

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

## Memorandum

**TO:** Andrew Altman  
Director  
Office of Planning

**FROM:** Kenneth Laden *Rich Dyer for KL*  
Associate Director  
Transportation Planning Administration

**DATE:** OCT - 8 2002

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Commission Case No. 02-17C – Request for a consolidated review and approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related Zoning Map Amendment from R-2 and R-5-B to R-5-D at 5401 Western Avenue, N.W.

The Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application and other material submitted by the applicant. This report addresses the transportation elements of the proposal.

### The Proposal

The applicant requests a consolidated review and one-step approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and a related Map Amendment to construct an apartment building. The site is split zone as a R-5 B and R-2. The applicant is requesting that the entire property be rezoned R-5-D district to permit the construction of an apartment building containing between 185 and 215 units and 3,000 square feet of child care facility. Currently, the site is developed with a three-story building with a basement used as the Washington Clinic for the past 50 years. The project will provide 224 parking spaces in a three-level underground garage and one loading berth plus one service delivery area. Access to both the parking and loading area will be from Western Avenue opposite and aligned to the Wisconsin Circle.

District of Columbia  
Case 02-17  
Exhibit 65

## **The Transportation System**

The subject property is located at the intersection of Western Avenue and Military Road, north of Wisconsin Avenue. Other streets serving the immediate area are Jennifer Street a local roadway east of Wisconsin Avenue, and 43<sup>rd</sup> Street, a local 30-foot wide local street with a traffic diverter at Jennifer Street.

The applicant has furnished a detailed description of the local street in his transportation assessment of the project. The description includes the number of lanes, turning movements, functional classification and signalized intersections for these streets. We concur with the findings of the applicant's report on the local street system. The Department notes that the project is situated within 300 feet from the Friendship Metro rail and Metrobus Station located within the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Western Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue. There are numerous bus routes including the Montgomery Ride-On and taxis standing originating or terminating on Wisconsin Circle adjacent the Station. We conclude that this project is ideally located with respect to the transit system.

## **The Impact of the Proposal**

As was stated previously, the applicant proposed to construct an apartment building containing between 185 and 215 units and a 3,000 square foot of a child care facility. For the purpose of this report, we have addressed the impact of the proposal in the following areas:

- Trip generation and level of service,
- Project access, parking and loading facilities,
- Pedestrian and bicycle access, and
- Transportation Management Program

### **Trip Generation and Level of Service**

We have reviewed the applicant's transportation report with regard to trip generation and level of service calculations on the critical intersections leading to and from the proposed project. DDOT has requested additional data supporting the vehicle trip reduction factor applied to this proposal. The applicant has provided this information and notes that the project is located along Western Avenue, within the Friendship Central Business District (CBD). The analysis covers the existing pre-development traffic conditions and the post-development traffic conditions.

To properly analyze the area impact of the proposal on the local street system, it is necessary that vehicular trips generated by known future developments in the area be included in this analysis. The applicant has done so by including in his report the impact of the WMATA Northwest Bus Garage Redevelopment, the Wisconsin Place (Height's), the Geico site and the Chevy Chase Center, all located in the Friendship Height CBD. We note that the proposed development will replace the existing Washington Clinic facility.

The trips associated with the existing development were estimated and subtracted from the trips generated by the proposed PUD.

The result of the applicant's calculation indicates that the net trip generated by the PUD will be **one trip** during the a.m. peak hour and **six trips** during the p.m. peak hour. If this scenario happens, this proposal will have a negligible impact on the surrounding street in terms of capacity and level of service. However, the applicant trip generation rates used for this development is based on 65 percent trip reduction to reflect the available ample public transportation supply in the area. Trip rates used by the applicant are lower than DDOT normally uses for similar residential development. For this reason, DDOT will apply rates derived from the D.C. trip generation study performed by the Council of Government (COG)'s in the Friendship Area. Applying 0.25 trips per dwelling unit and a 50 percent transit use, approximately 18 vehicles will be generated by the PUD during the morning peak hour and 13 trips during the evening peak hour. **The additional traffic generated by this project will have no significant impact** with regard to capacity and level of service at the critical intersections of Western Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue and Military Road at Western Avenue.

