

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Urban Forestry Administration

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

To: Anthony J. Hood
Chair, Zoning Commission

CASE NO. 08-26
EXHIBIT NO. 28

From: Munevver Ertem, UFA Lead Arborist Team 1
Sharon Dendy, UFA Landscape Architect/Urban Forester

Date: March 10, 2009

Subject: Case No. 08-26 – The Heights at Georgia (3232 Georgia Avenue NW)
Review of a Planned Unit Development

The District Department of Transportation's Urban Forestry Administration (UFA) would like to take this opportunity to provide comments on the proposed residential design for 3232 Georgia Avenue NW otherwise known as The Heights on Georgia Avenue. After reviewing the Planned Unit Development and Zoning Map Amendment Plans (dated October 8, 2008) and performing a street tree assessment, it is apparent that the removal of the existing street trees, ranging from 6 to 53 inches in circumference, will result in the loss of economic and environmental benefits for the adjacent properties and the DC area as a whole.

One of the environmental benefits provided by trees is reducing the amount of stormwater runoff into the Anacostia, Potomac, and Rock Creek. Many of the rain events in the Washington, DC area result in the washing of chemicals and litter from roadways and parking lots into the sewer system. This ultimately produces a negative impact on local stream banks and aquatic life. Large shade trees such as the ones along Georgia Avenue and Lamont Street help to control this runoff by capturing, storing, and filtering the rainwater, reducing and sometimes eliminating the problem at the source. For example a 6" circumference shade tree will eliminate approx. 82 gallons of stormwater runoff during the year, however, a 53" circumference shade tree such as the Scarlet Oak on Lamont Street will eliminate more than 4,000 gallons of stormwater runoff during the same timeframe. As a result, approximately 50 new trees (6") would need to be planted to equal the benefits provided by the single Oak tree which would be a challenge.

Large shade trees not only manage stormwater runoff, but also help to increase property values and home energy efficiency, absorb pollutants like ozone, and reduce the amount of atmospheric carbon. In addition, the size of the tree box can contribute to the quantity of rainwater that is captured by the street tree and its roots. Larger tree boxes reduce the amount of impervious surface and increase the soil rooting volume needed to contain runoff. This additional space

allows for the exchange of oxygen, water, and nutrients, which provides a better rooting environment for the street trees and contributes to their overall good health.

Trees are an important asset in the urban environment, but planting them can be a challenge not only because of above ground furnishings such as street lights, fire hydrants, and parking meters, but also below ground utility lines which can limit locations and sizes of tree boxes. In addition, utility companies have tried to restrict where trees can be planted in proximity to their buried lines despite what is stipulated in the DDOT regulations. Therefore, UFA recommends preserving the four (4) existing Oak trees and three (3) Chinese Elm trees which are in good to excellent condition and widening the existing street tree boxes from four (4) feet to six (6) feet. Removal of these healthy in order to plant new street trees of a smaller size will result in not only the loss of economic and environmental benefits for the neighboring properties, but also the loss of benefits that impact the District and its surrounding areas that may or may not be regained over time.

**DDOT-
Urban Forestry
Administration**

Fax

To: Sharon Schellin &
Donna Hanousek, Zoning Specialists **From:** Munevver Ertem/Sharon Dendy

Fax: 202-727-6072 **Pages:** 3 (including cover sheet)

Phone: 202-727-6311 **Date:** 3/6/09

Re: Case No. 08-26 – The Heights at
Georgia (3232 Georgia Avenue NW) **CC:**

☐ Urgent ☒ For Review ☐ Please Comment ☐ Please Reply ☐ Please Recycle

Dear Ms. Schellin and Ms Hanousek:

Attached is a copy of the comments prepared by the District Department of Transportation's Urban Forestry Administration (UFA) for Case No. 08-26 – The Heights at Georgia (3232 Georgia Avenue NW) Review of a Planned Unit Development. UFA requests that these comments are formally submitted for the March 10, 2009 hearing.

I apologize for the delay.

Thank you for your cooperation and should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Munevver Ertem at 202-671-5128 or myself at 202-671-5129.

Regards



Sharon H. Dendy, Landscape Architect/Urban Forester
Urban Forestry Administration | D.C. Department of Transportation
2217 14th Street N.W., 3rd Floor | Washington, D.C. 20009
Desk (202) 671-5129 | fax (202) 671-5103 | cell (202) 345-6032
sharon.dendy2@dc.gov
www.ddot.dc.gov