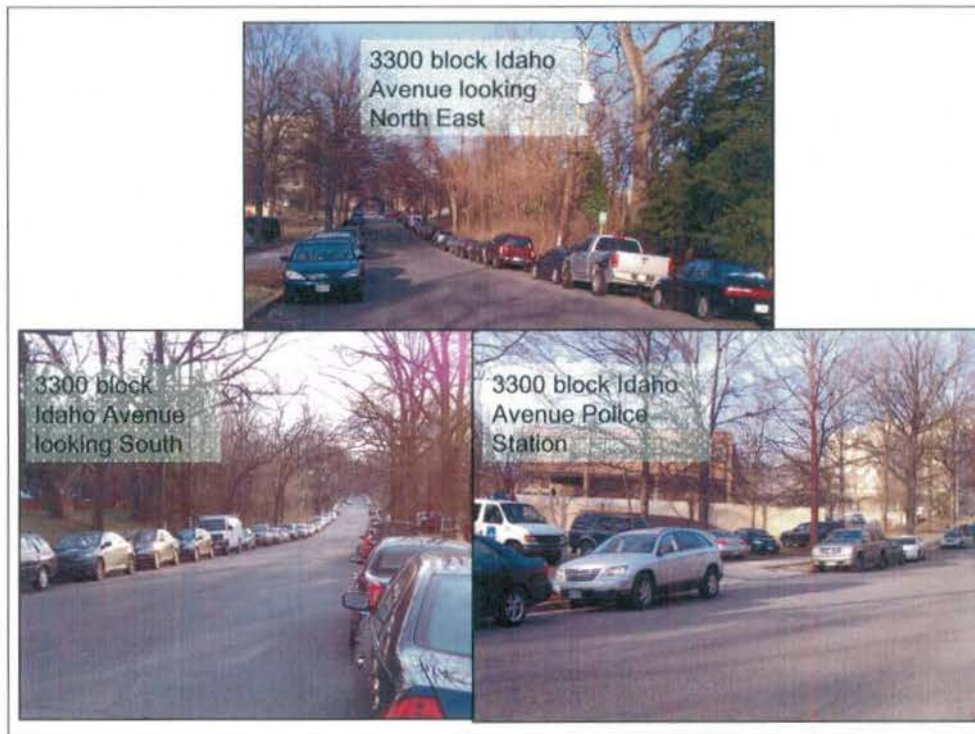
Overflow and its consequences:

The applicant acknowledges that the loading capacity is probably insufficient and that spill-over is possible (7) . In fact, pre-PUD conditions suggest it is likely: on Sept 16, 2008 there were 11 trucks on the Giant property at one time (8) . There are only 10 spaces provided in the PUD.



Where will the spill-over trucks from the loading dock off Macomb go? They will likely proceed down Macomb, then turn right onto Idaho, and wait (on the Giant loading "apron") for a berth to open, adding to already severe parking and traffic problems on Macomb and Idaho.

This will add to an already too-large number of trucks crossing the SP Idaho curb-cut each day.



The street parking on Idaho is already packed.

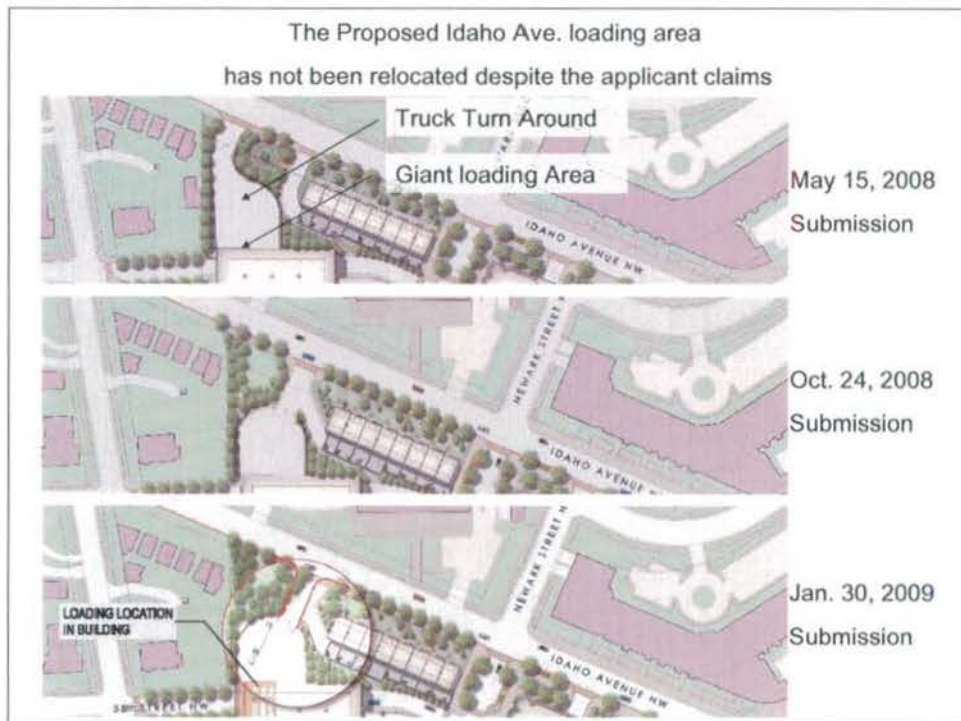
In top photo, note the dense buffer of vegetation separating 3300 Idaho from the Giant parking lot.



