

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



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Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director *JLS*

DATE: October 31, 2008

SUBJECT: Case No. **ZC-08-26: Setdown Report** for Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Zoning Map Amendment for 3232 Georgia Avenue, N.W., filed by Holland & Knight LLP for Lamont Limited Partnership

APPLICATION

Lamont Limited Partnership has applied for a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and a related map amendment to rezone the site from the GA/C-2-A and R-4 to GA/C-2-B to accommodate a 69-unit apartment building with 10,560 square feet of ground floor retail and 29 below grade parking spaces.

A separate application filed with the Office of the Surveyor is a request to close the portion of the public alley that divides the property in two and establishes a 20-foot wide easement for public ingress and egress in place of the existing public alley.

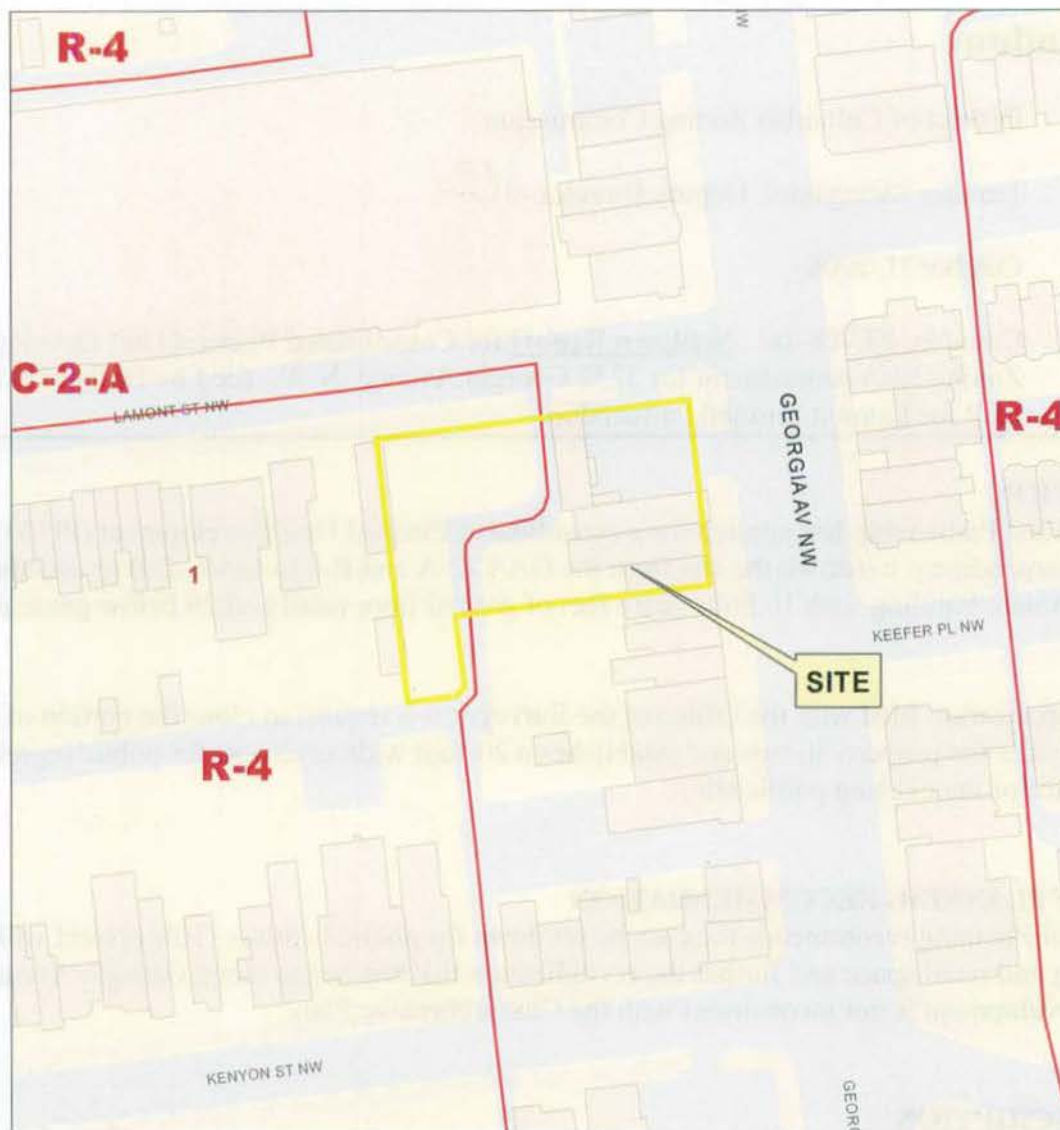
OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends the case be set down for public hearing. This project will provide new housing and retail space and further the revitalization that has begun along Georgia Avenue. The proposed development is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

