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Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: 1700 Kalorama Road, N.W.
BZA Application No. 17009

Dear Members of the Board:

The attached Summary of the Facts in the above-referenced case was inadvertently omitted from our submission of May 23, 2003. Please accept it into the record in the case.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cynthia A. Giordano

Attachment

BZA
Case No. 17009
Exhibit No. 32

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17009
EXHIBIT NO. 32

SUMMARY OF
PERTINENT FACTS
1700 KALORAMA AVENUE, N.W.
BZA NO. 17009

Subject application is special exception pursuant to Sections 1402.1 and 3104 to allow a height of 50 feet for the conversion and enlargement of an existing commercial building into a 34-36 unit apartment house with ground level professional and nonprofit arts uses at 1700 Kalorama Road, N.W. (Square 2567, Lot 81, the "Property"). A minor variance to reduce the amount of residential recreation space required is also requested pursuant to § 3103.

Property is zoned RC/C-2-B -- a medium-density, mixed-use zone with a maximum height of 65 feet and a maximum density of 3.5 FAR for residential or mixed uses, (1.5 FAR for commercial uses). The Reed-Cooke overlay zone, as set forth in 11 DCMR Chapter 14, modifies the base zoning in several significant ways, most importantly by enumerating a list of prohibited uses and by establishing a height limit of 40 feet. The permitted height restriction may be increased up to 50 feet as a special exception, provided that one-half of the additional density is devoted to affordable housing units.

The requested special exception seeks an increase to 50 feet on a portion of the existing improvements. The height increase will result in two additional residential units and approximately 1,350 square feet of low-moderate income housing in the project. The requested variance seeks to reduce the residential recreation space requirements from 15% to 6.7%.

The existing improvements on subject property consists of a two-story office building with a two-level, open-air parking structure at the rear on a lot having 22,004 square feet of land area. The lower level of parking is accessed from an alley off of Kalorama Road, and the upper level of parking is accessed by a driveway from 17th Street at a higher elevation. The office building is an industrial-design masonry structure with an irregular shape that follows the extreme acute angle formed by the intersection of 17th Street and Kalorama Road, N.W.

The proposed development consists of a conversion to residential condominiums with a two-story matter-of-right addition on top of the main building and a small, oval-shaped, two-story residential addition over the parking garage. Only the addition on the parking garage is proposed to extend to 50 foot height pursuant to the special exception relief requested. The height of the main structure will not exceed the 40 foot matter-of-right standard. The ground floor space will be occupied by "Sitar," a well-respected nonprofit arts center already located in the neighborhood and Lynne Israel and Associates, a professional service use which provides occupational therapy to children.

With the height increase, if granted, an additional residential gross floor area of approximately 2,936 square feet can be added, for a total of 36 units. A net increase of two units with 1,350 square feet each is obtained with the increase. Pursuant to Section 1402.1, the equivalent of 50% of this additional area (or approximately 1,350 net square feet) must be devoted to low and moderate income housing in the project. The Applicant has committed to provide this space in one large unit or two smaller units. The sale and resale of the unit(s) will be conducted in accordance with the program outlined included in the Applicant's post-hearing submission.

Because of the unusual configuration of the existing building and the parking deck behind it, together with the sloping site, it is difficult for the design to accommodate the full amount of required residential recreation space. The standard in the Zoning Regulations is for recreation space equal to fifteen percent (15%) of the residential gross floor area of the building. The Applicant is proposing to provide a total of 7,295 square feet with 3,422 square feet of residential recreation space or 6.7%.

All of the required recreation space cannot be provided on the roof because of the minimum width requirements for rooftop recreation space and the unusual shape of the building. Instead, the Applicant is proposing to provide two common area spaces totaling 3,422 square feet (6.7%) on the roof for recreational use and to divide and allocate the remaining area for private rooftop decks. Thirteen units will have a private rooftop garden. Fifteen units will have balconies (including some of the units with rooftop gardens). Only eight of the 36 units will have neither a terrace nor a balcony, thereby minimizing the need for additional recreation space beyond the proposed 6.7%.

Further, it is impractical to provide recreation space inside the building. Such space is rarely used in a project of this size, and the management and maintenance of the indoor recreation space would pose an undue burden for the future condo association which would have to shoulder the responsibility of managing this space. Rather, the Applicant proposes to devote this space to residential use and additional ground floor space for the Sitar School. Such utilization is more in keeping with the purposes of the Reed-Cooke zoning than a function room that will rarely be used.

The requested relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantial impairment of the zone plan with no adverse effects on neighbors or Zone Plan. The intensity of use of the site is being substantially reduced because the Applicant is converting the building from office to residential use. For the past 10 years the building has been 100 percent occupied for office use with 100 employees and 40 automobiles. The office use, of course, generated a high level of commuter vehicle trips during peak morning and evening traffic periods. A much smaller number of automobiles will be used in these periods by residents, a higher percentage of whom will walk or take public transit to work.

Both of the parking levels exist at present and will have the same two means of access as at present. The number of parking spaces will not change. By providing adequate parking in this parking-deficient neighborhood, the project helps alleviate a current problem condition in the neighborhood.

Both the ANC and the Reed-Cooke Neighborhood Association support the application.