STATEMENT OF REASONS IN SUPPORT OF AMENDED APPLICATION
FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION FROM THE REAR YARD REQUIREMENTS
OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS TO PERMIT THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL AND RETAIL PROJECT AT
1522-1526 14th STREET, N.W.; SQUARE 209, LOT 98

This Statement of Reasons is submitted on behalf of the applicant, US Property Development Corporation ("US Property"), the owner of the subject property.

The Property. The subject property, 1522-1526 14th Street, N.W., Square 209, Lot 98 (the "Property"), is located at the northeast corner of 14th and Church Streets, N.W. in the Greater U Street Historic District. The site contains 30,870 square feet of land. The eastern property line runs parallel with 14th Street; the southern property line is along Church Street; the northern property line is adjacent to a ten foot (10') public alley right-of way; and the western property line is adjacent to an existing three-story brick building.

The Property is located one block away from Q Street, which is developed with historic rowhouses ranging in height between twenty to forty feet (20'-40').

Current Use. The Property is improved with two contributing buildings to the Greater U Street Historic District. The first building, which has a premises address of 1522-1524 14th Street, N.W., is a Classical Revival style masonry building built in 1920 as an automobile showroom and service garage. The second building, which has a premises address of 1526 14th Street, N.W., is a Egyptian Revival-style building completed in 1926 for use as an automobile showroom and service garage. There is a three-story service addition to this building that fronts Church Street. These buildings, which occupy sixty-five percent (65%) of the Property, are currently used for retail purposes.

The Property also includes a 90' x 90' vacant site located to the west of the Church Street Addition. This vacant site is currently used for parking and contains approximately twenty-five (25) parking spaces.

Proposed Use. Through this application, US Property seeks to develop a mixed-use residential and retail building on the Property. US Property proposes to construct a five-story addition on the presently vacant portion of the site, as well as a fourth floor addition to the existing buildings. The fourth floor addition will be set back from 14th Street by forty-two feet (42') on the building located at 1526 14th Street and by sixty-one feet (61') on the building at 1522-1524 14th Street.

The project will contain approximately 12,182 square feet of ground floor retail and 86 residential units. The retail space will be located in the existing buildings. The existing buildings will also contain 48 apartment units, with the remaining 38 units located in the additions.

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BZA
Case No. 16969
Exhibit No. 4

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District of Columbia
CASE NO.16969
EXHIBIT NO.4

Because the existing buildings are contributing buildings and because the proposed construction is an addition to these buildings, there are no parking and loading requirements for the project. Regardless, US Property is providing a three (3) level, below grade parking garage on the presently vacant site, which will contain 79 spaces. A loading area of approximately 1000 square feet is also being provided at the rear of the Property.

Zoning. The Property is zoned Arts/C-3-A. The C-3 zone districts are designed to accommodate important sub-centers supplementary to the Central Business district and, as such, are intended to provide substantial amounts of employment, housing and mixed uses. 11 D.C.M.R. §§ 740.1 & 740.2. The C-3-A zone district permits medium density development, with a density incentive for residential development within a general pattern of mixed uses. 11 D.C.M.R. § 740.4. The C-3-A zone districts are to be located on arterial streets, in uptown centers and at rapid transit stops.

Matter of right uses in the C-3-A zone district include, *inter alia*, multiple dwelling and retail. 11 D.C.M.R. § 741.

The Arts Overlay District is intended to encourage retail and residential uses and to expand the housing supply in the overlay district. 11 D.C.M.R. § 1900.2. In addition to promoting the housing supply, the Arts Overlay District, as with the C-3-A zone district, is intended to expand business and job opportunities. 11 D.C.M.R. § 1900.2(e).

There is a strong emphasis on pedestrian activity in the Arts Overlay and, as such, the Overlay requires uses that encourage pedestrian activity such as retail, entertainment and residential uses. 11 D.C.M.R. § 1900.2(b). An example of this emphasis is the requirement that retail and services and arts and related uses, as set forth in Sections 1907 and 1908, respectively, occupy no less than fifty percent (50%) of the ground level of a building that fronts 14th Street. 11 D.C.M.R. §1901.1.

BZA Case No. 16907. In BZA Application No. 16907, US Property requested, and was granted area variances from the lot occupancy and residential recreation space requirements of sections 772 and 773 of the Zoning Regulations and a special exception from the retail requirements of section 1901.1 of the Zoning Regulations. A copy of the Order No. 16907 is attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

Additional Required Zoning Relief. Subsequent to the issuance of the Order in BZA Application 16907, it was discovered that an additional special exception is needed from the rear yard requirements of Section 774.1 of the Zoning Regulations. Previous plans did not clearly illustrate that the garage of the building, which extends to the rear lot line, has an above-grade height of five feet two inches (5'2").[1] Therefore, as measured by Section 774.7(a) of the Zoning Regulations, a rear yard of only five feet (5') is provided, falling seven feet (7') short of the required twelve feet (12').

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[1] This height is just over the allowed four foot (4') for projections into open space. 11 D.C.M.R. § 2503.1).

Private terraces on the top of the garage, as depicted on Exhibit "B," are proposed for the residential units adjacent to the rear lot and thus, the elevated area open from the rear of the building to the center of the adjacent alley is greater than the required rear yard.

CONCLUSION

The requested zoning relief is required so as to maximize the amount of retail and, more importantly, residential units provided on the site, goals of the underlying zone districts. The requested relief is necessitated in large part due to historic buildings that occupy 65% of the Property and the configuration of the buildings on the site. Moreover, recognizing the need for parking, although not required, the applicant has provided parking in a three-level parking garage. Because of the provision parking, this additional special exception from the rear yard requirements becomes necessary.

The proposed design of the project is the product of extensive study of the Property and development requirements. The proposed project has been designed so as to respond to and respect the surrounding historic district. The proposed project resolves the inherent conflicts, challenges and opportunities associated with the Property without substantially impairing the intent, purpose and integrity of the zone plan, as embodied in the Zoning Regulations and Map.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that, upon receipt of all of the applicant's proof and all other support of record for the additional special exception requested, such relief be granted.

Respectfully submitted,
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