GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

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2004 MAY -6 PM 3:01

TO: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Stanley Jackson
Director

DATE: May 4, 2004

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 17173 – Application for a Special Exception and Three Variances to Allow Construction of Ten Townhouses and 13 Off-Street Parking Spaces at 2525 Minnesota Avenue SE (Lot 804 in Square 5553)

As requested in a Board of Zoning Adjustment memorandum of April 2, 2004, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed the above referenced BZA Application, supports approval of the requested Special Exception under Subsection 353.1, the variance from off-street parking requirements, under Section 2116.1, the variance from FAR requirements under Section 402.4 and the variance from lot occupancy requirements under Section 403.2, and offers the following reasons in support based upon the specific information presented in the application:

1. DHCD has contributed funding to the Applicant's project for the purpose of creating ten (10) units of much needed affordable homeownership housing in this East of the River neighborhood. The 10 proposed townhouse units are in direct response to the DHCD funding conditions for the development of affordable homeownership units.
2. The site is an awkwardly shaped trapezoidal lot that fronts on 27th Street SE and Minnesota Avenue SE. In order to have a site plan where the 10 townhouse units front on 27th Street and Minnesota Avenue, it was necessary to develop a vehicle circulation and parking plan that has access from 27th Street. This circulation/parking plan makes it possible to place only two of the parking spaces on the townhouse lots they serve. The other eight townhouses will be served by assigned parking spaces located on the project property, but not located on their own townhouse lot.
3. Thirteen off-street parking spaces are provided on the property – three more than the ten parking spaces required.

BZA
Case No. 17173
Exhibit No. 24

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17173
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4. The awkward shape of the property has resulted in the creation of 10 record lots of varying sizes with an overall lot occupancy of 34.1%. Five of the individual lots face 27th Street and five of the lots face Minnesota Avenue. Three of the lots on Minnesota Avenue (Lots 7, 8, and 9) have a lot occupancy of 43.1%, which requires a modest variance of 3.1% to exceed the maximum 40% individual lot occupancy allowed.
5. The sloping topography of the site, with the slope falling across the site from 27th Street to Minnesota Avenue, results in a situation where three of the townhouses fronting on Minnesota Avenue (Lots 6, 7, and 8) will have a portion of their basements out of grade, that must be counted in the FAR. The FAR for these three townhouses are modestly above the maximum .90 FAR permitted for the individual record lots. The overall FAR for the whole property is approximately .71 – well below the maximum .90 allowed.
6. The scale, massing and exterior materials of the 10 proposed townhouses are in character with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed townhouses will be in harmony with the intent and requirements of the R-5-A Zoning District in which the project property is located.