AREA DESCRIPTION

Square: 2892	Lots: 98, 903, 904, 908 & 911	Quadrant: North West
Area: 19,191 SF	Zone Districts: GA/C-2-A & R-4	Historic District: None
Overlay District: Georgia Avenue	Building Restriction Line: None	

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. *CE-26*
EXHIBIT NO. *13*



Zoning Vicinity Map

Surrounding Properties:

- North:** Across Lamont Street, a two-story commercial building, the 5-story Lamont Lofts apartment building and a one-story industrial building housing "Linens of Week" within the GA/C-2-A zone district.
- South:** One and two-story commercial buildings within the GA/C-2-A zone district, some of which are vacant.
- East:** Across Georgia Avenue, one and two-story commercial buildings within the GA/C-2-A zone district. A five-story mixed use residential and retail

West: building is proposed for the vacant lot at the northeast corner of Georgia Avenue and Kenyon Street.
Across the public alley, two, three and four-story row houses and apartment houses within the R-4 zone district.

The GA/C-2-A portion of the subject property is developed with one and two-story commercial buildings, some of which are vacant. The R-4 portion of the site, located west of the public alley, is improved as a surface parking lot.

The subject property is located approximately three-quarters of a mile south of the Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metrorail station on the Green Line.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to construct a six-story mixed-use building with 69 dwelling units and two commercial spaces on the ground floor comprising 10,560 square feet. One of the commercial spaces will face Georgia Avenue; the other will be located at the corner and will face both Georgia Avenue and Lamont Street. At least 50 percent of the residential units would be affordable at 60 to 80 percent AMI.

Access to the apartment building would be from Lamont Street via a lobby located in the northwest corner of the building. The elevators, mailroom and the leasing office would be located off this lobby. On the second floor would be a 952 square-foot community room adjacent to a 406 square-foot outdoor space on a portion of the roof above the first floor, for a total of 1,358 square feet of community space available to the residents of the building.

A cool roof would occupy the majority of the roof above the sixth floor. A recreational area, in the northeast corner of the building, would be improved with a trellis and outdoor seating. Rooftop walkways would connect this recreational area with the two staircases and the elevator shaft.

Rear access to the building would be from a proposed 20-foot wide ingress/egress easement for public use. This easement would replace an existing alley system that currently snakes through the subject property. The applicant has informed the Office of Planning that a separate application to close the existing alley and establish the 20-foot wide easement will be filed with the Office of the Surveyor.

Twenty-nine underground parking spaces would be located within a one-level garage beneath the structure. Access to the garage would be from the proposed 20-foot wide easement. Two handicapped accessible parking spaces and nine compact parking spaces are included in the 29 spaces. A bicycle rack would also be included within the garage. Separate residential and retail lobbies would be provided on the garage level to separate pedestrian movement within the building, and provide security for the residents.

One loading space would be located with direct access from the ingress/egress easement for shared use between the retail and residential uses of the building. A service/delivery space would be located outside the building, accessible from either the easement or the public alley system.

Design of the building is generally in the shape of an inverted 'U' for floors two through six. The shape would create a closed court on the south side of the building. The first floor of the building would not include the courtyard, allowing for a more contiguous retail space on the ground floor. The roof over this retail space would allow for a common residential roof space adjacent to the community room and provide outdoor space for three of the residential units.

On the roof of the building, at the corner of Georgia and Lamont, would be a trellis. This trellis would contribute not only to the design of the building by establishing an architectural embellishment at the corner, but also provide a recreational area on the roof for the residents.

Along the Georgia Avenue and Lamont Street sides of the building the exterior would be a combination of two tones of brick, a veneer of high density CMU and EIFS. The EIFS would be used to form rectangular blocks around the residential windows. The retail store fronts would include canopies and a special curved entrance canopy would be provided on Lamont Street for the residential portion of the building, differentiating that portion of the building from the retail spaces.

