

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia  
**FROM:** <sup>JLS</sup>Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director for Development Review & Historic Preservation  
**DATE:** December 1, 2017  
**SUBJECT:** **Zoning Commission Case 17-\_\_\_ - Setdown Report** - Proposed zoning map amendment to locate previously unzoned property within the RA-1 zone to allow the replacement of the Fort Greble Recreation Center with a new net zero urban nature center and community garden

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### **I. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning recommends that the Zoning Commission set down the following map amendment for a public hearing:

The District Department of Parks and Recreation Fort Greble Recreation Center site (part of U.S. Reservation 412 transferred for use as a District recreation center) from unzoned to RA-1

### **II. BACKGROUND**

The petitioner, the District of Columbia, has proposed the redevelopment of Fort Greble Recreation Center (part of U.S. Reservation 421) an approximately 6 acres (261,891 square feet) site in Southwest Washington. Jurisdiction for the District's recreation center portion of the site was transferred from the Federal Government to the District in the 1973 (see Exhibit 1).

The District's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Fort Greble Recreation Center has an existing baseball field, two basketball courts, two play areas with swings and slides, and a splash pad. The site is located off Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue with access from Elmira Street SW. The park was renovated in 2013 through the Play DC program. The existing recreation center was constructed in 1970 and does not meet current building codes. The project scope is to raze the existing building while maintaining the park areas renovated in 2013. The DGS/DPR team plans to construct a Net Carbon Neutral recreation center in compliance with all local and international building codes. Proposed site updates will include a community garden, a stormwater management system and an orchard (see Exhibit 2).

The site is located within the Fort Circle Parks Historic District and in 2016 the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts stated they had no objection to the concept design for the replacement building.

### **III. AREA DESCRIPTION**

The project site is located along the northeastern side of Fort Greble Park, which is part of the Fort Circle Parks system of the National Park Service. Surrounding the site are parkland and I-295 to the west and to the east are residential buildings, a health care facility and an elementary school.

The closest metroraill stop is Congress Heights on the Green Line, about two miles away. The site is also close to Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. SW and Chesapeake Street SW, both which have metrobus routes.



Site Location and Zoning

#### IV. ZONING

Adjacent property to the east is zoned RA-1. The remainder of Fort Greble Park that is outside the Transfer of Jurisdiction boundary will remain unzoned, as is typical of federal parklands.

The proposed zone for the site is RA-1, which is consistent with the designation found on adjacent property to the east. The Zoning Regulations state: “*The Residential Apartment (RA) zones permit urban residential development and compatible institutional and semi-public buildings. The RA zones are designed to be mapped in areas identified as moderate- or high-density residential areas suitable for multiple dwelling unit development and supporting uses... The RA-1 zone provides for areas predominantly developed with low- to moderate-density development, including detached dwellings, rowhouses, and low-rise apartments.*”

Subtitle U Section 401 of the Zoning Regulations lists the following use is permitted as a matter of right in an RA-1 zone:

*Recreation building, park, playground, swimming pool, athletic field, ice rink, or other similar athletic facility, public or private, operated on and using local or federal land and approved by a joint federal-local jurisdictional transfer agreement; subject to the following:*

- (1) No part of any use is nearer than seventy feet (70 ft.) to the nearest residential structure;*
- (2) The uses shall not be organized for profit;*
- (3) All parking areas shall be shared by all uses on a lot;*
- (4) Scoreboards shall be installed such that the highest point is no taller than twenty-five feet (25 ft.) above grade; and*
- (5) Any lighting used to illuminate a park, playground, athletic field, trail, or other outdoor space, shall be so arranged that all direct rays of lighting are confined to the boundaries of the lot.*

#### V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposed amendment would be not inconsistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The Generalized Policy Map designates the area for “Federal Lands” and the Future Land Use Map designates it as “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space”.

While federal parklands are generally unzoned, District parklands are often zoned the same as the surrounding land uses. Adjacent land uses to the immediate east are zoned RA-1, the zone proposed for the subject property.

The proposed change is limited in its impact, in that it facilitates the replacement of a public recreation facility with a new public nature center, and would generally support the following Comprehensive Plan policy objectives:

## **Parks Recreation and Open Space Citywide Element**

### **PROS-1.1.2: Consideration of Federal Parkland**

Work with federal agencies to evaluate the role that federal lands play in meeting the recreational needs of District residents, particularly for regional parks and sports complexes. Because these properties are used by city residents, they should be considered when identifying underserved areas and assessing the need for local park improvements. 804.9

### **PROS-1.1.3: Park Diversity**

Provide a diverse range of recreational experiences in parks within the District of Columbia, including a balance between passive and active recreational uses, and a mix of local-serving, region-serving, and national recreational uses. 804.10

### **PROS-1.2.1: Closing the Gaps**

Achieve a better distribution of parks in all neighborhoods of the city. This will require a priority on improving or expanding parks in: (a) more densely populated neighborhoods with limited open space; (b) areas that are more than ½ mile from a neighborhood or community park (or a federal park that serves an equivalent function); (c) areas where substantial new housing growth is expected, based on the forecasts of the Comprehensive Plan; and (d) areas where the existing recreation centers and parks are in poor condition. 805.5

### **PROS-1.3.2: Parks and Environmental Objectives**

Use park improvements to achieve environmental objectives such as water quality improvement, air quality improvement, and wildlife habitat restoration. 806.4

### **PROS-1.4.5: Park Amenities on NPS Land**

Where consistent with other policies in the Comprehensive Plan and NPS plans, and where supported by nearby neighborhoods and needs assessments, encourage federal government projects that would provide new recreational amenities such as soccer fields, picnic areas, and trails serving District residents on national parkland. 807.8

### **PROS-2.1.1: Recreational Facility Development**

Improve the physical and psychological health of District residents by providing a variety of recreational and athletic facilities, including playing fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, basketball courts, trails and paths, and open areas for other sports activities. 809.5

### **PROS-2.2.4: Youth Recreational Services**

Provide recreational services that are particularly responsive to the special needs of the District's youth, using recreation and athletics to promote self esteem, responsibility, and leadership skills among DC teens. 810.8

## **Far Southeast and Southwest Area Element**

### **FSS-1.2.5: Fort Circle Parks**

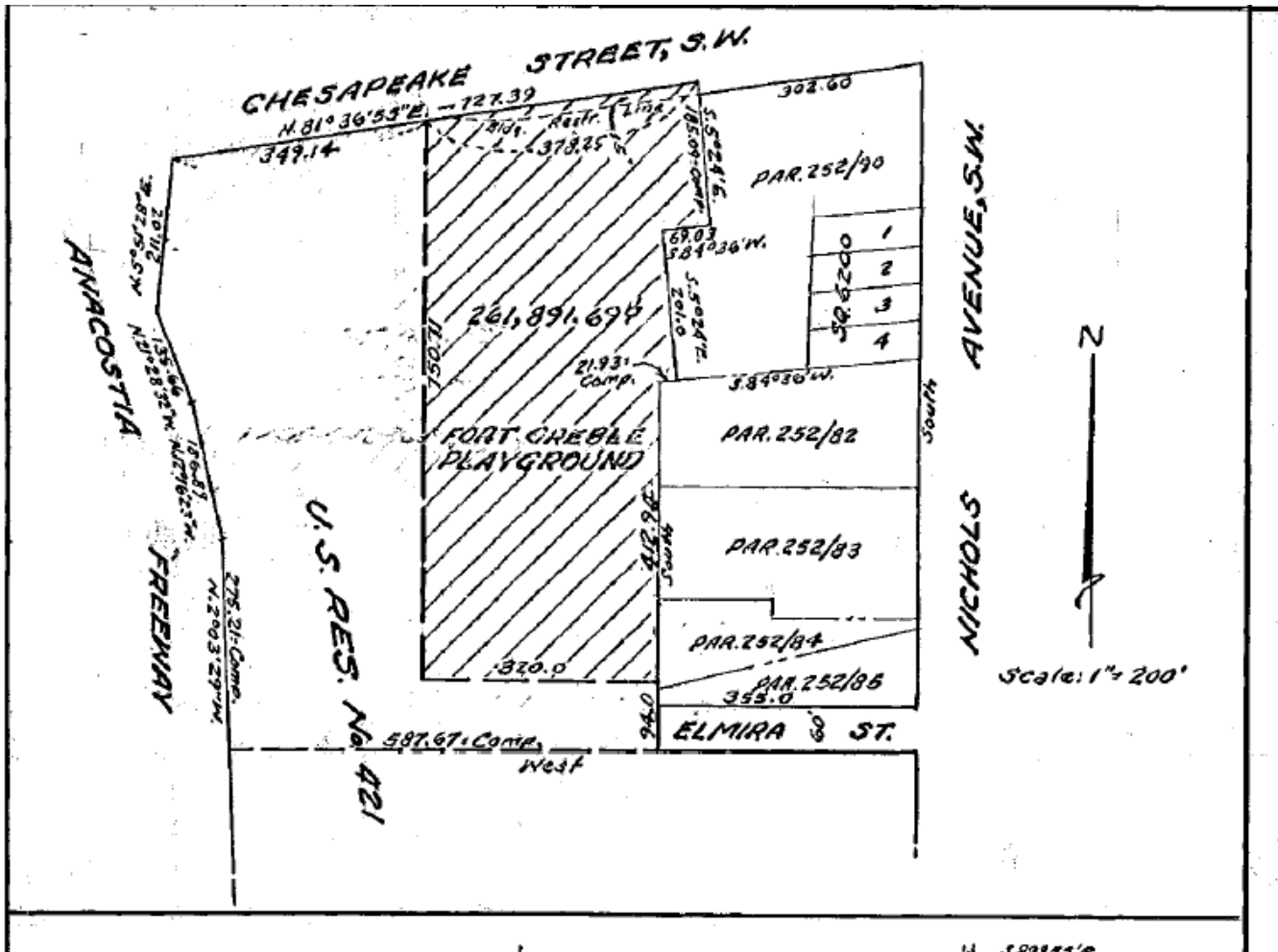
Improve the Fort Circle Parks within the Far Southeast/Southwest, including upgrades to the Fort Circle Trail, and additional recreational facilities and amenities at Fort Stanton Park. 1809.5

JS/af

#### **Attachments:**

- Exhibit 1 – Transfer of Jurisdiction boundary
- Exhibit 2 – Proposed site plan for new nature center



Exhibit 1



# TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION

National Capital Planning Commission  
Washington, D.C., DECEMBER 7, 1972  
In accordance with Section 8-115 of the Code of Law  
for the District of Columbia and Public Law No. 592, 82nd  
Congress, approved July 19, 1952.  
Recommended by vote of the Commission.

Daniel H. Prael  
Secretary

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Washington, D.C., 12-11, 1972  
In accordance with Section 8-115 of the Code of Law  
for the District of Columbia, I hereby transfer to the Juris-  
diction of the District of Columbia, parts of U.S. Reservations  
405, 421, 495, 497 and 561 for recreation and  
related purposes as shown hereon thus: ; and  
for reservoir purposes the area shown thus: 

Russell E. Dickinson  
General Superintendent  
Office of National Capital Parks.

Washington, D.C., July 8, 1971  
In accordance with Section 8-115 of the Code of Law  
for the District of Columbia, and Section 402 (1d) of Reorgan-  
ization Plan No. 3 of 1967, the transfers of jurisdiction offered  
hereon are hereby accepted.  
By direction of the District of Columbia Council.

David A. Delward  
Secretary of the Council

Office of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia  
Washington, D.C., December 14, 1972  
I certify that the plat shown hereon is correct and is  
heraby approved for record in this office.

G. J. [Signature]  
Acting Surveyor, D.C.

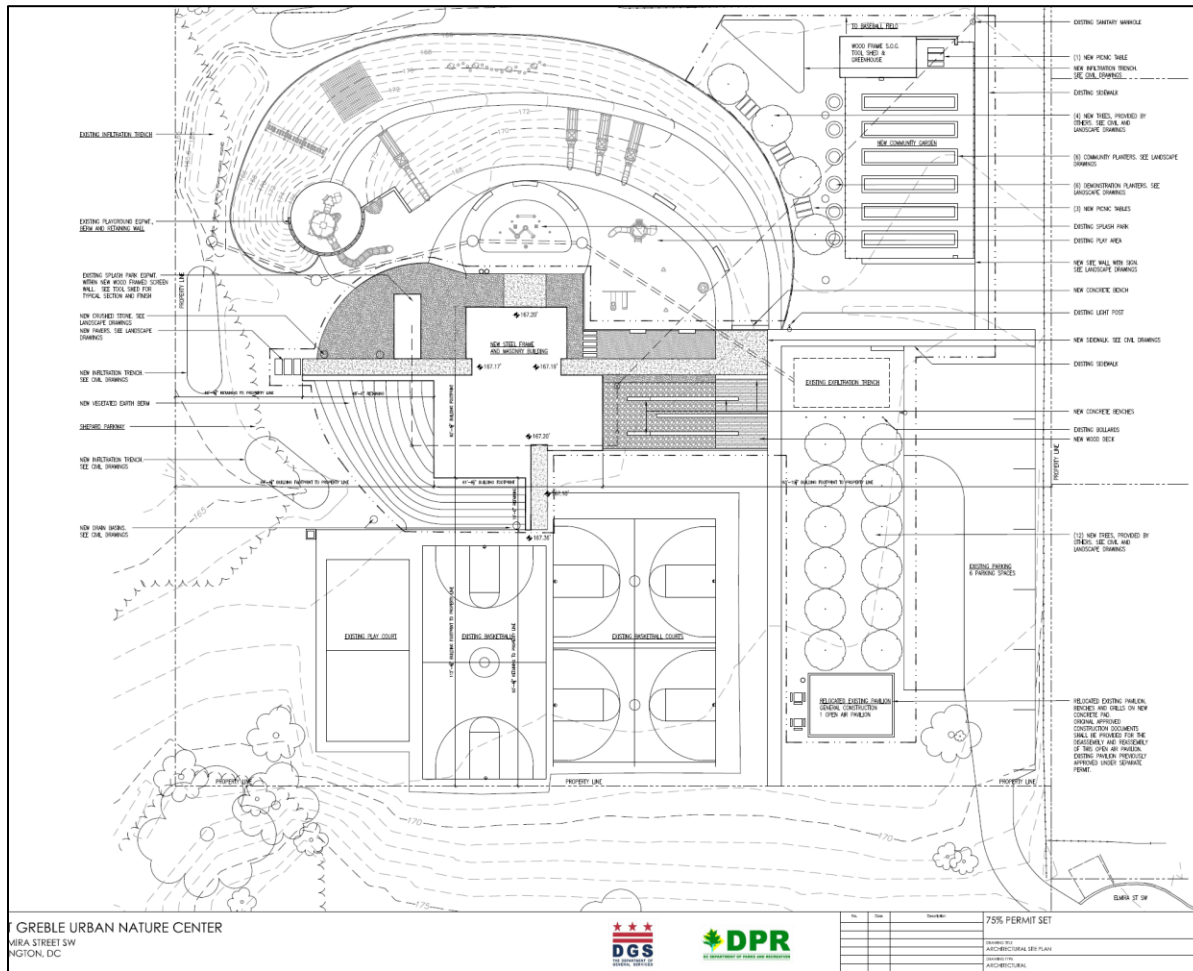
<b>SURVEYOR'S OFFICE, D.C.</b>	
Made for: Dept. of General Services	
Drawn by: R.M.M. - Checked by: J.M.	(no. 25205)
Recorded at 11:30 A.M. December 14, 1972	
Recorded in Book 158 page 40	
File No: 3072-277	MAP No. 96071

MAP = 271

SURVEYOR'S OFFICE, D.C.

MAP = 271

Exhibit 2 Proposed site plan of new nature center at Fort Greble





POINT OF COMMENCEMENT  
AT NORTHWEST CORNER OF  
US RESERVATION 421

ANACOSTIA FREEWAY  
(156' WIDE PUBLIC STREET)

N 81°36'55" E 349.14'

POINT OF  
BEGINNING

CHESAPEAKE STREET, S.W.  
(90' WIDE PUBLIC STREET)

N 81°36'55" E  
378.25

15' BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE

S 5°24'00" E  
185.09

S 84°36'00" W  
69.03

S 5°24'00" E  
201.00

PARCEL 252/90

S 84°36'00" W  
21.93

PART OF  
US RESERVATION 421

N 00°00'00" W  
750.71

FORT GREBLE PLAYGROUND  
US RESERVATION 421  
261,892 SQ. FT.  
6.01221 ACRES

S 00°00'00" W  
412.94

PARCEL 252/82

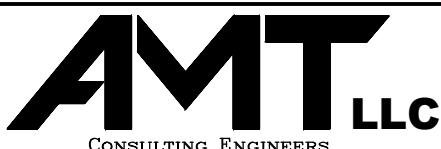
PARCEL 252/83

PARCEL 252/84

PARCEL 252/85

N 90°00'00" W 320.00

ELMIRA STREET, S.W.  
(60' WIDE PUBLIC STREET)



CONSULTING ENGINEERS  
10 G STREET, NE, SUITE 430, WASHINGTON, DC, 20002  
(202) 289-4545 FAX: (202) 289-5051

DES.	
DRN.	JO
CHK.	DS
FILE:	16-0403.001

EXHIBIT

**FORT GREBLE PLAYGROUND**  
US RESERVATION 421  
WASHINGTON, DC

DATE  
**11/30/17**

SHEET  
**1 OF 2**

**Description  
Fort Greble Playground  
Part of US Reservation 421  
November 30, 2017**

**Being** land know as Fort Greble Playground, as part of U.S. Reservation 421, District of Columbia, as shown on a Transfer of Jurisdiction, per plat thereof December 7, 1972, among the Records of the Office of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia in Recorded Book 158 at Page 140 said land being more particularly described as follow:

**Commencing** at the northwest corner of US Reservation 421, said point also being the intersection of the east line of Anacostia Freeway, SW (156' wide public street) and the south line of Chesapeake Street, SW (90' wide public street); thence on the south line of said Chesapeake Street, SW **N 81°36'55" E 349.14 feet to the Point of Beginning**; thence continuing on said south line

**N 81°36'55" E 378.25 feet**; thence departing south said line running in, through and over said US Reservation 421 the following courses and distances.

**S 5°24'00" E 185.09 feet**; thence

**S 84°36'00" E 69.03 feet**; thence

**S 5°24'00" E 201.00 feet**; thence

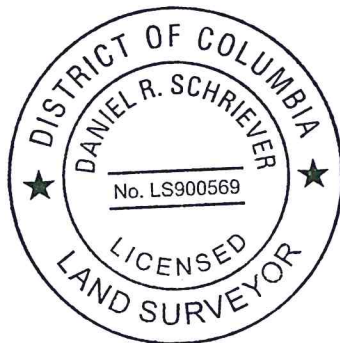
**S 84°36'00" E 21.93 feet**; thence

**S 00°00'00" E 412.94 feet**; thence

**N 90°00'00" W 320.00 feet**; thence

**N 00°00'00" W 750.71 feet to the Point of Beginning.**

Containing a recorded area of **6.01221 acres** or **261,892 square feet.**




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Daniel R. Schriever  
License Surveyor  
District of Columbia License No. LS 905059  
For AMT, LLC