GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

★ ★ ★

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman,
Director

BZA
Case No. 16926
Exhibit No. 29

DATE: October 11, 2002

SUBJECT: **Supplemental Report:** BZA Application 16926, EQR-JBG 2400 Residential, L.L.C. 2400 M Street, NW –Square 25, Lot 808

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

In our October 8, 2002 report the Office of Planning (OP) recommended that the Board of Zoning Adjustment (the Board) approve the requested roof structure special exception, and approve the requested residential recreation space variance for this case.

OP did not make a recommendation on the rear yard variance, pending the receipt of additional information from the applicant. The applicant has now supplied some of the additional information. OP strongly supports the construction of a broad range of housing types in the West End. However, having evaluated the additional information, OP feels that the applicant has not yet demonstrated that there would be practical difficulties that would be unnecessarily burdensome and impose undue hardship to the Applicant should the rear yard variance not be approved.

DISCUSSION

As requested, the applicant has filed letters from both the owner and contract purchaser of the Columbia Women's Hospital stating they would have no objection to the Board's granting the requested two-foot projection of bays on the south side of 2400 M Street into the required rear yard. The Columbia Women's Hospital property is adjacent to the south to 2400 M Street and would be most affected by any rear yard projection.

As requested, the applicant compared the trade-off between unit size and location of the southern string of apartments and the space required for recreation. According to the applicant, removing two feet from the courtyard dimension would reduce the residential recreation space approximately 232 square feet. OP would not have a problem with such an additional reduction in residential recreation space, as most of the active recreation space would be located on the roof deck of the proposed building.

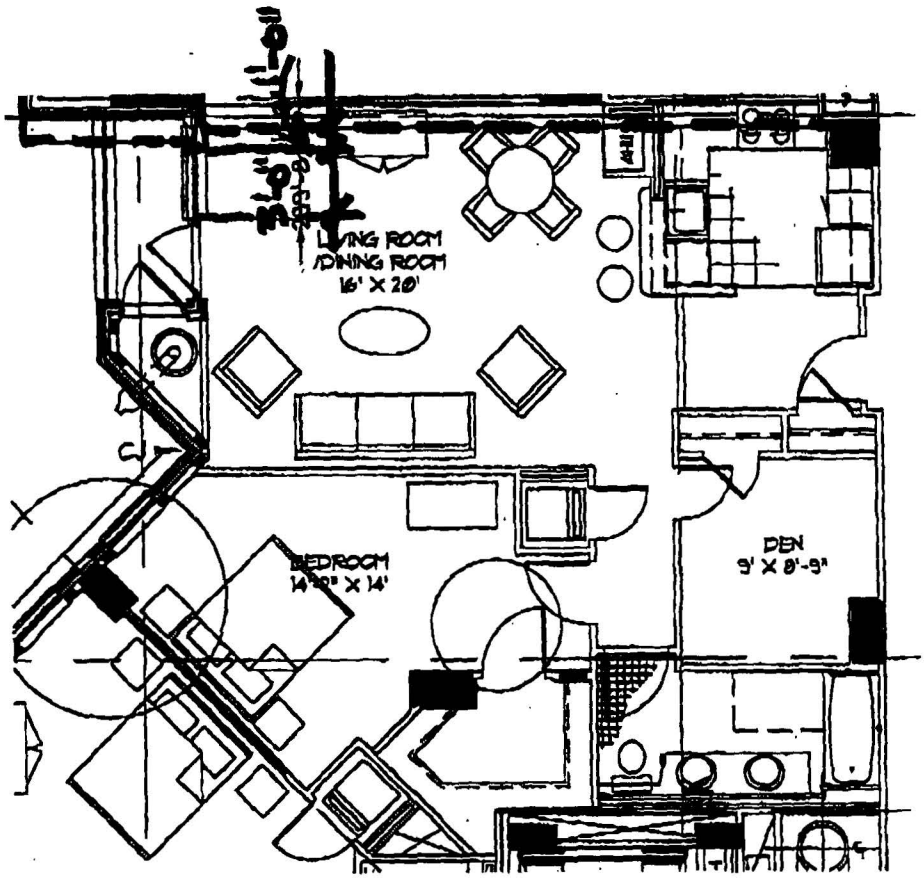
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16926
EXHIBIT NO.29

In responding to the request for information, the applicant chose to reduce the north/south courtyard dimension by one foot on the north side and one foot on the south side. The applicant states this reduction would result in the practical difficulty of the corner units facing the courtyard losing one foot of windows, thus decreasing window widths in these apartments to three feet – a dimension the applicant feels makes the units potentially unmarketable. The applicant's demonstration of this is the attached sheet labeled B.4. The applicant did not explore reconfiguring units, nor did it explain why the window facing and the door opening out to the interior courtyard would not provide more than adequate "window" space in conjunction with the other, somewhat narrowed, window.

The applicant also provided floor plans of 5 apartment buildings in Virginia and 3 apartment buildings in Washington (1 under construction; 2 planned) by the same architecture firm that is designing 2400 M Street. The dimensions for most of the living/dining areas in these apartments exceed 19 feet. However, because the applicant has not demonstrated that, based on an exploration of innovative floor plans the applicant cannot develop a reasonable residential structure at 2400 M Street with different apartment configurations, OP does not feel the applicant has demonstrated the need to project two feet into the rear yard at 2400 M Street.

In its information request about the rear yard variance, OP had also asked for clarification of the relationship among the structural bay system, the loading and parking entrances and ramps, and the requested rear yard relief – a relationship the applicant had said made necessary a certain location of columns that also influenced the decision to request the rear yard variance. According to the applicant, additional study has revealed that column placement may be more flexible than originally thought.

Attachment
Aa/slc



UNIT B4 SHOWING WINDOW REDUCTION IMPACT

Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"
10/03/02

'M' & 24th STREET RESIDENTIAL

WDG ARCHITECTURE PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN

1025 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 300 Washington, DC 20036
tel 202.857.8300 fax 202.463.2178 email address

WASHINGTON DC

B4

SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"