GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING RECEIVED
2002 MAR 19 AM 9:43

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman

DATE: June 26, 2001

SUBJECT: BZA Case # 16853 Special Exception Request

APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: The National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NA of CWC). Inc.
1601 R Street, N.W.
Square 178, Lot 78

Relief Sought: Pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 the applicant is requesting a special exception to change the use of the subject property from a private club to nonprofit office in the DC/R-5-D zone.

Relief Sought Under: Subsection 217 and 352

OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION-IN-BRIEF

The Office of Planning recommends the subject application be approved.

BZA
Case No. 16853
Exhibit No. 21

Applicant's Justification:

The applicant is seeking to properly certify the present use of the building as being a nonprofit organization, not a private club, as was previously the case. There is an existing certificate of occupancy for the building that authorizes private club use.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Ward 2, located on the northwest corner of 16th and R Streets, at 1601 R Street, N.W. S Street generally bounds the neighborhood on the north, Massachusetts Avenue is to the south, Rhode Island

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Avenue is on the east and New Hampshire Avenue is to the west. Moderate density row dwellings and mid-rise multi-family buildings are the predominate uses in the neighborhood.

There are two mixed-use areas, on either side of the subject site that provide commercial support. The frontage on both sides of 14th Street, between U Street and Massachusetts Avenue is moderate density commercial/residential. The frontage on 17th Street, between Riggs & Q Streets is moderate density commercial and medium density residential.

The subject building is in the DC (Dupont Circle)/R-5-D District and the building is a contributing structure to the 16th Street historic district.

The National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NA of CWC) has owned the subject premises since the early 1950's. The NA OF CWC was founded in 1896 to promote education for women and girls, raise the standards living conditions, improve the conditions for women and families, develop leadership, ensure civil rights, and promote interracial understanding. NA of CWC purchased the subject building in 1954 and used it as its national headquarters until 1970. The organization moved its headquarters to another site on upper 16th Street and leased the subject building to a private club, the Fox Trap. The building has been licensed as a private club since 1970. Recently, NA OF CWC completed extensive renovations of the subject premises and returned its national headquarters to the building.

AREA ZONING

The subject premises are in the R-5-D zone district. The R-5 districts are designed to permit a flexibility of design by permitting in a single district, all types of urban residential development if they conform to the height, density and area requirements. The R-5 districts shall also permit the construction of those institutions and semi-public buildings that would be compatible with adjoining residential uses and which are excluded from more restrictive residential districts.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The NA of CWC is requesting special exception approval pursuant to § 217, (non-profit organizations) and § 352, (uses subject to BZA approval: General (R-5)) of the zoning regulations to allow non-profit office in the building on the subject property.

The NA of CWC has two administrative staff currently working in the subject building. There is also an apartment on the top floor of the building, which is available to the president of the organization when she is in the District. Additionally, the building is used twice a monthly for meetings of the local NA OF CWC. Further, the Grandparent's Academy, a mentoring organization founded by NA of CWC meet at the building once a week. When the mentoring program is fully operational, it is anticipated that approximately 20 mentors will visit the building for weekly meetings. There is also a

long-term plan to conduct computer literacy programs for neighborhood children in the basement of the building.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE APPLICATION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan Generalized Land Use Map depicts the subject premises as being in the ***Moderate Density Residential Land Use Category.*** Row houses and garden apartments are the predominant uses in this land use category.

REQUESTED ZONING RELIEF

Pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104, the applicant is requesting a special exception under Sections 217 (Non-Profit Organizations R-1) and Subsection 352, Uses Subject to BZA Approval: General R-5, in the DC/R-5-D zone district.

§217.1 The use of existing residential buildings and land on which they are located by a non-profit organization for the purposes of the non-profit organization shall be permitted in the R-1 district in the following instances if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment in accordance with the conditions specified in §3104 of chapter 31 of this title, subject to provisions of this section:

(a) Is the building listed in the District's Inventory of Historic Sites contained in the comprehensive statewide historic preservation survey and plan prepared pursuant to §101 (a) of Public Law 89-665, Oct. 15, 1966 (16 U.S.C. §§ 470a-470m), or is the building is located within a district, site, area, or place listed on the District's Inventory of Historic Sites?

Yes. The subject building, located at 1601 R Street, N.W. is designated as a contributing building in the 16th Street Historic District. The Historic Preservation Review Board approved recent exterior and interior modifications to the structure.

(b) Is the gross floor area of the building in question, not including other buildings on the lot, ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft.) or greater?