PUD Mitigations are ineffective

Adverse impacts for the residents of 3300 Idaho avenue have been recognized in public meetings with ANC, DDOT, and Street-works. The applicant's minor revisions of their initial plans do not remove the adverse impacts. Here we see how they moved the truck entrance, but nothing else.

- The PUD proposed a Truck Management Plan and noise mitigation measures in the attempt to mitigate the above adverse impacts on Idaho avenue residents. These measures are not adequate. In particular the noise mitigation measures are very narrowly addressed to the sight and sound of trucks as they use the turn-around and loading facility, not to the sight and sound of trucks on the street. Also, they have not mitigated the physical incongruity of a large-scale truck loading operation placed unnecessarily in the middle of our residential street. No where in the applicant's Truck Management Plan do they indicate that they can ensure the truck's arrival at such intervals to avoid any queuing. The sheer number of these trucks on our residential streets and the proximity to our homes would change the character of our neighbourhood. Who can deny this?



- Developers propose 15 or 20 foot acoustic barriers for the turn-around and loading dock, and assert that surrounding property owners will not be adversely impacted because Giant will comply with DC noise regulations (9) . We disagree with this.

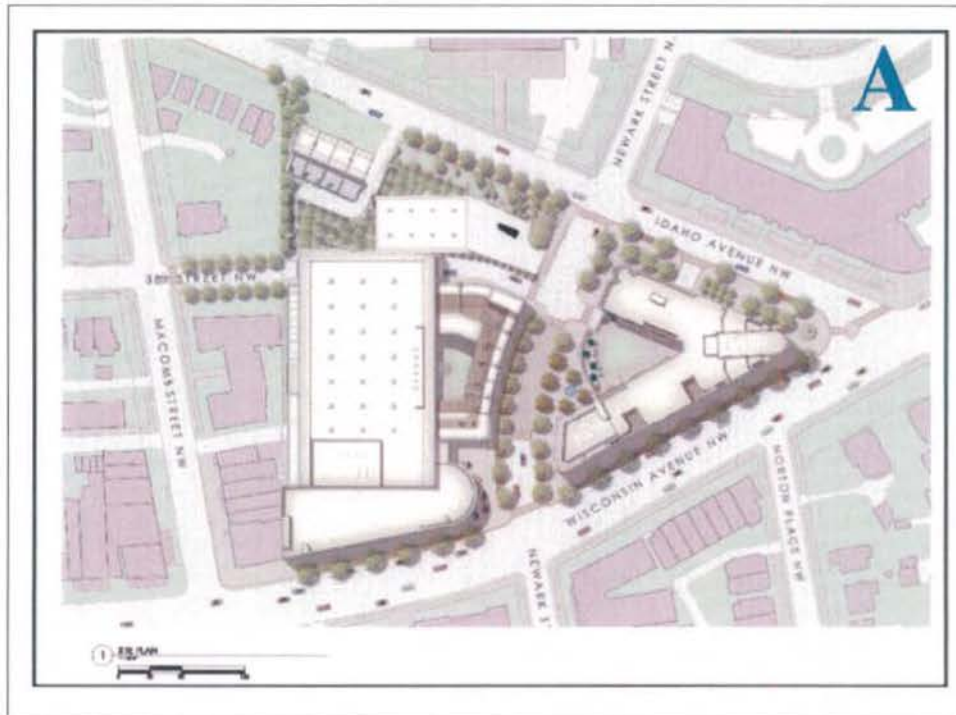
NOTE: (a) DC regulates only noise from loading operations (max 60 dbA for day-time loading) not truck noise per se. But truck noise is *still* an adverse impact, and the noise study shows unacceptable truck noise, even with mitigations:

(FOR EXAMPLE, see TABLE 4:) Loc. 2a (Montalto's 2nd floor): Max 78-88 dbA with 15-ft barrier; 72-83 dbA with 20-ft barrier.