The rear of the building, facing the 20-foot wide easement, would be primarily brick, but would also include windows framed in rectangular blocks of EIFS similar to the two street facades of the building. The edges of the building would be framed in brick for the first four floors on the north side and the first through fifth on the south. EIFS would be used to demarcate piers between the banks of windows, complementing the brick along the edges of the building. As is proposed for the two street frontages, EIFS would also be used to form rectangular blocks around the residential windows. This side will also provide the garage entrance and loading access to the building.

The south side of the building will include no windows, with the exception of those located within the courtyard to prevent the introduction of at-risk windows. A combination of brick and patterned EIFS partially mimicking the Lamont Street and Georgia Avenue facades of the building will complete the southern façade.

ZONING

The site is currently zoned GA/C-2-A and R-4 and is divided into five lots. The four lots located east of the public alley are zoned GA/C-2-A and the lot west of the alley is zoned R-4. The application proposes to consolidate the lots and zone the entire site GA/C-2-B, close the public alley and establish a 20-foot wide public access ingress/egress easement on the west side of the property. The project is designed to conform to the permitted height and FAR for the requested GA/C-2-B Zone District.

The following table is a comparison of the C-2-A, R-4 and C-2-B/PUD standards, and the proposed development:

Table 1

	GA/C-2-A	R-4	GA/C-2-B/PUD	Proposal
Area	N/A		10,000 SF	19,191 SF
Height	50 ft.	40 ft.	90 ft.	80 ft.
FAR	Retail – 1.50 Residential – 2.50 TOTAL – 2.50	N/A	Retail – 2.00 Residential – 6.00 TOTAL – 6.00	Retail – 0.55 Residential – 3.96 TOTAL – 4.51
Lot Occupancy	Non-Residential-100% Residential- 70%	60%	80%	79%
Parking	<u>Retail</u> –1/ 300 SF after the first 3,000 SF <u>Residential</u> -1/2 units	<u>Residential</u> – 1 per unit	<u>Retail</u> –1/ 750 SF after the first 3,000 SF or 10 <u>Residential</u> –1/ 3 units or 23 TOTAL - 33	<u>Retail</u> –10 <u>Residential</u> - 19 ¹ TOTAL - 29¹
Loading	1 loading berth @ 55 ft deep 1 loading berth @ 30 ft deep 1 loading platform @ 200 SF 1 loading platform @ 100 SF No service/delivery space required	N/A	1 loading berth @ 55 ft deep 1 loading berth @ 30 ft deep 1 loading platform @ 200 SF 1 loading platform @ 100 SF 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	1 loading berth @ 30 ft deep ¹ 1 loading platform @ 120 SF ¹ 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft

¹ Relief requested

FLEXIBILITY

The following relief is required from the Zoning Regulations:

PUD and Related Map Amendment

The applicant has requested a PUD related map amendment from GA/C-2-A and R-4 to GA/C-2-B to gain between 30 and 40 feet in building height, add approximately 48,969 square feet in floor area and increase the FAR from 2.5 to 4.51 over that permitted as a matter-of-right.

Parking

§ 2101.1: This section requires 23 off-street parking spaces for a 69-unit apartment building and 10 off-street parking spaces for 10,560 square feet of retail space, for a total of 33 spaces. The application proposes to provide 19 parking spaces for the residential and 10 for the retail, reducing the residential parking by four spaces and resulting in a total parking reduction of approximately 12 percent. The garage level, in addition to other necessary uses, such as mechanical space, elevator core, lobbies and bicycle room, occupies the entire footprint of the building. Provision of four addition parking spaces

would require expansion of the garage to include a partial second below grade level, at a site located less than one mile from a Metrorail station. The Office of Planning will request comments from DDOT on this proposal should this application be set down by the Commission.

Roof Structures

§§ 411 and 770.6: These sections require that all penthouses be located within one roof structure. The subject application proposes three roof structures for pedestrian access; one for the elevator, necessary to make the rooftop accessible and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act and two for the stairwells, as required by the fire code. Four mechanical units, five feet in height, are necessary for the operation of the building.

