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MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director *JS*

DATE: May 1, 2009

SUBJECT: ZC 09-05 – Setdown Report (United House of Prayer)
Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment

ZONING COMMISSION
District of ColumbiaCASE NO. 09-05EXHIBIT NO. 13**I. APPLICATION**

The United House of Prayer (the Applicant) is requesting approval of a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related map amendment to rezone the site from the R-4 to C-2-B district to accommodate a sixteen-unit apartment building with eight affordable units on property located at Square 442, Lots 115-119 in the northwest quadrant of the District.

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the case be setdown for public hearing. This project would further the aim of providing affordable housing to the District and the revitalization of 7th Street, NW as contemplated by the Duke Small Area Plan. The proposed development conforms to the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map for medium density residential and the objectives for development close to metro stations.

III. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property (Square 442, Lots 115-119) has an area of 16,320 square feet, is zoned R-4 and is currently improved with four row dwellings and a surface parking area. The lots are located at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and R Street NW, and mid block between 7th Street to the west and 6th Street to the east. The surrounding area is developed with a mix of row dwellings, commercial buildings, and vacant properties. Additional multi-family dwellings are located to the west, northwest and south of the square. The property is less than a block from the Shaw-Howard University Metrorail Station to the north.

IV. PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to redevelop the property with a sixteen-unit apartment building and 11 at-grade parking spaces. In order to accommodate the proposed building, the applicant has also proposed a PUD related map-amendment to re-zone the site from R-4 to C-2-B, similar to the existing zone district abutting the property to the west. The square is split-zoned R-4 and ARTS/C-2-B.

The proposed apartment building would have approximately 57,120 square feet of gross floor area, a 1.97 FAR, and a height of 48.6 feet. It is intended to provide affordable housing and family units, open space and an improved streetscape at a prominent corner in the Le Droit neighborhood.



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VI. ZONING

The site is currently zoned R-4 and the applicant proposes a PUD related map amendment to C-2-B to accommodate the proposed PUD. The project as proposed is well below the permitted height and FAR for the requested C-2-B district. Generally, properties fronting along Georgia Avenue/7th Street are in the C-2-A and the C-3-A districts.

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

Table 1

Requirement	R-4	C-2-B	C-2-B/PUD	Proposal	Deviation
Lot Area (Min)	Row dwellings – 1,800 sq. ft. Semi-detached - 3,000 sq. ft. All other structures – 4,000 sq. ft.	N/A	N/A	16,320 sq. ft.	N/A
Lot width	Row dwellings – 18 ft. Semidetached - 30 feet All other structures – 40 ft.	N/A	N/A	35.14ft. – 93 ft.	N/A
Height	40 ft. or 3 stories	65 ft.	90 ft	48.6 ft	N/A
FAR	No maximum	3.5 for apartments 1.5 for other uses	6.0 (residential) 2.0 (commercial)	1.97	N/A
Lot Occupancy	60% for row houses 40% for other structures	80%	80% (13,056 sq. ft.)	49% (7,996.8 sq. ft.)	N/A
Rear yard	20 ft.	15 ft.	15 feet	23.9 ft	N/A
Side yard	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loading	None	None (for 16 units)	None (for 16 units)	None (for 16 units)	N/A

While the C-2-B provides for much more density and height than the proposal needs, the C-2-B zone is immediately adjacent to the site and its use maintains the integrity of the zone plan with the assurance of the PUD use

VII. FLEXIBILITY

The applicant is only requesting relief from the roof structure requirements of Section 411 for roof structures that do not meet the setback requirement and having more than one enclosure. The roof plan shows three roof structures on of which is not setback from an exterior wall.

VIII. 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 to accommodate the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2.

The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development and 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 change in zoning of the property to permit additional floor area for an apartment use over that permitted by-right in the R-4 zone. The proposed development is more suited for multifamily housing as it would provide a transition to the single-family units along Rhode Island Avenue to the east. The adjacent property is a warehouse and there is a small parcel separating it from a portion of the alley. At the corner of Rhode Island Avenue and 7th Street properties are a mixture of medium density residential and commercial uses.

The proposed development would be constructed on a prominent corner in the Shaw neighborhood. 7th Street and Shaw/LeDroit is experiencing revitalization including both new commercial and residential projects. The development of the site would contribute to the general improvement of the area and the applicant has committed to working with the community for the neighborhood’s benefit. OP understands that the ANC is in support of the proposal.

Section 2403 further outlines the standards under which the application is evaluated.

2403.3 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.

The main public benefits that the application propose are the provision of affordable housing for moderate income households, new housing at a convenient metro location, and a green roof.

IX. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

OP believes that the benefits of the moderate income housing and the green roof would compensate for the additional floor area and height that is needed beyond what would be permitted as a matter-of-right. 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;*

Urban Design

OP is generally supportive of the architecture and design of the proposed building. The density, massing and height would be transitional to, and respectful of, the lower scale row dwellings to the east. The design is also complementary to the existing buildings within the square to the northwest of the site opposite the alley. If necessary, OP would continue discussions with the applicant on the proposed building materials and improvement of the façade treatment along Rhode Island Avenue.