Let me remind you that an increase of 10 dbA corresponds to a doubling of loudness.

(b) Loading dock will violate DC noise regulations when docks are open unless all loading activity is halted until they close again.

How likely are they to halt if those doors are expected to be opened 60 or more times each day?

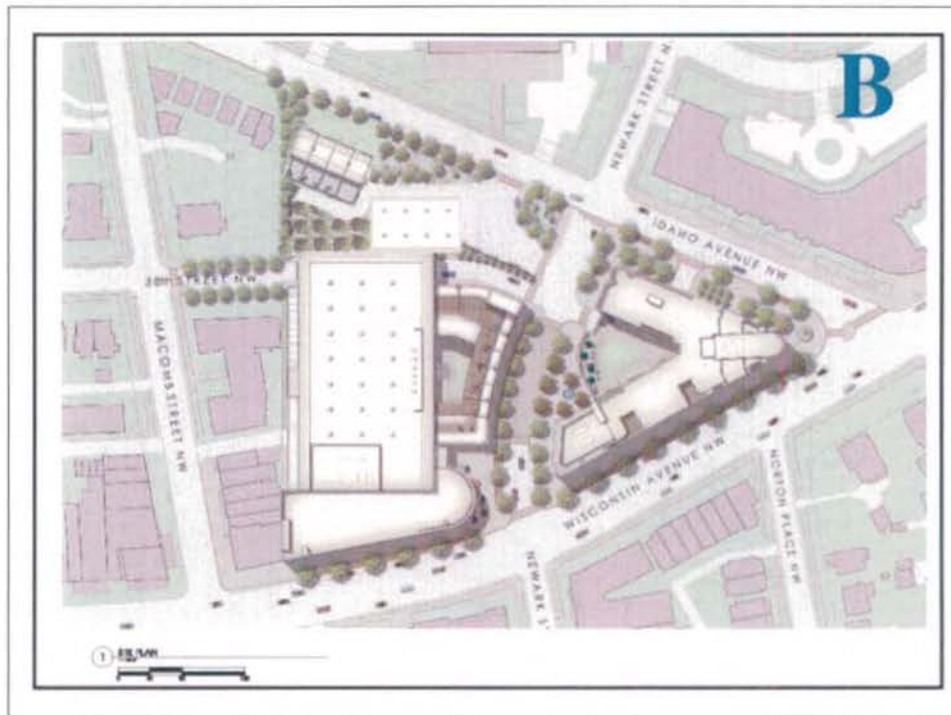


Alternate grocery loading configurations

ALL THESE IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS ARE UNNECESSARY!. We have designed alternatives which solve the alleged engineering problems, create harmonious transitions, and restore a **genuine buffer** between our homes and the Giant loading activities. After ignoring our pleas for months, the applicant finally requested our alternatives in late January and has not yet responded to them.

MAIN IDEA: The grocery loading dock can be moved closer to Newark by separating it from the grocery store, and the truck entrance is near the Idaho/Newark intersection. The row houses are built next to existing homes.

What follows are more detailed descriptions.



