

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, ^{JS}Deputy Director

DATE: August 31, 2009

SUBJECT: ZC 09-05 – Final Report (United House of Prayer)
625 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Related Map Amendment

I. APPLICATION

The United House of Prayer (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 625 Rhode Island Avenue, NW (Square 442, Lots 115-119).

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval of the proposed PUD and related Map Amendment. The proposed sixteen unit apartment building would provide additional housing for District residents half of which would be affordable to residents with incomes of 60-80% of the Annual Median Income (AMI). The project incorporates environmental features such as green roof, open space and the use of pervious pavers. This project would further enhance and support the projected commercial 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 to the north and across from 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 interspersed with vacant properties. Additional multi-family dwellings are located to the west, northwest and south of the square. The property is adjacent to a 20 feet wide alley on the north and a 15 feet alley on the northwestern portion of the site and is less than a block from the Shaw-Howard University Metrorail Station to the north.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 09-05

EXHIBIT NO. 25



Aerial Photograph of Site and Surrounding Area

IV. PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to redevelop the property with a sixteen-unit apartment building. The proposed apartment building would have approximately 32,125 square feet of gross floor area, at 1.97 FAR, and a height of 48.6 feet in four floors. The unit mixture would consist of one-, two- and three-bedrooms and are targeted toward families. The table below captures the proposed unit mix.

Number of Bedrooms	Number of Units	Number of Affordable Units
1- bedroom	1	None
2-bedrooms	10	7
3-bedrooms	5	1
	Total = 16	Total = 8

As shown on Sheet A1-1 (applicant's submission) the affordable units are distributed on each floor. To enhance the building, the applicant has proposed significant open space much of which would be useable by the residents. To the west of the building would be a 3,051 square foot "green space" area that would be used for passive recreation by the residents and would be enhanced with benches, flowering trees, and pervious pavers and secured by gates along Rhode island Avenue and the private alley. A 915 square foot courtyard is located on the opposite side of the building and would also be accessible to residents. Landscaping would also be provided in front of the building within the public space along Rhode Island Avenue and to the rear of the building adjacent to the public alley. The proposal would also provide eleven at-grade parking spaces directly accessible from the public alley. To encourage a reduction in the use of vehicles, the proposal provides an enclosed area for six bikes.

Item	R-4 Allowance	C-2-B/PUD Allowance	Proposal	Gains over R-4 Allowance
Height	40 ft. or 3 stories	90 ft	48.6 ft	8.6 ft. and 1 story
FAR	No stated requirement but calculated at 1.2 (19,584 sf)	6.0 (residential) 2.0 (commercial)	1.97 (32,125 sf)	0.77 (12,581 sf)
Lot Occupancy	60% -row houses 40% - other structures	80%	49%	9% over the “other structure” allowance

As shown on the table above the FAR, height and lot occupancy gains over that allowed under the existing R-4 zoning seems to be fairly moderate and would not overwhelm adjacent properties.

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

Item	R-4 Allowed/Required	C-2-B/PUD Allowed/Required	Proposal	Deviation
Lot Area (Min)	Row dwellings – 1,800 sf Semi-detached - 3,000 sf All other structures – 4,000 sf	N/A	16,320 sf	N/A
Lot width	Row dwellings – 18 ft. Semidetached - 30 ft. All other structures – 40 ft.	N/A	35.14ft. – 95 ft.	N/A
Height	40 ft. or 3 stories	90 ft	48.6 ft	N/A
FAR	No maximum	6.0 (residential) 2.0 (commercial)	1.97	N/A
Lot Occupancy	60% for row houses 40% for other structures	80% (13,056 sf)	48.6% (7,996.8 sf)	N/A
Rear yard	20 ft.	15 ft.	23.9 ft	N/A
Side yard	None	N/A	N/A	N/A
Loading	None	None (for 16 units)	None (for 16 units)	N/A
Roof Structure Setback	11 ft. (based on height of the penthouse)	11 ft.	0 ft.	11 ft.