Loading

§ 2201.1: This section requires the provision of one 12 x 30 foot loading berth and one 100 square foot loading platform for the retail component of the building, and one 12 x 55 loading berth and one 200 square foot loading platform for the residential component of the building. Instead the application proposes one 12 x 30 foot loading berth and one 120 square foot loading platform to be shared by both the retail and residential uses and coordinated by the management of the building. This request relieves the applicant from having to provide two sets of loading berths and platforms for one building, decreasing the amount of area that could otherwise be devoted to the provision of new, modern retail space along Georgia Avenue. The Office of Planning will request comments from DDOT on this proposal should this application be set down by the Commission.

Additional Areas of Flexibility

The application requests the ability to modify the plans as approved for this project. Specifically, the applicant requests the ability to:

1. Provide a range in the number of residential units between 60 and 71 units;
2. Vary the location of and design of interior components, such as partitions, structural slabs, doors, hallways, columns, stairways and mechanical rooms, provided the exterior configuration of the building does not change;
3. Increase the number of parking spaces and vary the location and arrangement of parking; and
4. Vary the final selection of the exterior materials within the color ranges and material types as proposed based upon availability at the time of construction without reducing quality, and to make minor refinements to the exterior details of the building.

The Office of Planning will work with the applicant to further refine and define these requests prior to public hearing, should the Commission set down the application.

Georgia Avenue Overlay District

The Georgia Avenue Overlay District contains a list of design requirements intended to improve the pedestrian experience on the street, including more openness between pedestrians and buildings, direct access into individual businesses and minimization of solid windowless walls. The subject application is in conformance with those design guidelines as enumerated under Section 1328 of the Zoning Regulations.

Section 1330.1(b) requires special exception approval for the construction of any new building on a lot consisting of 12,000 square feet or more. The subject property consists of 19,191 square feet. Section 2405.7 of the Zoning Regulations gives the Commission authority to approve any special exception as a part of a PUD application.

PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. Section 2400.1 states that a PUD is “designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.” In order to maximize the use of the site consistent with the zoning regulations, and be compatible with the surrounding community, the applicant is requesting that the proposal be reviewed as a consolidated PUD. This will allow the utilization of the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2.

The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development ands other incentives, such as increased building height and density; provided, that the project offers a commendable number of quality public benefits and that it protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience.

The applicant has requested a related change in zoning of the property to gain between 30 and 40 feet in height and approximately 48,969 square feet in floor area over that permitted as a matter-of-right. Public benefits proposed by the applicant are discussed below.

Section 2403.3 further outlines the standards under which the application is evaluated.

The impact of the project on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to be unacceptable, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project.

Georgia Avenue is beginning to experience revitalization of new commercial and residential projects. The proposed mixed use development will incorporate two ground-level commercial spaces designed to conform to modern retail requirements. It will compliment the recently renovated five-story residential building located directly across Lamont Street from the subject property, align the existing public alley system to better utilize the narrow Georgia Avenue lots and provide new housing to increase the residential density along the avenue in support of improved commercial opportunities.

PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

The Office of Planning will request additional information from the applicant regarding the proposed benefits and amenities to ensure that they are consistent with the relief requested.

Section 2403.9 outlines “Public benefits and project amenities of the proposed PUD may be exhibited and documented in any of the following or additional categories:

- (a) *Urban design, architecture, landscaping, or creation or preservation of open spaces;*
- (b) *Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization;*
- (c) *Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access, transportation management measures, connections to public transit service, and other measures to mitigate adverse traffic impacts;*
- (f) *Housing and affordable housing;*
- (h) *Environmental benefits, such as stormwater runoff controls and preservation of open space or trees;*
- (i) *Uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole;”*

The Office of Planning is generally supportive of the architecture and design of the proposed building.

Affordable Housing

The application proposes a minimum of 50 percent of the new residential square footage as affordable at 60 to 80 percent of AMI, or 37,953 square feet. Provision of 50 percent of the residential square footage as affordable is equal to more than three-quarters of the bonus density proposed to be achieved through this PUD.

Proposed regulations for inclusionary housing, when adopted, will require that 8 percent of the residential floor area be devoted to affordable housing for projects that are located within the C-2-B Zone District, or 6,072 square feet. At a minimum of 50 percent the subject application far exceeds that minimum by more than 30,000 square feet.