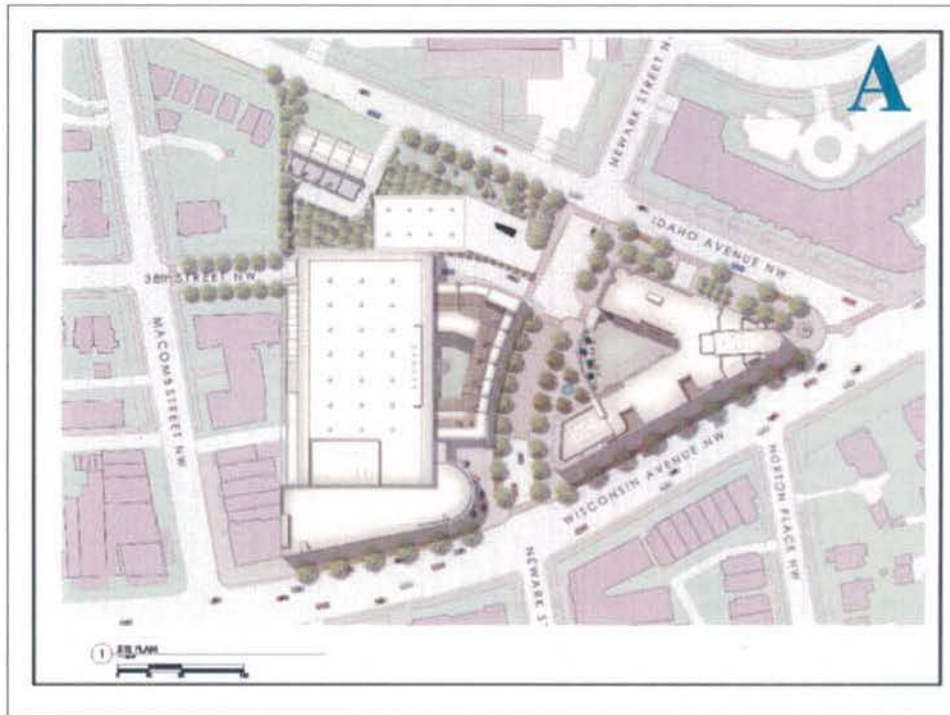
Common features of these alternatives

The loading dock would be separated from the grocery store and made into a separate covered structure closer to the corner of Newark/Idaho but having its rear close to the northwest corner of the grocery store. Since it would be separate, it would not need to be at the low elevation of 346' where it is currently proposed; it could be at 360' or higher, effectively removing any issues related to grades which trucks would need to negotiate in using Newark as the truck entrance point.

Elevators would take wares to any floor of the grocery store. Internal corridors would be used to move wares from the loading dock elevators to the rear of the grocery store.

Separating the loading dock from the grocery store would create additional room for parking under the grocery store.

In both of the these arrangements, trucks would still enter the area by turning onto Idaho from Wisconsin and they would leave the area the same way. Also, in both arrangements, the planned townhouses would be moved down Idaho, next to established residences. The geometry suggests that the applicant would have to give up some of the townhouses (retaining perhaps 4 or 5 of the 8). However, we note that our arrangement would make each townhouse that is built more valuable.



Movement of trucks in plans

Plan A The truck entrance/egress would be on Newark, slightly northwest of the proposed car entrance. Tractor-trailer trucks could back straight into the dock off Newark street (as they do today; Giant estimates (10) that the number of tractor-trailer trucks using the new facility will be 5-6 a day). Single-unit vendor trucks (11), being smaller, could enter off Newark head-first, then turn around using a Y-shaped turn-around pattern, and then back into the docks.

Plan B This is a one-way system where all trucks would enter from Idaho a little bit south of Newark, and exit off Newark, making a loop. To enter the dock, trucks would pull into the loop and approach Newark and straighten-out, and then back into the dock; to exit they would pull straight onto Newark, and then right on Idaho toward Wisconsin.

Some advantages of alternatives:

- Each townhouse is more valuable and could be made with larger footprint;
- harmonious and sensible transition between commercial and residential uses;
- genuine buffer, in form of townhouses between 3300 Idaho and commercial activity, creating continuous residential area;
- noise/visual mitigation unnecessary;
- they have the support of 3300 Idaho residents, if architecturally consistent with our homes;

