GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
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MEMORANDUM

TO: D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman
Director

DATE: September 17, 2001

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 16760, Addition to the Jurys Washington Hotel at 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.

APPLICATION

Application of New Hampshire Hotel LLC, pursuant to 11 DCMR Section 3103.2 for a variance from the court width requirements under subsection 776.1, and a variance from the closed court area requirements under subsection 776.2 to allow an addition to a hotel in a DC/C-3-C District at premises 1500 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W. (Square 135, Lot 4).

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the variance from the court width requirements under subsection 776.1 and a variance from the closed court requirements under subsection 776.2 in order to allow this small, one-story addition on the north side of this hotel.

BACKGROUND

This application involves a request to build a small, one-story addition to the north side of the hotel in order to provide additional rest room space on the first floor of the hotel. Due to the unique shape and arrangement of the lot, and the hotel building, the Zoning Administrator has indicated that a variance is needed from the court width requirements under subsection 776.1, and a variance from the closed court requirements under subsection 776.2.

BZA
Case No. 16760
Exhibit No. 21

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16760
EXHIBIT NO.21

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The Jurys Washington Hotel occupies a prominent site on the north side of Dupont Circle (Lot 4, Square 135) in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Ward 2. The Office of Planning understands that the building, constructed in 1946, was originally an apartment building but was later converted to a hotel. The hotel operated for many years as the Dupont Plaza Hotel. The hotel was purchased by the present owners (New Hampshire Hotel LLC) in December 1997 and was closed for a year while a major renovation was undertaken. This work included renovations to all 315 rooms of the hotel and the hallways and common areas of the upper floors, as well as major renovations to the ground floor which includes the registration areas, meeting rooms, related rest rooms, a restaurant and a lounge. The hotel reopened in January 1999 as the Doyle Hotel. Final renovation work was completed in March 1999. The name of the hotel was changed to Jurys Washington Hotel in June 2000.

Square 135 has a generally triangular shape that results from the design of the L'Enfant Plan. Square 135 is bordered by New Hampshire Avenue N.W. on the southeast, 19th Street on the west and Q Street on the north, with a short southern frontage on Dupont Circle. The Jury's Hotel property (Lot 4) has an unusual shape with six sides (see attached drawing) and occupies the majority of the square. This includes the complete frontage of the square on Dupont Circle, the complete frontage of the square on 19th Street (247.75 feet), part of the frontage on Q Street (80.0 feet) and part of the frontage on New Hampshire Avenue (178.50 feet). The main hotel entrance is on New Hampshire Avenue and that is its address (1500 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.) There are two other buildings on the square to the north of the hotel. The Embassy of Jamaica at 1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W. occupies an older, four-story building immediately north of the hotel. The Woman's National Democratic club occupies the Whittemore House, a landmark building at the southwest corner of New Hampshire Avenue and Q Street. A modern addition on the rear of that building extends almost to the portion of the hotel property that extends to Q Street.

The hotel building has eight stories and is 74 feet, two inches high. At present, at the northeast side of the hotel building, the hotel property extends another 14.5 feet to the property line of the Jamaican Embassy. At present, this area is paved and has the appearance of a dead-end driveway.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The ground floor of the hotel has a number of meeting rooms and the existing restrooms are inadequate. The existing men's and women's restrooms are small and narrow. There is a small unisex restroom between the two restrooms that is wheelchair accessible. To address this deficiency, the hotel proposes to build a one-story addition into the now vacant portion of the hotel property on the northeast side of the building. This addition will house a new women's restroom. The space now occupied by the men's and women's restrooms will be reconfigured to house an enlarged men's restroom. Both of these

restrooms will now be wheelchair accessible and will have a wheelchair accessible toilet space.

The space between the hotel building and the hotel property line is fourteen and one-half feet. The proposed one-story addition will have a width of 12 feet. The space between the addition and the property line is two and one-half feet. The addition is 30 feet, 4 inches long and has a height of about 20 feet. This height is necessary because the now open area along the northeastern edge of the hotel is about six feet below the grade of the first floor. The proposed addition does not have any doors or windows on the exterior. If the Board of Zoning Adjustment approves these variances, the D.C. Historic Preservation Board will review the design of the addition, since the hotel is within the Dupont Circle Historic District. The hotel management has told the Office of Planning that they have conferred with officials of the adjacent Embassy of Jamaica and that there are no objections from the Embassy to this addition to the hotel.