The application does not include a mix of the units proposed as affordable, nor does it indicate the location or the floors on which those units are proposed to be located. The application proposes that ten percent of the units would be three bedroom/ two bath units, 42 percent would be two bedroom units, most with two bathrooms, and 43 percent one bedroom/ one bath. If a minimum of 50 percent of the residential square footage is made affordable, the Office of Planning would recommend that not only are some of the larger family units included, but that some are also located on the lower floors to facilitate ease of parental control of children. Should the Commission set down this case the Office of Planning will work with the applicant to provide more information and detail on the affordable housing component.

Urban Design and Architecture

The application indicates that the building “*will assist in the further development of Georgia Avenue into a major mixed-use corridor with higher-density residential uses and high-quality community oriented retail uses.*” The Georgia Avenue – Petworth Metro Station Area and Corridor Plan encourages higher residential density and an improved retail environment.

Although the application conforms to the design requirements of the Georgia Avenue Overlay District, it does not indicate what high-quality community oriented retail uses are proposed for the site. The Office of Planning will request more information from the applicant prior to public hearing should the subject application be set down by the Commission.

First Source Employment Program and Local Business Opportunity Program

The applicant has agreed to enter into Certified Business Enterprise Agreements (CBE) with the Department of Employment Services and the Local Business Development office to promote and encourage the hiring of District of Columbia residents.

Environmental Benefits

The applicant proposes to participate in the Green Communities program. Green Communities provides funds and expertise to developers for the construction of healthy energy efficient buildings. The building and its construction will include many sustainability features, including:

1. Best management erosion and sediment control practices;
2. Water conservation fixtures;
3. Energy Star appliance and lighting fixtures;
4. Individual electric meters;
5. Cool roof;
6. Energy Star compliant high-emissive roofing;
7. Low/no Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) paints, primers, sealants and adhesives; and
8. Exhaust fans.

The Ground Floor Plan (dwg. A-1.1) proposes the planting of seven shade trees within public space; three within tree boxes on Georgia Avenue and four within tree boxes along Lamont Street.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PUBLIC POLICIES

The proposed development is located within the Mid-City Area of the Comprehensive Plan and is not inconsistent following policies of Mid-City Element of the Plan:

Policy MC-1.1.2: Directing Growth

Stimulate high-quality transit-oriented development around the Columbia Heights, Shaw/Howard University, and U St. /African American Civil War Memorial/Cardozo Metrorail station areas, as well as **along the Georgia Avenue corridor** and the North Capitol Street/Florida Avenue business district. **Opportunities for new mixed income housing, neighborhood retail**, local-serving offices, and community services **should be supported in these areas**, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Policy Map and Future Land Use Map.

Policy MC-1.1.7: Protection of Affordable Housing

Strive to **retain the character of Mid-City as a mixed income community** by protecting the area's existing stock of affordable housing units and **promoting the construction of new affordable units**.

Policy MC-2.1.1: Revitalization of Lower Georgia Avenue

Encourage continued revitalization of the Lower Georgia Avenue corridor. **Georgia Avenue should be an attractive, pedestrian-oriented “Main Street” with retail uses, local-serving offices, mixed income housing, civic and cultural facilities, and well-maintained public space.**

Policy MC-2.1.3: Georgia Avenue Design Improvements

Upgrade the visual quality of the Georgia Avenue corridor through urban design and public space improvements, including **tree planting**, new parks and plazas, upgrading of triangle parks, and façade improvements that establish a stronger identity and improved image.

The proposed development is not inconsistent following goal and policies of the Housing Element:

Housing Goal

The overarching goal for housing is: *Develop and maintain a safe, decent, and affordable supply of housing for all current and future residents of the District of Columbia.*

Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support

Encourage 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.

Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth

Strongly encourage the **development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land** in all parts of the city.

Policy H-1.1.4: Mixed Use Development

Promote mixed use development, including housing, on commercially zoned land, particularly in neighborhood commercial centers, along Main Street mixed use corridors, and around appropriate Metrorail stations.

Policy H-1.1.5: Housing Quality

Require 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.

Policy H-1.2.7: Density Bonuses for Affordable Housing

Provide zoning incentives to developers proposing to build low- and moderate-income housing. Affordable housing shall be considered a public benefit for the purposes of granting density bonuses when new development is proposed. Density bonuses should be granted in historic districts only when the effect of such increased density does not significantly undermine the character of the neighborhood.

Policy H-1.3.1: Housing for Families

Provide a larger number of housing units for families with children by encouraging new and retaining existing single family homes, duplexes, row houses, and three- and four-bedroom apartments.

