GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 6, 2002

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

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

FROM: David J. McGettigan, AICP

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case No. 02-04C
New East Capitol
PUD @ Square 5401, Lots 24-28, 48 and 49
Square 5402 Lots 5-13, 16-18, 25, 802, 803, 807, 808, and 812

Summary

The applicant seeks approval of the first stage of a two-stage Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the development of approximately 50 acres in the eastern corner of the District. The application also requests approval of a combined PUD for the senior housing apartment component of the project to expedite the construction schedule for that portion. The development will consist of a variety of housing types including row houses, single-family detached dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family dwellings. The development will also provide a community center with an integrated day care and a retail center with a grocery store. The existing streets and alleys will be vacated and new streets and alleys will be created to serve the new development. Open space and passive recreation space will be provided with the development.

Recommended Action:
The Office of Planning recommends that the combined PUD for the Senior Housing application be set down for a public hearing. The remainder of the application is not ready for setdown at this time and the decision to setdown the application should be deferred until the next meeting.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-04
Exhibit 15

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-04
EXHIBIT NO.15

Background

The Development is located at the eastern corner of Washington, 5 miles east of the U.S. Capitol and across from the Capital Heights Metro Station (Blue line). The site is bounded by Watts Branch Park to the north Southern Avenue to the south and 56th Street to the east. The northern part of the site slopes severely towards the Watts Branch while the southern side consists of hilly topography. The surrounding neighborhoods are primarily single-family detached dwellings and duplex units. The existing buildings on the site are public housing developments consisting of a high-rise senior building, walk-up units, and townhouses.

HUD has granted funding for this project through the HOPE VI program, which provides planning and demolition funds. The HOPE VI application set forth design goals, uses, housing types and other criteria for the development.

Project Description

A&R/THC LLC is developing this site under contract to the DC Housing Authority with a combination of public and private funds. The development will consist of a combination of market rate and affordable homes for rent as well as for sale. The applicant proposes to construct 515 dwelling units in a variety housing types. The applicant states that these 515 units include 196 ACC-assisted rental units, 166 affordable and market rate rental units and 156 homeownership units. The units are sited to provide a mixture of household types and include the following types of units:

- 15 single-family detached houses
- 92 semi-detached houses
- 102 row dwellings
- 9 grandhouses
- 120 unit multi-family dwelling
- 150 unit senior housing

This mix of housing types is intended to complement surrounding neighborhoods and to boost the community's overall appeal.

The development will also include a community building and day care center. In addition, a 10-acre neighborhood retail center to provide for the retail, entertainment and commercial needs of the neighborhood is also planned. The East Capitol Street Gateway LLC, a joint venture of the Jenco Group and the Marshall Heights Community Development Corporation, is developing a 110,000 square foot retail center anchored by a large national chain grocery store (46,800 square feet). Other potential tenants include a full-service bank, video store, clothing store, a community health clinic and a restaurant.

Urban Design Objectives

The site plan for this 40-acre site strives to meet four main urban design goals. First is to provide integration into the existing urban fabric by providing appropriate connections to

the surrounding neighborhoods. Second, is to provide an environmentally sensitive site design. Third, is to develop an architecture that complements the surrounding context. Fourth, improve the safety and defensibility of the site. To meet these design goals the applicant has outlined the following objectives:

Interconnectedness

- Provide a grid street pattern, which replaces a cul-de-sac dominated layout. This promotes interconnectivity to the surrounding area by extending the neighborhood street pattern into the new community.
- Use of landscaping, fencing and architectural detail to provide continuity between the retail and residential components.
- Coordinated streetscape including plantings, surface materials, street furniture, and lighting.

Environmental Sensitivity

- Preserve as much of the existing topography and mature trees as possible.
- Provide a street pattern and siting of buildings that takes advantage of unique views and preserves important vistas.
- Correct infrastructure problems that are harming the environment and provide stormwater management and water quality control practices that reduce environmental damage.

Contextualism

- The architectural style of the project should be inspired by the character of the surrounding area and incorporates elements of scale, massing, materials and rhythm.
- The residential density should be in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood.
- The plan should acknowledge East Capitol Street a special street of prominent vistas by maintaining a continuous street edge of buildings and landscaping compatible with the existing setbacks on East Capitol Street.
- The plan should provide prominent architectural features and designs for the buildings on East Capitol Street.

Safety

- Provide well-defined, protected public open spaces and pedestrian connections throughout the community particularly to transit stops, the retail center, Watts Branch trail, day-care center and the community center.
- Provide another traffic light to improve pedestrian connections across on East Capitol Street.
- Site homes close to the street edge to promote intimacy and to promote more "eyes on the street."
- Arrange open spaces and street patterns to provide "defensible spaces" and deter criminal activities.

Public Benefits

Public benefits attributable to the project include:

1. Housing and affordable housing;
2. Uses of special value to the neighborhood or District of Columbia as a whole;
3. Urban design, architecture, landscaping, creation or preservation of open spaces
4. Site planning, efficient and economical land utilization
5. Environmental benefits, such as stormwater runoff controls and preservation of open space or trees
6. Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access

Planning And Zoning Issues

Comprehensive Plan

In evaluating the New East Capitol development for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Commission should consider compliance with major themes of the Comprehensive Plan, compliance with the objectives and policies of the major elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and consistency with the Generalized Land Use Map. Major themes within the Comprehensive Plan relevant to this development are:

1) Stabilizing and improving the District's neighborhoods, and;
2) Preserving and Promoting Cultural and Natural Amenities
3) Respecting and improving the physical character of the district;
4) Preserving and ensuring community input
5) Increasing the Quantity and Quality of Employment Opportunities in the District
6) Providing for Diversity and Overall Social Responsibilities
7) Promoting Enhanced Public Safety

Specific goals within some of the major elements of the Comprehensive Plan further support these themes.

- The Economic Development Element seeks to expand the economic base of the District, create jobs, enhance residential neighborhoods, and attract businesses and consumers from the entire region.
- The Housing Element sets a goal to support homeownership among moderate-income households. Also, the Housing Element directs that suitably located publicly owned properties that are vacant, surplus or unused be made available for housing.
- The Environmental Protection Element would support developments that improve the overall quality of the environment through preservation and protection of natural features, establishment of water quality control practices, and planting of new vegetation.

- The Transportation Element supports land use arrangements that simplify and economize transportation services, including mixed-use zones that permit the co-development of residential and nonresidential uses to promote higher density residential development at strategic locations, particularly near appropriate Metrorail stations.
- The Urban Design Element defines as a policy objective that the redesign of poorly designed communities responsively addresses the challenge of contributing to the National Capital environment.
- The Land Use Element designates East Capitol Dwellings a "Housing Opportunity Area" and as such the District encourages new housing in this area. In addition, the Generalized Land Use Map designation for the site is moderate density, which consists predominately of row houses and garden apartments.
- The Ward 7 Element recommends preparing a comprehensive housing development plan for East Capitol Dwellings.

The development of this site with a variety of residential uses should fit into the character of the community and should be in conformance with the Generalized Land Use Map. Though the Generalized Land Use Map does not identify this specific site, the text of the Plan contemplates the provision of neighborhood serving retail in underserved areas of the District.

PUD Area Requirements and Development Standards

The objectives of a PUD are to promote sound project planning, efficient and economical land utilization, attractive urban design and the provision of desired public spaces and other amenities. In an R-2 zone, the strictest zone that would apply, a PUD has a 2-acre minimum lot area; this project meets that standard.

Because of the complexity and scope of the project it is appropriate to consider a two-stage PUD process for the development. The following table summarizes the three residential zoning categories proposed in the application:

	R-2	R-2 w/PUD	R-5-A	R-5-A w/PUD	R-5-D	R-5-D w/PUD
Min. PUD Area (acres)	N/A	2.0 Acres	N/A	2.0 Acres	N/A	15,000 ft^2
FAR	1.2	0.4	0.9	1.0	3.5	4.5
Height	30'	90'	40'	60'	90'	90'
Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	1200*		1800	1800*	None	None
Min. Lot Width	20 ft.		14 ft.	14 ft.	None	
Lot Occupancy	40%	40%	40%	40%	75%	75%
Side Yards	6 ft.		8 ft.	8 ft.	None**	
Rear Yards	25 ft.		20 ft.	20 ft.	4"/ft ht***	

*Each lot need not be 1800 sq. ft. as long as the difference is accumulated into common spaces.

The Senior Building portion of the development, which is currently unzoned and is requested with the application to be zoned R-5-A is addressed in the following chart:

	Permitted/ Required R-5-A w/PUD	Proposed	Difference	Zoning Relief Required
Min. PUD Area (acres)	2.0 Acres	4.9 Acres	+2.9	0
FAR	1.0	0.55	-0.45	0
Height	60'	50'	-10'	0
Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	N/A	216,764	N/A	N/A
Min. Lot Width	N/A	535 ft.	N/A	N/A
Lot Occupancy	40%	12.29%	-27.71%	0
Side Yards	8 ft.	15-20 ft.	+7 ft.	0
Rear Yards	20 ft.	20 ft.	0 ft.	0
Parking	25	60	+35	0

As can be seen above the Senior Building will meet or exceed the requirements of the R-5-A zone.

The R-2 zoning proposed in the application will not permit the 4-unit mult-family grandhouses as a matter-of-right use. The applicant should reconsider this zoning designation. The C-3 zone is generally reserved for more intense commercial developments than proposed. A C-2 zone may be more appropriate.

Community Needs

The redevelopment of these dilapidated public housing projects into an attractive and functional residential community benefits the area. In addition, a residential development that promotes homeownership and provides a variety of housing types will encourage long-term residency and increase neighborhood stability. The area needs housing that is affordable to a variety of income levels. Preservation of open space, construction of community facilities, and visual amenities in this neighborhood would be appropriate. Finally, stabilization of steep slopes, control of soil erosion, prevention of sewage discharges and control of storm water runoff are needed to improve the site's natural environment.

Agency Referrals

This application is being referred to the following District government agencies for review and comment:

1. Department of Public Works;
2. Metropolitan Police Department;
3. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department;
4. Environmental Health Administration

5. D.C. Board of Education
6. Department of Housing and Community Development; and
7. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA).

Community Outreach and Involvement

The HOPE VI planning process began in June 1999 when DCHA convened the resident leadership of East Capitol Dwellings. Once the development team was in place, a series of charettes and larger community meetings were conducted. The developer and the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) continue to host Community Task Force meetings every quarter, which are open to the general public, and monthly Steering Committee meetings, which include the Resident Advisory Board of DCHA. However, due to last minute changes to the commercial design, the affected ANC's have not had time to review the application as submitted.