### **Project access and Parking and Loading Facility**

As previously stated, vehicular access to the development will be from Western Avenue across from Wisconsin Circle. **The combined loading and parking garage entrance, as proposed does not meet DDOT design standards.** The present design of the loading facilities requires trucks to back into the proposed loading area, encroaching on the intersection of Wisconsin Circle and Western Avenue. Driveways and loading facilities shall be designed to avoid vehicle backing and vehicle waiting in the street, thereby, blocking through traffic on a major arterial street. The minimum acceptable width of the sidewalk along Western Avenue and Military Road adjacent to the project should be at least six feet wide.

The applicant will provide 224 parking spaces compared to 72 spaces required by the Zoning Regulations. In our estimation, the proposed level of parking supply is adequate to service the project and minimize parking spillover into the neighboring residential area. As regard to loading, the project will provide one loading berth and one service delivery area as required by the Zoning Regulations. DDOT is concerned with the concentration of all vehicular ingress and egress on a single point on Western Avenue and its impact on pedestrian safety in the area. **This circulation arrangement is not acceptable to the Department** and DDOT recommends that the applicant provide a site plan scale one inch to 30 feet for DDOT staff review and comment.

### **Transportation Management Plan**

The applicant has developed a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) the essence of which consists of on-site transit and a ridesharing information program, car sharing services and bicycle racks. DDOT welcomes car sharing and the provision of bicycle parking spaces as a means to encourage residents to leave their cars at home and

commute by bike. In addition, the applicant undertook an extensive traffic mitigation study to address existing identified traffic operational and safety issues within the Friendship Heights area. DDOT will carefully analyze the findings and determine the applicable traffic calming measures to address the negative impacts of traffic and to ensure the overall safety and livability of residential neighborhoods.

### **Friendship Heights Transportation Study**

The Department of Transportation will investigate traffic management and truck management improvements in the Friendship Heights area of Northwest Washington DC. These efforts are in response to citizen concerns regarding speeding traffic, truck traffic and other safety concerns. The study area for this project is bounded by Fessenden Street to the south, 45 Street to the west, 41<sup>st</sup> Street to the east and Western Avenue to the northwest. The purpose of the study is to examine existing and future traffic conditions in the study area and to determine short-term and long-term traffic management and infrastructure improvements to reduce traffic congestion, especially during the peak morning and evening hours; improve traffic and pedestrian safety; reduce truck traffic and protect surrounding residential streets from commuter and commercial traffic impacts. It is anticipated that over a 20-week period, the DDOT contractor will investigate current and future needs regarding vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, truck movements and safety work in close coordination with community stakeholders in addressing their traffic and safety concerns. The study will begin soon and should be concluded by May 2003.

In addition, the Department has been closely working with the Montgomery County Planning Board to resolve traffic and transportation problems generated by planned project developments on the Maryland side of the Friendship Heights area. As a result of our cooperation, the developer of the Friendship Place and the Chevy Chase Center will provide funding for a traffic mitigation program and intersection improvements (Wisconsin and Western Avenue, Military Road and Western Avenue) to accommodate their proposed development. Another area of cooperation is the coordination of traffic signals along Wisconsin Avenue in Maryland and those along Wisconsin Avenue in the District of Columbia. Finally, The District is a member of a Transportation Management District (TMD) established for the Friendship Heights CBD. As shown above, the proposed PUD will not operate in a vacuum. It will benefit from all the proposed traffic and transportation improvements in the Friendship Heights sector.

### **Conclusion**

The Department of transportation supports the proposed Planned Unit Development. As shown by the applicant's transportation study and verified by the Department, vehicular traffic generated by this project can be accommodated with little or no negative impact on the area road network. However, access design to the garage and to the loading facility are not acceptable at the present time. The streetscape elements will also require further coordination with the Department.

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
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**TRANSPORTATION POLICY & PLANNING ADMINISTRATION**

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