Yes. The gross floor area of the subject building is approximately 10,892 square feet.

§217.2 Will the use of existing residential buildings and land by a non-profit organization adversely affect the use of neighboring properties?

No. The proposed use of the subject building as a non-profit organization, with two administrative staff on site, who will coordinate occasional

functions in the building, such as meetings by the local NA of CWC, and a mentors program, will not adversely affect the use of neighboring properties. The previous use (private club) had a much higher impact on neighboring properties, because it's certificate of occupancy allowed 180 seats and use of the building as a private club included late-night activities. The NA of CWC staff and programs will generally use the building during normal business hours, with some occasional evening or weekend activities.

§217.3 Will the amount and arrangement of parking spaces be adequate and located to minimize traffic impact on the adjacent neighborhood?

Yes. There are no off-street parking spaces on the subject property. However, it should be noted that there would be only two full time employees in the building on a regular basis and other NA of CWC programs that would occasionally use the building, will not exceed 20 persons. The public space can accommodate such small parking increases. There is also metro rail service near the site and both 14th & 16th streets provide easy metro bus access to the site. These two public transportation systems should limit the demand for parking spaces in the area of the subject building. Further, as previously noted, the prior user was a private club and the neighborhood accommodated parking for a larger volume (180 seats in the club) of vehicles.

The subject structure is a contributing building in the 16th Street Historic District. Under § 2100.5 and 2200.5 of the Zoning Regulations, such buildings are eligible for waiver of certain zoning requirements for off-street parking and loading facilities. Under these sections, no additional off-street parking spaces or loading docks are required for a historic landmark or a building certified by the State Historic Preservation Officer as a contributing to the character of a historic district. The applicant has applied for and received a waiver from off-street parking requirements.

§217.4 Will goods, chattel, wares or merchandise be commercially created, exchanged, or sold in the residential building or on the land by a non-profit organization, except for the sale of publications, materials, or other items related to the purposes of the non-profit organization?

No. The building will be used for administrative office functions and occasional meeting of program under the NA of CWC. The non-profit will not manufacture or sale products on the site.

§217.5 Any addition to the building or any major modifications to the exterior of the building or to the site shall require the prior approval of the Board. The Board shall refer any proposed additions or modifications to the State Historic Preservation Officer, who, acting with the advise of the D.C. Professional Review Committee for nomination to the National Register of

Historic Places, shall provide the Board with a report to determine possible detrimental consequences that the proposed addition or modification may have on the architectural or historical significance of the building or site of the building or sites or district in which the building or site or district in which the building is located.

The subject premises were recently substantially renovated to accommodate functions of NA of CWC, the non-profit users. All of the modifications to the structure have received the necessary HPRB and BZA approvals.

DOES THE APPLICATION MEET THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION TEST?

Will the special exception be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning regulations and Maps?

Yes. The proposal to change the use in the subject building by the applicant, from that of a private club, to the present use of a non-profit office, will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning regulations and Maps, as demonstrated through the responses to section 217 of the zoning regulations.

Will the special exception adversely affect the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Maps?

No. There will be very little adversely affect regarding the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning regulations and maps, if the Board were to grant the requested special exception relief. The proposed use of the subject building as a non-profit organization, with two administrative staff on site, who will coordinate occasional functions in the building, such as meetings by the local NA of CWC, and a mentors program, will not adversely affect the use of neighboring properties. The previous use (private club) had a much higher impact on neighboring properties, because its certificate of occupancy allowed 180 seats and use of the building as a private club included late-night activities. The NA of CWC staff and programs will generally use the building during normal business hours, with some occasional evening or weekend activities.

COMMENT COMMENTS

The applicant make a presentation to Advisory Neighborhood (ANC) 2B, at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 13, 2002. ANC 2B voted unanimously (7-0) to support the special exception request. Members of the ANC expressed delight that the NA of CWC was returning to the community and considered the non-profit use of the building better than that of a private club.

OP SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the application submitted by the National Association of Colored Women's Club, Inc, requesting a special exception to change the use of it's head quarters building from that of a private club to non-profit office, the Office of Planning recommends that the Board **approve the application**. The Office of Planning finds that the applicant has satisfactorily met all the tests specified in Section 3104.1, and 217 and 352 and concluded the application will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.



Feature Key

Zoning Boundaries
Square Index

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Application No. 16853

DC Office of Planning
March 7, 2002

Scale 1:1205

25 0 25 50 75 Feet

Attachment 1