The proposed development is not inconsistent following policies of the Environmental Protection Element:

Policy E-2.2.3: Reducing Home Heating and Cooling Costs

Encourage the use of energy-efficient systems and methods for home insulation, heating, and cooling, both to conserve natural resources and also to reduce energy costs for those members of the community who are least able to afford them.

Policy E-3.2.1: Support for Green Building

Encourage the use of green building methods in new construction and rehabilitation projects, and develop green building methods for operation and maintenance activities.

The proposed development is not inconsistent with the following policy of the Economic Development Element:

Policy ED-2.2.3: Neighborhood Shopping

Create additional shopping opportunities in Washington's neighborhood commercial districts to better meet the demand for basic goods and services. Reuse of vacant buildings in these districts should be encouraged, along with **appropriately-scaled retail infill development on vacant and underutilized sites.**

The proposed development would consolidate several smaller underutilized properties to develop a mixed use building located less than a mile from a Metrorail station. It would provide affordable housing, three-bedroom apartments suitable for families and new modern retail space along the Georgia Avenue corridor. Many green components are incorporated into the design of the building, and new street trees are proposed along Georgia Avenue and Lamont Street.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP: Mixed Land Use: *"Areas where the mixing of two or more land uses. The general density and intensity of development within a Mixed Use area is determined by the specific mix of uses."*

Moderate Density Commercial: "Defines shopping and service areas that are somewhat more intense in scale and character than the low-density commercial areas. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses. Areas range from small business districts that draw primarily from the surrounding neighborhoods to larger business district uses that draw from a broader market area."

Medium Density Residential: *“Defines neighborhoods or areas where mid-rise (4-7 stories) apartment buildings are the predominant use. Pockets of low and moderate density housing may exist within these areas.”*

GEORGIA AVENUE-PETWORTH METRO STATION AREA AND CORRIDOR PLAN

The Georgia Avenue – Petworth Metro Station Area and Corridor Plan is a small area plan that was adopted by the City Council in December 2006. It supplements the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.

This Plan includes a revitalization strategy as a framework to guide growth and development and preserve and enhance the quality of life in the neighborhoods along the corridor. The site is within the Park View/Park Morton Neighborhood Area and the entire west side of the 3200 block of Georgia Avenue is identified as an opportunity for redevelopment. It also recommends the assemblage of vacant properties for redevelopment.

The Plan recognizes that the Georgia Avenue Corridor is mostly zoned C-2-A with a few areas of C-3-A zone and has struggled with a lack of critical residential mass to support viable retail environment. The corridor has an abundance of vacant retail space. The subject property is located less than a mile from a Metrorail station and proposes additional residential density on Georgia Avenue with modern retail spaces.

The strategy for redevelopment encourages the inclusion of affordable units. An affordable component is included as a part of the PUD application (fifty percent), in excess of the proposed Inclusionary Zoning requirements (eight percent).

Georgia Avenue is one of the eight streets identified in the District’s Great Streets Initiative. These streets have been identified as arterials that have great opportunities for commerce, vitality and city living. The District Government is providing financial resources to revitalize these areas. Along Georgia Avenue investments have been made in many new residential projects to bring new residents and shoppers to the neighborhoods.

The Office of Planning therefore finds that the proposed development at a FAR of 4.51 and a mixture of residential and retail uses is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

AGENCY REFERRALS AND COMMENTS

If this application is set down for a public hearing, it will be referred to the following District government agencies for review and comment:

- DC Public Schools (DCPS);
- DC Water and Sewer Agency (WASA);
- Department of Employment Services (DOES);

Z.C. Case No. 08-26
The Heights on Georgia Avenue
3232 Georgia Avenue, N.W.
October 31, 2008
Page 13

- Department of Health (DOH);
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD);
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR);
- Department of Public Works (DPW);
- District Department of Transportation (DDOT);
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS); and
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicant informed the Office of Planning that the proposal was presented to **ANC-1A** and that the ANC recommended approval.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning supports the proposal for a new mixed-use building providing space for residential and commercial uses. The proposed PUD and related map amendment are not inconsistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the Office of Planning recommends that the application be set down for public hearing. The Office of Planning will continue to work with the applicant towards a more detailed review prior to the public hearing.

JS/sjm^{AICP}

Case Manager: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP