GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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2002 APR 12 PM 3:35

MEMORADUM

TO: Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

DATE: April 12, 2002

SUBJECT: Waiver of Rules for Late Submittal of Final Report on **Case No. 01-36C**
Unified Communications Center Planned Unit Development

The attached report concerning a proposed map amendment and Planned unit development for the Unified Communications Center is being submitted less than 10 days prior to the Zoning Commission's consideration of the item and scheduled public hearing. The Office of Planning respectfully requests that the Commission waive its rule and accept the report into the record.

Attachments

AA/

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case
Exhibit

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.01-36C
EXHIBIT NO.27

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

RECEIVED
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2002 APR 12 PM 3:35

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 3, 2002

TO: Zoning Commission

THROUGH: Andrew ~~Altman~~, Director
Ellen McCarthy, Deputy Director

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, AICP

RE: **ZC- 01-36C:** Final Report for the Unified Communications Center Map Amendment and Consolidated Planned Unit Development for property on the Saint Elizabeth Hospital East Campus, Martin Luther King Boulevard, S.E.
(Lot 1 Square S5868)

SUMMARY

The D.C. Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) is the coordinating and lead agency for the city's planned Unified Communication Center (UCC) to be built on the east campus of the Saint Elizabeth's Hospital. The UCC will centralize the city's critical communication operations in one secured, state-of-the art building, and will include a supporting food court and day care facility.

The application proposes a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and map amendment to C-2-B medium density commercial. The property is currently unzoned.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the consolidated PUD and map amendment to C-2-B with the condition that the Historic Preservation Amenity Plan include:

- The relocation of two of cottages on-site,
- The recordation of the other two cottage,
- The planting of grasses and preservation of "many of the existing buckeyes"
- A stabilization of the barn and stable.

PROJECT

The applicant's pre-hearing statement describes the project as "a state-of-the-art, three story, 144,000 square foot office building (with basement), together with specialized communications equipment, dining area, childcare center, landscaping, surface parking and historic preservation features." The UCC plan is "to centralize in one secure facility the critical communication functions of the District of Columbia."

ZONING BACKGROUND

The proposed UCC site is located on the northern end of Saint Elizabeth's Hospital east campus, Lot 1 Square S5868. The Saint Elizabeth's property was originally a federal facility and therefore unzoned; Section 106.4 of 11DCMR stipulates "Properties owned by the government of the United States and used for or intended to be used for a federal public building or use ... shall not be included in any zone district." Ownership of the property transferred to the city in 1989 and the property has remained unzoned. Section 106.5 of 11DCMR sets out the applicability of zoning to district owned properties and Section 106.5 (b) triggers the zoning requirement for this project. It reads in part "...any change or expansion in the use of land or building, or any new construction or additions to buildings shall be subject to zoning..."

The property has been used for hospital purposes since the early 20th century. The city, as represented by the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO), proposes to construct a new facility for the centralization of city communication facilities. OCTO is the lead agency for the project and has filed the application as the applicant.

C-2-B Zone District

The applicant, in consultation with the Office of Planning, the Zoning Administrator and the Office of Zoning, determined that the most appropriate underlying zone for the UCC project would be C-2-B. The C-2-B allows for medium-density office development, hospitals, and residential development. The table below identifies the development standard permitted as a matter of right, through the PUD process and as proposed by this application.

	C-2-B	C-2-B PUD	UCC Project
Minimum Area	N/A	15,000 sf	513,755 sf
FAR Non-residential Uses	1.5	2.0	0.28
FAR Residential Uses	2.0	2.5	0.00
Total FAR	3.5	4.5	0.28
Height	65 ft	90 ft	65 ft
Principal Permitted Uses	Office, retail, service and food business, residential, CBRF for 7-15, entertainment, assembly hall, universities, daycare, telephone exchange, antennas, hospitals		Office w/accessory food court and daycare

It was determined that the C-2-B zone would accommodate the proposed UCC communication and office use, supporting dining area and the accessory daycare, and would be compatible with existing campus uses and the surrounding residential neighborhood. The proposed intensity and uses are most consistent with the intent of the C-2 Community Business District, which is to "be located in low and medium density residential areas with access to main highways or rapid transit stops, and shall include office employment centers, shopping centers, and medium-bulk mixed use centers." (Sec. 720.3)

The project and the site meet this intent in the following ways:

1) The site will be located with frontage along Martin Luther King Boulevard, SE, a dedicated arterial roadway;
2) The surrounding neighborhood is predominantly zoned R-5-A and is developed as moderate density residential including apartments, semi-detached units and row houses; and
3) The use will be an office use with significant employment.

The Office of Planning and the Office of Zoning recommended that a PUD accompany the proposed map amendment because the map amendment is intended to facilitate a site-specific project. The PUD will provide assurance of the site's development and use in the absence of a completed redevelopment plan for the campus.

PURPOSE OF A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are set out in Chapter 24 of 11DCMR. A PUD is "designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits." This UCC project will be a state-of-the-art development that will provide secure and critical communication operations for the entire city. The collocation

of the communication operations will provide increased efficiency of emergency services including fire, police, and emergency medical services. The UCC will also house the advanced communications operations of varying traffic management and emergency management services. This advanced technology and collocation will benefit the entire city through more effective, efficient and advanced operations.

The UCC project will benefit the immediate neighborhood by:

- An increased public safety presence and
- Potential economic spin-off to the neighborhood from the daily presence of employees and
- Improved landscaping along MLK Jr. Avenue, SE
- Immediate clean up of the site with the removal of trash and abandoned vehicles.

STANDARDS FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

As demonstrated in the table above, the application meets the minimum 15,000 square foot area requirements of Sec. 2401.1 (c). Pursuant to Section 2402.3, the applicant has elected to file a single application for consolidated review.

The PUD standards state that the "impact of the project on the surrounding area and upon the operations of city services and facilities shall not be unacceptable..." Rather the application must be favorable, capable of mitigation or acceptable based on the projects's public benefits.

Based on the information provided and the improvements in critical communications that will result from the project, OP believes that the project will be favorable and, in and of itself an improvement to city operations and services. The proposed PUD site is relatively under-developed and it is anticipated that the impacts from the UCC development will be minimal and acceptable with the campus context. The project will result in the immediate clean up of the site with the removal of trash and abandoned cars and trailers, sufficient on-site parking will be provided, the driveway is to be aligned with the entrance to the west campus thereby minimizing traffic impacts on MLK Jr. Avenue.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PUBLIC POLICIES

Section 2403.4 requires that the application is "not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with other adopted public policies and active programs related to the subject site." The PUD is also consistent with other sections of the Comprehensive Plan including the following Major Themes of the Comprehensive:

- Section 102 Stabilizing and Improving District Neighborhoods,
- Section 106 Respecting and Improving the Physical Character of the District,
- Section 108 Preserving the Historic Character of the District,
- Section 110 Promoting Enhanced Public Safety, Specifically:

(e) The District government must continue to improve responsiveness both to public requests for emergency police, fire, or medical assistance, and to other emergency situations ranging from infrastructure and public utility failures to natural disasters. Moreover, the District must engage in appropriate planning and capital projects that reduce the likelihood or severity of such emergencies in the future.

Specifically, the application is consistent with Chapter 6, Public Facilities, of the Comprehensive Plan (10DCMR), including:

- Section 601, Public Facilities Goal, which is to "provide adequate and energy-efficient public facilities in good condition to support the cost-effective delivery of municipal programs and services, and to support economic development and neighborhood improvement objectives," and
- Section 604, Increased Cost-Effectiveness In Public Facilities, which "is to improve the cost-effectiveness of public facility construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation,"
- Section 606, Location Of Public Facilities, which states that the "objective is to locate public facilities to provide optimum service and to support the land use, transportation, economic and social development, and neighborhood improvement objectives." And
- Section 1911, Ward 8 Plan, which calls for the environmentally sensitive treatment of fly ash deposited on site, prevention of further soil erosion, restoration of eroded areas and enforcement against illegal dumping and other destructive practices.

The UCC PUD is also consistent with the Mayor's Government Centers Program, which aims to locate government services and centers in neighborhoods to support community revitalization and improve service delivery. The UCC will bring a twenty-four hour employee base to the neighborhood, an increased public safety presence, an enhancement of the immediate streetscape along Martin Luther King Blvd., and an historic preservation effort which recognizes the significance of Saint Elizabeth's and complies with the federal Section 106 requirements for historic preservation.

Public Benefits and Amenities

Section 2403.5 through 2403.13 discusses the definition and evaluation of public benefits and amenities. **Public benefits** are defined as "superior features of a proposed planned unit development that benefit the surrounding neighborhood or the public in general to a significantly greater extent than would likely result from development of the site under the matter of right provisions of this title" (§2403.6). A **project amenity** is defined as "one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors" (§2403.7)

Section 2403.8 states:

> In deciding a planned unit development application, the Zoning Commission shall judge, balance, and reconcile the relative value of the project amenities and

public benefits offered, the degree of development incentives requested, and any potential adverse effects according to the specific circumstances of the case.

Proposed amenities provided by this project include:

- $500,000 contribution for a development plan for the remainder of the east campus. In combination with an equal amount from the Department of Mental Health the plan will address "restoration, infill development and revitalization of the campus." This financial contribution has already been transferred to the Office of Planning and a request for proposal has been issued soliciting proposals for the planning consultant,
- An Historic Preservation Plan for the relocation of at least two of the cottages, the recordation of the other two cottages, and historically relevant plantings,
- Landscape improvements on the property which will reflect the agricultural history of the site,
- Landscape improvements along MLK Avenue,
- Environmental benefits include:
    - The containment of the fly ash that was deposited on the site,
    - An on-site bio-retention pond,
    - An energy efficient building,
    - Stormwater runoff controls, and
    - Preservation of open space and many existing buckeye trees.
- The design of the building is reflective of the same size and massing as existing historic buildings on the campus.
- Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access is provided through careful alignment of the driveway, the provision of sufficient on-site parking and an approximately 480-foot drive way to accommodate off-street stacking as the cars enter the secure employee parking lot at the rear of the site.
- The site plan has been designed to minimize any adverse traffic impacts through the alignment of the internal road with the existing southern gate of the west campus and location of the parking lots at the rear of the site (the eastern side of the lot). The approximate 480-foot drive allows for stacking of approximately 25 automobiles ahead of the security gate.
- The highly specialized and state-of-the-art use of the communications center is of special value to the District of Columbia as a whole. It will improve the emergency preparedness and non-emergency service response to the entire city through the consolidation and integration of critical public safety communications. It will also provide for the efficient and effective operations of the various departments that will have their communications facilities housed at the UCC.

OP has worked extensively with the applicant's design team to arrange the internal circulation and driveway to accommodate future development of the adjacent campus property to the south. The parallel parking along the southern edge of the road allows for

future road intersections from the southern property and maintains the security needed for the UCC.

Historic Preservation Efforts
The entire Saint Elizabeth's Hospital is a designated federal historic landmark on the National Register of Historic Places. The property, however, is not a local landmark. Therefore, only the federal Section 106 preservation review is required which is negotiated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The DC Preservation League has nominated the entire Saint Elizabeth's campus to the National Trust's list of "Eleven Most Endangered Sites" which will bring national attention to the site.

Page 5 of the PUD application identifies the preservation plan as proposed:

- The relocation of two of the cottages nearer dry barn (dated 1885) and horse barn (dated 1902) just off the UCC site,
- The recordation of the other two cottage on-site to Historic American Buildings Survey standards prior to their demolition,
- The planting of grasses in a linear pattern in the security setback to resemble the agricultural-therapeutic nature of the original east campus, and
- The preservation of "many of the existing buckeyes between the Avenue and the UCC building."

The applicant has been working with the historic preservation staff and the Advisory Council over the last several months on the preservation plan and incorporating a level of stabilization of the barn and stable.

Historic Preservation Amenity
As an amenity, the historic preservation efforts need to be further detailed. The plan includes the relocation of two cottages off the UCC site to un-zoned areas around the barn and stable. The exact off-site location is not specified in the application. The general area around the barn and stable is currently un-zoned and the relocation of the cottages to un-zoned areas will result in the inability to obtain a building permit, and could result in unachievable preservation efforts.

OP believes the cottages should be relocated on site to ensure their stabilization and upkeep. The Advisory Council also desires that the cottages remain on the UCC site in an historically appropriate location. The exact location on-site is still being negotiated.

The negotiations also include a level of stabilization for the barn and stable. The exact degree of stabilization has not been finalized but should include, at a minimum, repairing the roofs which is permitted under without zoning under §106.5 11 DCMR.

106.5 Properties of the District of Columbia government shall be subject to zoning; Provided that:

(a) Any governmental land or building uses that were either in existence or were substantially planned, documented and invested in prior to May 23, 1990, shall not be subject to zoning:

OP recommends that the historic preservation amenity be detailed to include:

- The relocation of two of cottages on-site,
- The recordation of the other two cottage,
- The planting of grasses and preservation of "many of the existing buckeyes"
- A stabilization of the barn and stable.

HOUSING LINKAGE

The project is not subject to the housing linkage requirements in Section 2404 because the project does not exceed the matter-of-right FAR for non-residential uses in the C-2-B zone.

COMMISSION ISSUES

At the January setdown the Zoning Commission asked the applicant to address the strategy of centralizing the communication services into one location. The applicant has stated that they will speak to the issue during their presentation.

The Commission also asked that the applicant address the views of the facility as seen from the Suitland Parkway, which is National Parkland property. The applicant has provided a photo-montage projecting these views in their pre-hearing statement that (page 12 of Exhibit C) and the applicant reports that they have met with representatives from the National Park Service on this issue. The photomontage indicates that the building will barely crest the tree tops.

The Commission questioned the mechanism for funding the planning study for the campus. As stated earlier the money has been transferred and matched by the Department of Mental Health and the Office of Planning is in the process of soliciting bids on the planning project.

The applicant has supplied a listing and photographic sample of materials to be used on the building as requested by the Commission.

AGENCY COMMENTS

Requests for comments were sent to the District Department of Transportation and the Department of Health. No comments have been received.

Because of its inclusion on the landmarked Saint Elizabeth's campus the project has been reviewed by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). On February 21, 2002 the CFA gave the plan preliminary approval and noted that they would like to see more trees in the

parking areas and to ensure the landscape security features (i.e. berms, trees, etc.) will effectively work.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning has been working with the applicant on the project design, access to the adjacent property and historic preservation efforts. The Office of Planning believes that the proposed PUD is consistent with the requirements of Chapter 24, 11DCMR and elements of the Comprehensive Plan, 10 DCMR.

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the consolidated PUD and map amendment to C-2-B with the condition that the Historic Preservation Amenity Plan include:

- The relocation of two of cottages on-site,
- The recordation of the other two cottage,
- The planting of grasses and preservation of "many of the existing buckeyes"
- A stabilization of the barn and stable.

AA/jls$_{AICP}$