The addition creates what the Zoning Administrator has interpreted as two courts. The first court, which is 14.5 feet wide and 20 feet long, is an open court because it opens out to the public space at the New Hampshire Avenue frontage of the hotel. The hotel management has indicated to the Office of Planning that this space will be appropriately landscaped.

Section 776.1 of the Zoning Regulations requires that when a court is provided, the width of the court shall be a minimum of three inches per foot (3 inches/foot) of height, provided that in no case shall the width of the court be less than 12 feet. Since the building is 74 feet high, a width of 18 feet is required and the existing distance between building and the property line is only 14.5 feet. A variance is required.

The second or interior court is defined by the Zoning Administrator as a closed court. It is bounded by the existing hotel building, the proposed addition and a wall along the property line. This closed court has a width of 14.5 feet and a length at its longest side of just under 33 feet.

Section 776.2 of the zoning regulations provide that, in the case of a closed court for a building devoted to non-residential uses, the minimum area shall be at least twice the square of the width of the court based upon the height of the court, but not less than 250 square feet. Based on the height of the court being 74 feet, the Zoning Administrator calculated the court width as needing to be 18 feet and the area needing to be 648 square feet. The Zoning Administrator indicates the width of the closed court as 12 feet and the area as 389.89 square feet, so a variance is required.

ANALYSIS

Section 3103.2 provides three standards for a variance.

The property is unique by reason of its exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape, topography or other extraordinary or exceptional situation or condition.

The Jury's Hotel property has an unusual six-sided shape. The areas of the lot not covered by the building are the strip of land along the northeast side of the hotel, where the one-story addition is proposed, and the area of the parking ramp off Q Street, which is open to the sky and drops down to the underground parking garage under the building. In view of the location of the existing rest rooms, and the arrangement of the first floor, there is no place to locate additional rest room space except the strip of land along the northeast side of the hotel.

By reason of the aforementioned unique or exceptional condition of the property, the strict application of the Zoning Regulations will result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties or to exceptional and undue hardship upon the owner of the property.

In order to provide appropriate, modern rest room facilities for the first floor lobby and meeting rooms, including wheelchair accessible areas, additional rest room space must be provided. The only practical solution is to expand into the narrow strip of property beyond the northeast wall of the hotel building. Existing court requirements would not allow such expansion and would limit the hotel's ability to provide adequate restroom facilities for the first floor public areas. The small one-story addition is a minimum addition to the building.

The variance will not cause substantial detriment to the public good and will not impair the intent, purpose and integrity of the zone plan as embodied in the Zoning Regulations and Map.

The Office of Planning believes that the addition will not cause a detriment to the public good nor impair the intent, purpose and integrity of the zone plan. The addition is low in height and limited in length, taking up only part of the strip of property on the northeast side of the hotel building. It is set back 20 feet from the building line along New Hampshire Avenue and will not impact the light to hotel rooms above the ground floor. With landscaping in front of the addition, the view from the street along the northeastern wall of the hotel will probably be improved over the present appearance.

ANC AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

ANC-2B had expected to review and make a recommendation on this application at their scheduled meeting on Wednesday, September 12. Due to the terrorist acts against the nation on September 11, that meeting was postponed to September 19. The Chair of ANC-2B has told the Office of Planning that ANC-2B will consider this application at the September 19 meeting and expects to file a report to the Board of Zoning Adjustment before the hearing on September 25.

OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS

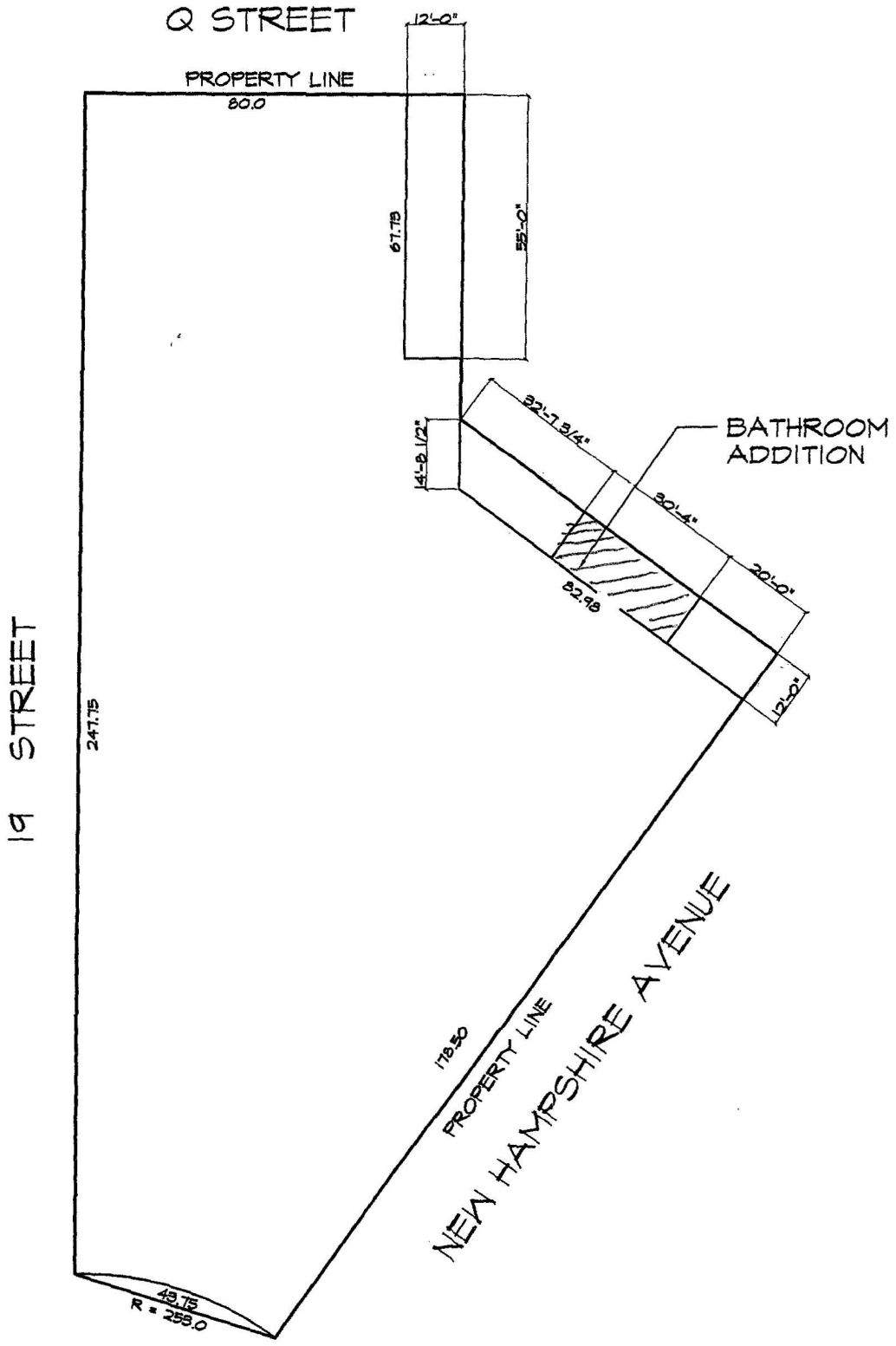
No comments have been received from other agencies. As previously noted, if the addition is approved, the exterior design of the addition will be subject to future review by the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustment approve this addition, which requires approving a variance from the court width requirements under subsection 776.1 and a variance from the closed court area requirements under subsection 776.2.

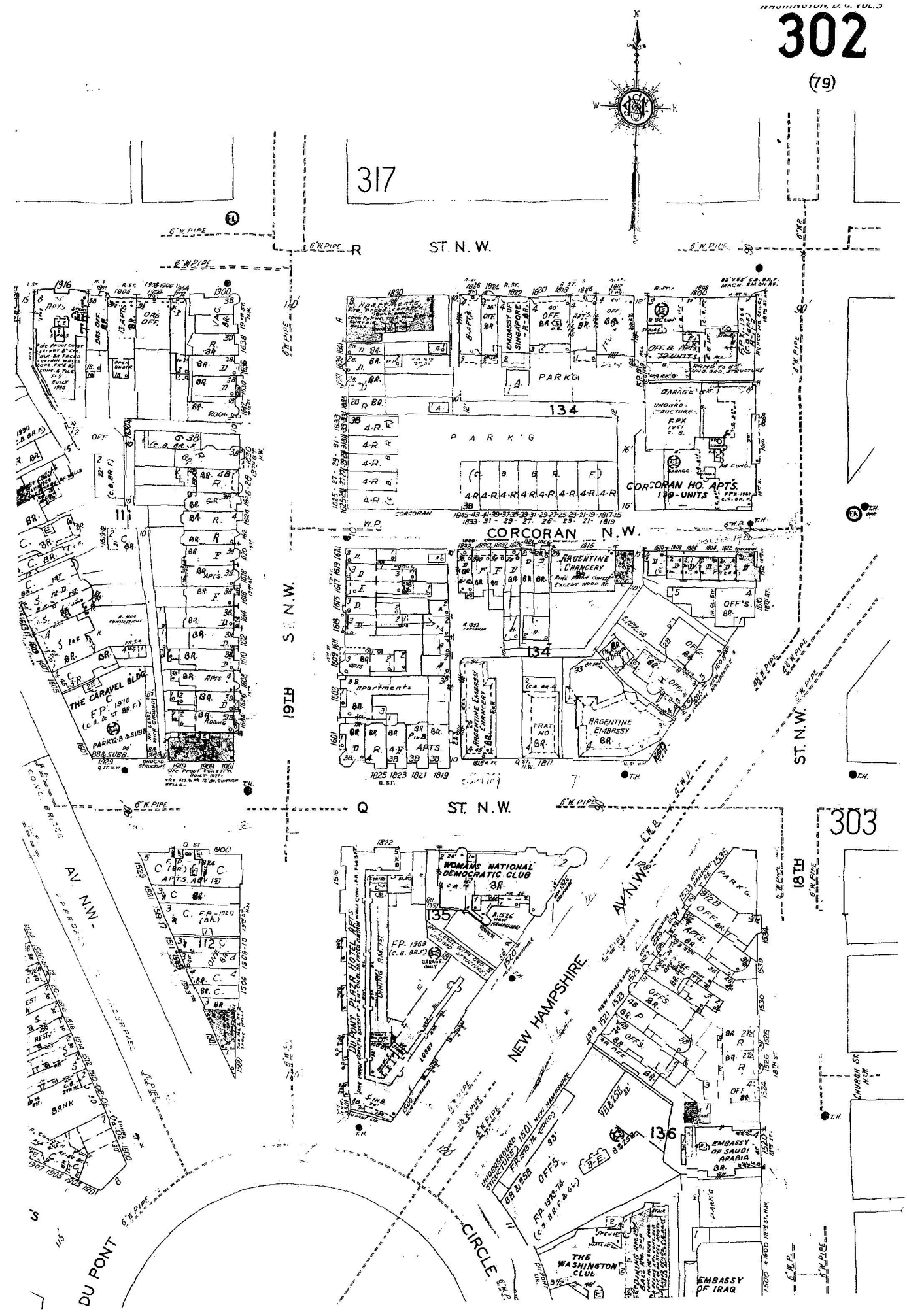
Attachments

AA/jf



COVER SHEET

JURYS HOTEL
1500 NEW HAMPSHIRE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036


317
R ST. N.W.
Q ST. N.W.
19TH ST. N.W.
CORCORAN N.W.
ST. N.W.
18TH
303
NEW HAMPSHIRE AV. N.W.
AV. N.W.
DU PONT CIRCLE
CORCORAN HO. APTS.
139 UNITS
THE CARAVEL BLDG.
DU PONT PLAZA HOTEL APTS.
WOMANS NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB
ARGENTINE CHANCERY
ARGENTINE EMBASSY
EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
EMBASSY OF IRAQ
THE WASHINGTON CLUB
PARK'G
134
135
136
112
6" W. PIPE
4" W.P.
T.H.