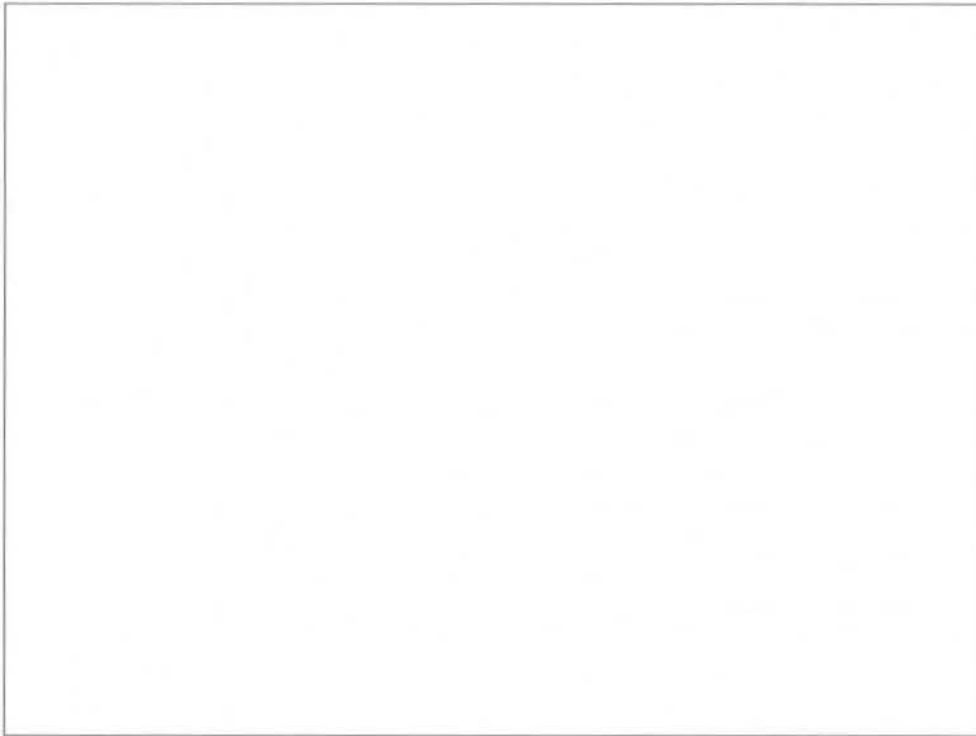


- removing the loading dock from the grocery store will yield additional room for parking, partially allaying community concerns about inadequacy of parking provided by the PUD. By our count, the footprint of the current proposed loading dock contains room for 21 parking spaces;
- if the grocery store loading dock ends up being used to service the SP retail/office space (as the ANC resolution suggests), the new location very close to SP retail would make this more practical.

Conclusion:

If this redevelopment is approved in any form, we respectfully ask Zoning Commissioners to ensure not only that it works well but that it does no harm to those who are supposed to benefit from it, especially those who live closest to it. As proposed, this PUD takes advantage of every square inch in order to maximize development, making it nearly impossible to mitigate the adverse impacts on residents. We have learned to live with the by police car sirens that operate 24 hours a day that leave the 2nd Police District across the street, do the residents deserve to see their street turned into the backside of a commercial center? The 3300 Idaho residents, like all DC residents, deserve and expect the protection of zoning laws. We implore you to ask yourselves: Does this PUD really have “exceptional merit”, when it imposes such adverse impacts unnecessarily?

Thank you.



Notes

- (1) RCW element, Intro "b....Along parts of ...Wisconsin Avenue[s],multi-story apartment buildings abut single family homes along rear lot lines. These uses ... coexist in part because of the significant buffering effects of open space, parking lots,[etc]."
- (2) Aug. 5, 2008 email from David Avitabile.
- (3) Table 3-1, Ex. F of the Oct. 24, 2008 PUD submission
- (4) See Exhibit E, p. 2:"Together with DDOT, the Applicant will monitor the use of the loading docks during the first three months of building occupancy. If warranted, DDOT will add a dedicated curb-side loading zone on the east side of Idaho Avenue."
- (5) Ex. F, Table 3-1, p. 14
- (6) Ex. F, Table 3-1
- (7) Ex. F, p. 13: "In addition, space will be available on the apron to the Giant loading berths to temporarily store a tractor-trailer truck and/or single-unit box trucks in the unlikely event that all of the seven loading berths and the three service spaces are occupied at one time."
- (8) The Sept. 16, 2008 truck count done by Wells and Assoc.
- (9) (Page 2 of Jan 30, 2009 Supplemental): "As a result of these noise control improvements, noise generated by the proposed Giant will comply with the DC noise regulations. Therefore the proposed Giant will not impose adverse impacts on surrounding property owners due to noise"
- (10) Aug. 5, 2008 email from David Avitabile.
- (11) Expected (cf. email from Avitabile) to be 25-30 per day.

Summary and Recommendation

- Per ITE Trip Generation Handbook, currently **4,630** daily trips generated, and **8,687** daily trips after the development
- A link count collected by Wells & Associates seems quite low: **1,308** versus **2,136** (PSI count), a 40% difference
- Future no. of daily tractor-trailers is estimated to be **eight (8)**; potholes and deformation of pavement surface
- It is a rare practice in DC to use **650** feet of local street as a truck route, or to position a major loading facility in the middle of a low-density residential street; it is recommended that this loading facility be relocated closer to Newark Street
- The 30-foot loading berth @ the alley off Macomb Street does not provide enough capacity; the overflow rate is **143%** (40 daily trucks)
- The PUD does not provide sufficient commercial parking spaces; the peak-period spillover rate (onto local streets) is **45%** (160 cars)



Link Count Comparison



Truck Overflow Rate, Macomb Street Alley

- Macomb Alley loading capacity: 28 trucks per day (30-min periods from 7am to 9pm)
- Demand at this loading facility

Land Use	Area	Daily Truck Trips Per 1,000 GSF	Estimated Trip
Office Buildings	17320	0.2	3.5
Soft Retail	32155	2	64.3
Total			67.8

- Overflow rate: $(68\text{trucks}-28\text{trucks}) / 28\text{trucks} = 143\%$