Access

The applicant proposes to improve the pedestrian walkway around the property with improved landscaping. The impact of the traffic generated by the proposed development would be minimal since it is located at a convenient metro station and limited parking is proposed. A parking reduction is also appropriate due to the site's proximity to the Shaw-Howard University Metro Station..

Affordable Housing

The main amenity of the proposed application is the dedication of eight units to affordable housing specifically for residents within 60%-30% of AMI.

Environmental Benefits

The applicant has committed to energy efficiency of the building through the creation of a green roof and other energy efficient elements, including minimizing the use of non-renewable resources, and the promotion of water and energy conservation. The applicant would provide additional details of these elements as part of the hearing report. The proposed development would be of special value to the community as it would provide housing for low-income residents and would be an environmentally sustainable product for the neighborhood's benefit.

Value to the Neighborhood and the District**First Source Agreement**

The applicant has committed to participation in a First Source Agreement with the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services and should provide a signed agreement prior to the Commission's vote on the Final Order.

Local Business Opportunities

The applicant is a certified small business developer in the Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) program offered by the Department of Small and Local Business Development to engage the District's small and local businesses in the construction of the project. The applicant should provide a signed agreement prior to the Commission's vote on the Final Order.

X. 2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND GENERALIZED POLICY MAP**

The Future Land Use Map recommends the subject site for a mix of medium density residential and medium density commercial uses. The mixed-use category also includes existing commercial areas and areas proposed for land use changes. The proposed development at a FAR of 1.97 of residential use is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Generalized Policy Map shows that the property is located in a Neighborhood Enhancement Area which may be characterized by patchwork of existing homes and individual vacant lots, some privately owned and others owned by non-profit developers. These areas present opportunities for compatible small scale infill development. The guiding philosophy in the Neighborhood Enhancement Areas is to ensure that new development "fits in" and responds to the existing character, natural features and existing/planned infrastructure capacity. The proposed development would satisfy these criteria.

The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan including the following elements and policies of the Plan:

LAND USE***Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development***

Encourage 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. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern.

Policy LU-1.4.2: Long-Term Vacant Sites

Facilitate the reuse of vacant lots that have historically been difficult to develop due to infrastructure or access problems, inadequate lot dimensions, fragmented or absentee ownership, or other constraints. Explore lot consolidation, acquisition, and other measures which would address these constraints.

Policy LU-1.4.3: Zoning of Infill Sites

Ensure that the zoning of vacant infill sites is compatible with the prevailing development pattern in surrounding neighborhoods. This is particularly important in single family and row house neighborhoods that are currently zoned for multi-family development.

HOUSING***H-1.1 Expanding Housing Supply***

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 would 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.

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 NNW-1.1.1: Residential Neighborhoods

Maintain and enhance the historic, architecturally distinctive mixed density character of Near Northwest residential neighborhoods, including..., Logan Circle, Mount Vernon Square, and Shaw. Ensure that infill development within these areas is architecturally compatible with its surroundings and positively contributes to the identity and quality of each neighborhood.

Policy NNW-1.1.2: Directing Growth

Generally direct growth within the Near Northwest Planning Area to the eastern side of the Planning Area (Logan Circle and Shaw), given the strong market demand and limited land available on the west side, and the need for reinvestment and renovation on the east side.

Policy NNW-2.1.2: Reinforce Existing Development Patterns

Stabilize and maintain existing moderate-density row house areas within the Shaw/Convention Center Area. Locate multi-unit buildings in areas already zoned for greater density, including areas near the Mount Vernon Square and Shaw/Howard University Metrorail stations, and on publicly owned land with the potential for housing. Ensure that development on infill sites scattered throughout the row house portions of the Shaw/ Convention Center area is consistent with the neighborhood's character.

XI. DUKE PLAN¹

This plan is a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan and was adopted by the City Council in June 21, 2005. The site is identified as an under-utilized property that provides an opportunity for redevelopment. The strategy for redevelopment encourages the inclusion of affordable units. The subject property is also included in the radius of the Rhode Island Place Sub-district of the Duke Plan, which is intended to be an architecturally distinct gateway to the Shaw community. The applicant owns several properties within the square and identified in the plan. The proposed submittal is complimentary to the architecture of those properties within the plan.

XII. AGENCY REFERRALS

Subsequent to setdown for a public hearing, the application would be referred to District government agencies for review and comment, including:

- Department of Transportation (DDOT);
- Department of the Environment (DDOE);
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS);and
- DC Water and Sewer Agency (WASA).

XIII. RECOMMENDATION

OP supports the proposal as it would provide affordable housing for residents earning 60-80% AMI. The proposed PUD and related map amendment is not inconsistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan and recommends that the application be set down for public hearing. OP would continue to work with the applicant towards a more detailed review prior to the public hearing.

JLS/mbr AICP.

¹ Development Framework for a Cultural destination District within Washington DC's Greater Shaw/U Street (PR 16-176 Approved by DC Council, June 21, 2005)