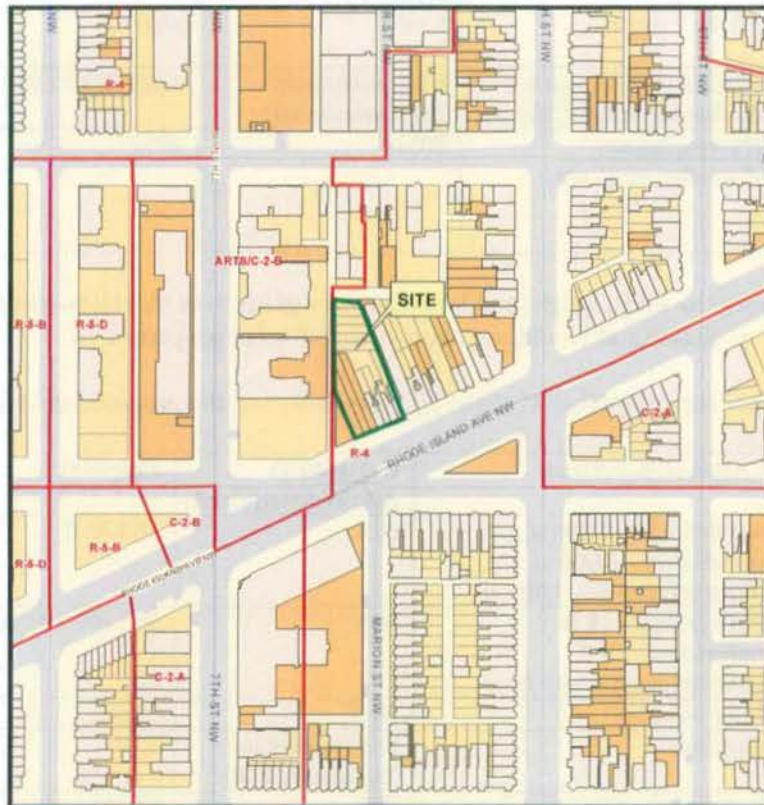
VI. FLEXIBILITY

The applicant requests relief from the roof structure requirements of Section 411.3 for roof structures that do not meet the setback requirement and from Section 770 .6(a) and having more than one enclosure. The roof plan shows three roof structures, two stair towers and one elevator penthouse. The elevator penthouse does not have the required 11 feet setback. Additionally, the three roof structures are not within a single enclosure. Due to the location and placement of the stairs and the elevator a single penthouse enclosure is not possible.

VII. 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.

V. ZONING



Site and Surrounding Area Zoning

The subject square is split-zoned R-4 and ARTS/C-2-B with the subject site within the R-4 portion. To accommodate the proposed development, the applicant proposes a PUD related map amendment to the C-2-B district extending to the existing zoning line from the west. 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. Extending the ARTS Overlay to the subject property is not appropriate as the aim of the overlay is to concentrate retail, service and arts uses along particular corridors such as 7th Street, NW.

The C-2-B district is designated to serve commercial and residential functions with high-density residential and mixed uses. C-2-B districts are located on arterial streets, and at rapid transit stops and building use may be entirely residential or a mixture of commercial and residential uses.

The proposed residential development would be consistent with the aims of the C-2-B district as it would be in close proximity to the high density mixed used development projected and envisioned for the Georgia Avenue/7th Street area. The development fronts on Rhode Island Avenue which is an arterial street and is also with one block of the Shaw/Howard University Metro Station.

The following table shows the potential development that would be allowed under the R-4 and C-2-B/PUD standards compared to the development proposed:

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 to the east is an apartment building while to the west there is a small undeveloped 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 near a prominent corner in the Shaw neighborhood. The 7th Street and Shaw/LeDroit area 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 proposes are the provision of affordable housing for moderate income households, new housing at a convenient metro location, and a green roof.

VIII. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

OP believes that the benefits of the moderate income housing, the green roof, and open space areas 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 façade of the building would be a combination of corrugated siding with smooth architectural CMU and aluminum trim windows. Bright colored canopies and trim are introduced for contrast. The design and materials of the building would be complementary to the existing buildings within the square to the northwest of the site opposite the alley which are owned and built by the applicant.

To complement the building the applicant has proposed areas of useable open space around the structure. The proposal would provide a 3,051 square foot open space area to the west of the building for the residents. The area would be landscaped with shade trees, flowering plants and benches. Along the property line would be a six feet high fence supplemented with privacy trees adjacent to the vacant property. The proposed fence would be of a material that would be transparent to allow the vegetation to be visible. The applicant has stated that similar materials would be used for the proposed gates at either end of the green space area. OP has requested that the applicant provide sample materials for the proposed gates which should balance transparency and security. OP does not believe that the materials shown on Sheet A2.6 would give a sense of security. A 915 square foot courtyard is also provided on the eastern side of the building along with a small garden on the northern portion of the property.

The applicant proposed to supplement the existing street trees along the Rhode Island Avenue public space with flowering trees, ornamental grass and shrubs. The public space area is approximately eight feet wide and the plantings proposed may interfere with pedestrian movements. OP has requested that the applicant address this issue.

The applicant proposes a five and a half feet high dumpster enclosure at the intersection of the adjacent alleys. Three sides of the enclosure would be of concrete blocks, similar to that used on the ground floor of the building. On the fourth side of the enclosure is a gate made from similar materials as that used on the fencing. Similarly, OP is concerned that materials proposed as shown on Sheet A2.6 may be too transparent and the material should strike a balance between security and aesthetics.