Recommendation

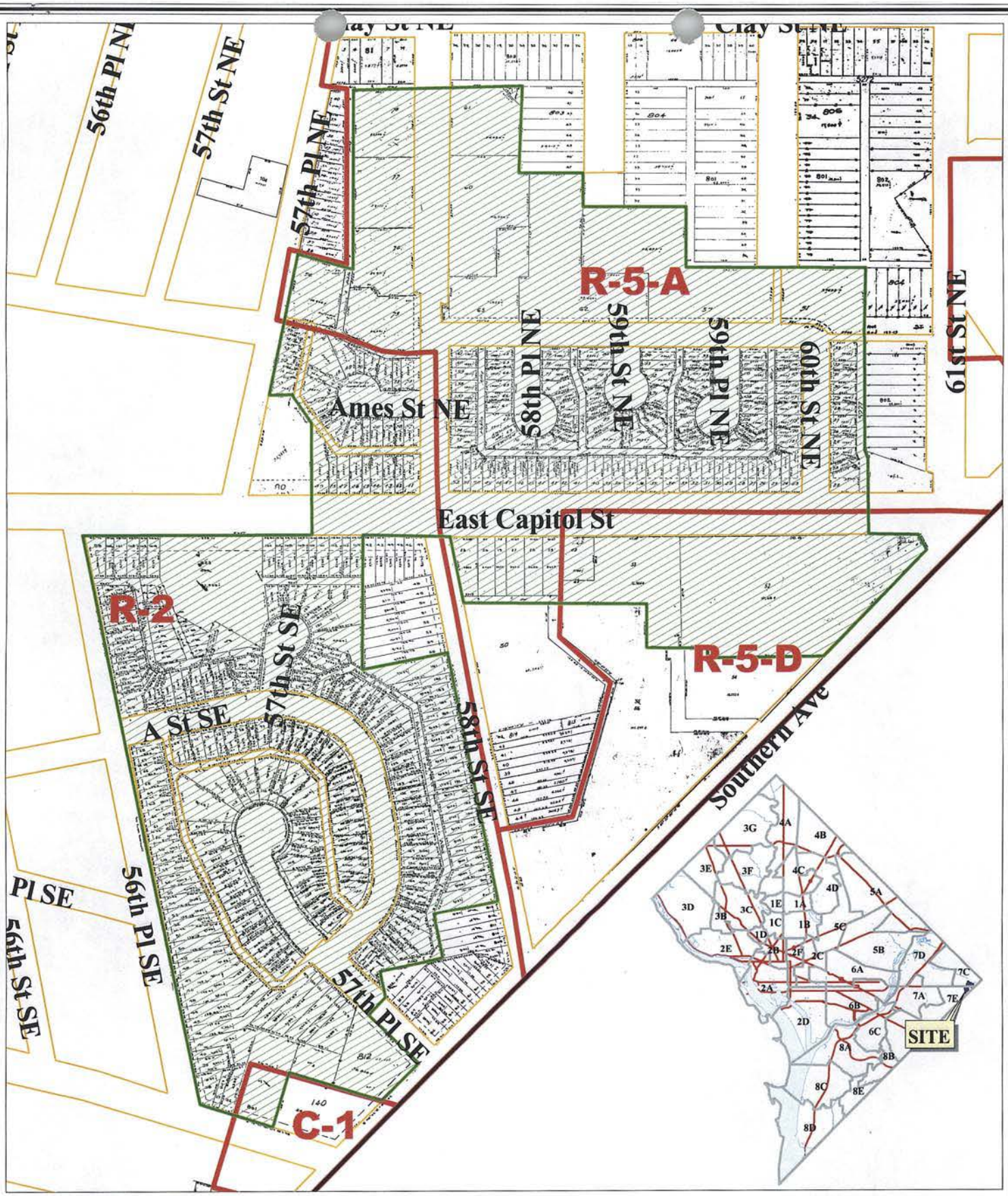
The Office of Planning recommends the Senior Building portion of application ZC 02-04C be set down for public hearing. Due to issues regarding the proposed zones for the commercial and R-2 areas within the project, concerns over the commercial design, and the inadequate time for the Office of Planning and the ANC to review the commercial design, the Office of Planning does not recommend setting down the rest of the application at this time. With regard to the Senior Building, additional issues that should be addressed are:

- The applicant should provide more detail regarding the pedestrian access from the parking area to the building.
- The relationship of the property lines and the building site should be delineated in more detail.
- A complete set of elevations should be provided.
- Building materials and appearance of the building should be finalized.
- Provision of detailed grading and utility plans.
- Detailed landscaping designs and other pertinent information for evaluation of the application.
- Connection between senior housing and shopping should be strengthened

Due to the immediate needs for the construction of a new Senior Building to replace the existing, dilapidated Capitol View Plaza, the Senior Building portion of the application should be setdown as a combined PUD for public hearing.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Zoning Map
2. Aerial Photo
3. Comprehensive Plan



Feature Key

- Zoning Boundaries
- Square Index
- Site

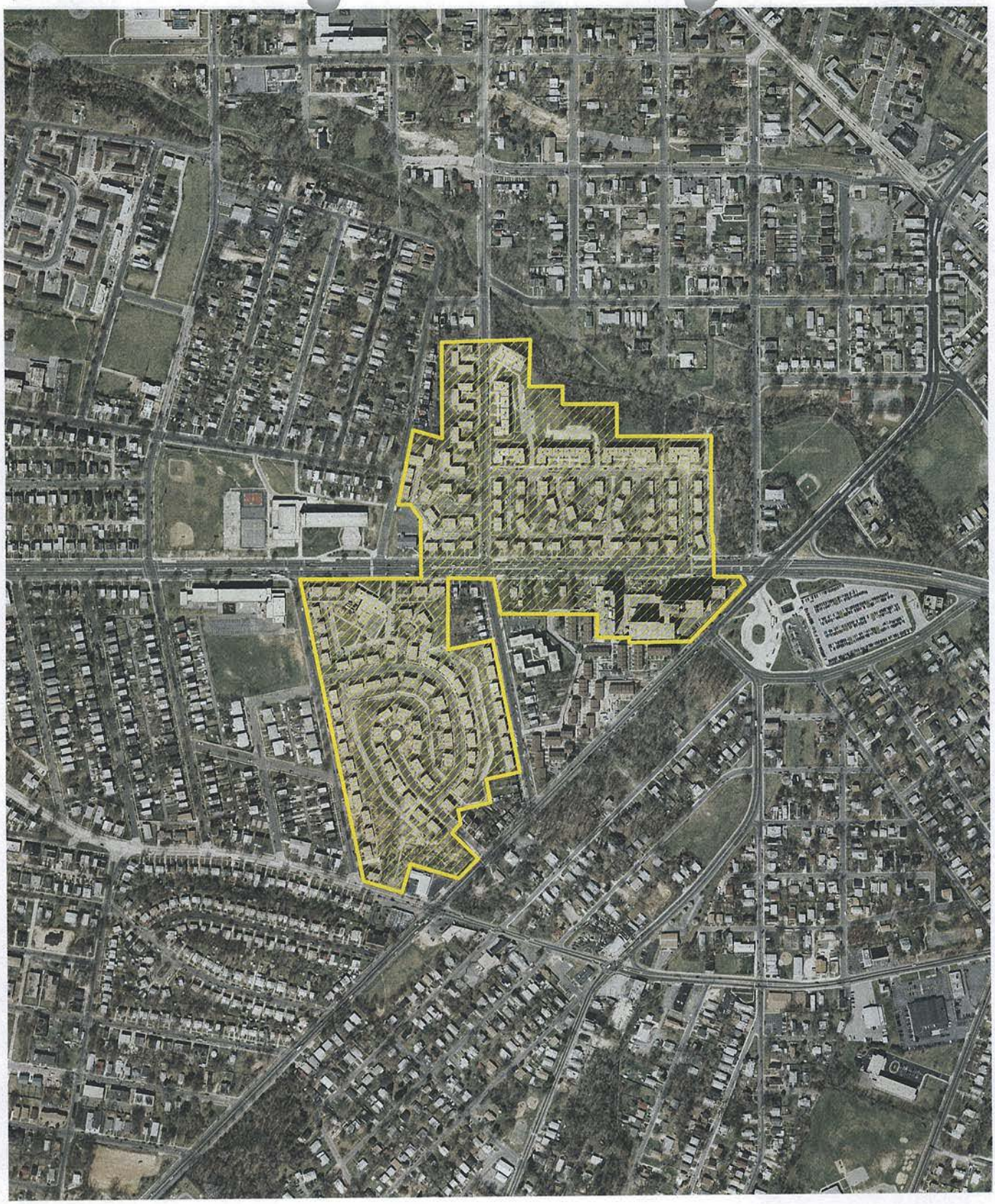
Zoning Commission
Case No. #02-04

DC Office of Planning
February 5, 2002

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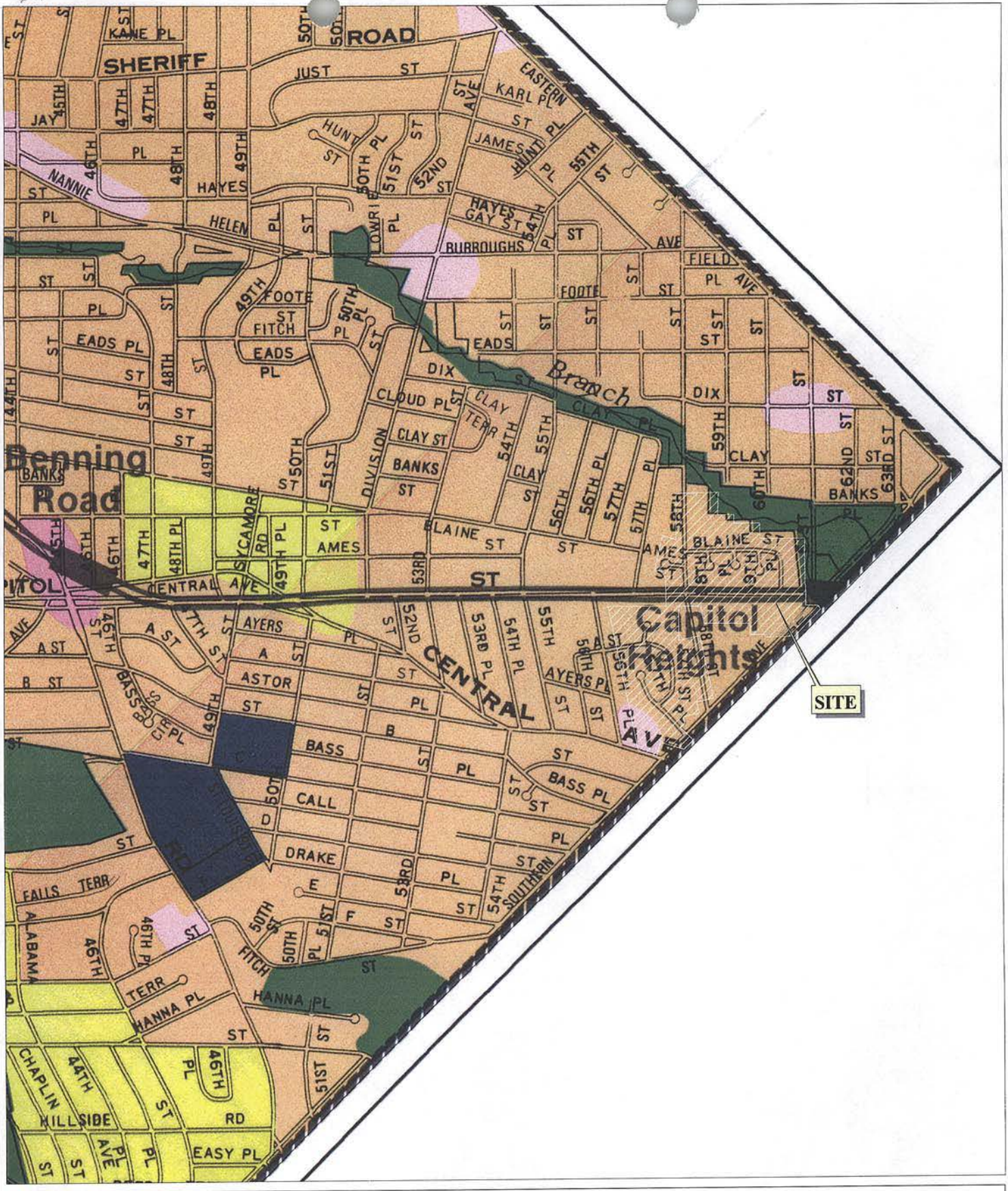
Attachment 1



Aerial Photograph

DC Office of Planning
January 31, 2002

Attachment 2



Generalized Land Use

- Residential Low Density
- Residential Moderate Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Residential High Density
- Water
- Commercial Low Density
- Commercial Moderate Density
- Commercial Medium Density
- Commercial Med.-high Density
- Commercial High Density
- Federal
- Institutional
- Local Public
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space
- Production and Technical Employment

Comprehensive Plan Landuse

Scale 1:14400

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DC Office of Planning
January 31, 2002

Attachment 3