Access

The main access into the building would be off Rhode Island Avenue with a secondary access from the adjacent 15-foot wide alley and the parking area. Both entrances would meet ADA requirements and be accessible. The applicant proposes to improve the pedestrian walkway around the property with improved landscaping. Due to the small number of units, it is envisioned that the impact of the traffic generated would be minimal. The property is located in close proximity and convenient to the Shaw-Howard University Metro Station. The applicant proposes 11 surface parking spaces which would be leased independently of the units. In order to encourage the residents to reduce vehicular use the applicant has provided a room to facilitate bicycle parking. Other transportation management measures and issues relating to transportation would be further discussed in the Department of Transportation's report submitted under separate cover.

Affordable Housing

The main amenity of the proposed application is the dedication of eight affordable units specifically for residents who earn between 60% and 80% of AMI. The units would be distributed throughout all floors and would range in size of between 1,148 and 1,979 square feet in size. Most of the units would have two bedrooms with one of the units having three bedrooms and are targeted towards families.

Environmental Benefits

The applicant has committed to energy efficiency of the building through the materials, fixtures and appliances. The applicant is providing approximately 5,122 square feet of open space as well as 1,088 square feet of green roof. The applicant has submitted that they anticipate seeking LEED certification at the "certified" level for the development and has submitted a checklist of sustainability elements to be incorporated into the project.

Value to the Neighborhood or the District

The proposed development would be of special value to the community and to the District as it would provide both market rate and affordable rental housing for District residents. This housing would help in the revitalization envisioned for the 7th Street/Georgia Avenue corridor and would provide residents to support the businesses in the

area. The applicant has incorporated environmentally sustainable features such as a green roof, pervious pavers and open space, which would benefit the residents, as well as the District as a whole.

First Source Agreement

The applicant has stated that they are committed to participation in a First Source Agreement with the District of Columbia Department of Employment Services and is in the process of negotiating such an agreement. The signed agreement should be provided 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.

IX. 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.

The proposed development would replace dilapidated rowhouses and contribute to the ongoing revitalization of this area of Rhode Island Avenue. The proposed apartments would complement and are similar to other apartment buildings in the vicinity in both density and size.

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.

The subject property is a consolidation of five long and narrow lots. Development of the site to its full potential has been constrained by the shape of the existing lots and their adjacency to alleys on two sides. Nevertheless, the

applicant has proposed a consolidation of the lots and a development that does not overbuild the site and provides useable open space. The development would blend into the existing community and complement the neighboring apartment buildings in size, design, materials and units provided.

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.

The proposed C-2-B district on the property would be compatible to the prevailing zoning pattern in the area. The applicant has constructed buildings of similar scale and size in the neighborhood and the consolidation of the lots offers an opportunity to redevelop the site in a manner that is compatible to the surrounding neighborhood. Extending the C-2-B zoning to the property would be consistent with the zoning to the north of the property and provides a transition between the higher density uses along 7th Street and at the 7th Street/Rhode Island Avenue intersection.

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.

The proposed PUD related map amendment to the C-2-B district would enable the applicant to provide more residential units than allowed in the R-4 district. The development would also provide a mixture of market rate, as well as affordable units and more importantly would provide greatly needed rental units for families. The number of units is not excessive, and the density and height would not overwhelm the neighboring rowhouses. The production of housing is important to the district and this neighborhood and would help support the businesses envisioned.

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.

The applicant is a private, non-profit organization that provides market rate as well as affordable housing for District residents. The applicant has other successful developments in the vicinity of the site. As demonstrated above, the proposal would be consistent with and implements the land use policies and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

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.

The proposed development would be architecturally compatible to the adjacent structures along 7th Street and S Street. The development would also be at a scale and density that is compatible to the neighboring row houses and would not impede their light and air.

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.

The proposed development would contribute to growth and reinvestment in this neighborhood to achieve redevelopment of an underutilized site.

X. 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.

XI. AGENCY REFERRALS

The application was submitted to the Department of Transportation (DDOT) for review. A report from this agency will be submitted under separate cover.

XII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The subject property is within the jurisdiction of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 2C. The ANC, at its December 3, 2008 regularly scheduled meeting voted to support and recommend approval of the project.

XIII. RECOMMENDATION

The proposal development would be an asset to the revitalizing Shaw neighborhood as it would provide affordable housing for residents earning 60 to 80% of AMI, would provide on-site open space and passive recreational areas and would be environmentally sensitive with the use of the proposed material, green roof, the uses of pervious pavers and other elements to attain LEED certification. The proposed PUD and related map amendment is not inconsistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan and therefore OP recommends **approval** of the development and the related map amendment.

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)