



Forest Hills Citizens Association

Dedicated to the enhancement, maintenance, protection, and promotion of
a positive community spirit in the Forest Hills neighborhood.

October 23, 2002

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Alberto P. Bastida, AICP
Secretary of the Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case No. 02-19 (Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay District)

Dear Mr. Bastida and Zoning Commissioners:

The purpose of this letter is to call attention to an error in median lot size figures appearing in the Office of Planning's Final Report dated October 7, 2002. Because we obviously had no opportunity to review the Report prior to its being filed, we attempted thereafter (see attached e-mail) to reach a resolution with the Office of Planning concerning its figures, especially since OP was using the data base that we had developed and supplied to them. Unfortunately, the matter has still not been resolved. (You will recall that at the June 27 hearing the Commission asked FHCA and OP to reconcile their differences; FHCA provided the correct information to OP in August and we thought the matter was resolved.)

In any event, while we continue to believe that the determination of an appropriate minimum lot size for R-1-A properties in Forest Hills should be based on average lot size (ranging from 14,000 to 21,000 square feet but compromised at 12,000 square feet according to the testimony), and not on median lot size, the correct median lot size figure for R-1-A lots within the overlay should be 10,500 square feet (see attachments hereto).

Respectfully submitted,

FOREST HILLS CITIZENS
ASSOCIATION

By Barbara M. Simons
Barbara M. Simons
President

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 02-19
Exhibit 290

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-19
EXHIBIT NO.290

Clark, George R.

From: Clark, George R.
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2002 11:49 AM
To: 'Ellen McCarthy'; 'Jennifer Steingasser'; 'Karen Thomas'; 'Stephen Mordfin'
Cc: 'NutriKinetics'
Subject: CP 2d Supplemental Report/Forest Hills

Ellen, Jennifer, Karen and Stephen;

In looking at the supplemental report on minimum lot size (and we're happy that you recommended an increase, even though we still think it should be larger), we noticed that the report uses old figures on the median lot sizes, both for developed and undeveloped lots. You'll recall that the Commission asked us on June 27 to reconcile the different numbers we were using at that hearing.

Our numbers guru, Ginger Worthington, was able to figure out where and why we differed, and sent that info on (I've attached her e-mails on this subject). As Ginger's e-mail of August 2 shows (after explaining why the numbers are different), these are the figures:

R-1-A developed Mean: 21,023 Median: 10,500
R-1-A vacant Mean: 32,043 Median: 9,699
R-1-A all Mean: 21,720 Median: 10,478

As her e-mail explained, we used R-1-A only because there was agreement that there would be no change to lot size in the other districts, even assuming they were included (as you have now recommended). I'm also attaching the statistics FHCA presented at the June 27 hearing.

Maybe I'm missing something in all this, but thought you should have it so that the most accurate data is available. Please let me or Ginger know if you have any questions.

George

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Errors in Statistics
in the OP...



Statistics for Forest
Hills Ov...

Errors in Statistics in the OP Supplemental Report

1. The median lot size numbers include data for 2 squares that are not in the overlay (squares 2028 & 2029). OP was first informed that these squares are not included on May 24, 2002 (See the attached emails). These squares are zoned R-1-B and have small lots.
2. The median lot size numbers include the whole overlay area. Subdivision is not an issue in the R-1-B and R-2 portions of the overlay since these areas are already developed with small lots. The relevant area of concern is the portion of the overlay zoned R-1-A, which contains many properties large enough to be subdivided. Appropriate median statistics should include only the R-1-A area.
3. The median lot size for undeveloped property includes government owned parkland.
4. The median lot size for undeveloped property includes very small lots under 3,000 square feet in size. The data base used for these calculations was constructed from tax and revenue data. Some lots are split by utilities right-of-ways and thus receive two tax bills. Some of these splits resulted in very small lots in size such as 5 square feet, 200 square feet, etc. Including these lots in calculations biases the resulting statistics. It is reasonable to exclude very small lots that are an artifact of the tax system.

From: "NutriKinetics" <nutrikin@sprynet.com>
To: <Karen.Thomas@dc.gov>
Cc: "David Bardin" <bardind@arentfox.com>; "George Clark" <grclark@erols.com>; <DavidBardin@aol.com>; "Clark, George R." <GClark@ReedSmith.com>
Sent: Friday, May 24, 2002 9:19 AM
Attach: TSP_NO2028_2029.xls
Subject: Update database for Tree & Slope Overlay

Karen,

The tree and slope committee discovered that squares 2028 and 2029 were not in the overlay area that was set down by the zoning commission.

Attached is an updated version of the database of properties with squares 2028 and 2029 deleted.

Sincerely,

Ginger Worthington

From: <karen.thomas@dc.gov>
To: "NutriKinetics" <nutrikin@sprynet.com>
Cc: <stephen.mordfin@dc.gov>
Sent: Sunday, May 26, 2002 4:07 PM
Attach: reply.txt
Subject: Re: Update database for Tree & Slope Overlay
Thank You, Ginger. We will amke the necessary adjustments
>
>

From: "Steingasser, Jennifer (OP)" <Jennifer.Steingasser@dc.gov>
To: <nutrikin@sprynet.com>
Sent: Monday, July 29, 2002 11:53 AM
Attach: Lot sizes.xls
Ginger, attached is a copy of the data we have used for all our median figures. I worked off of table one, which has all the lots provided to us.
Jennifer

From: "NutriKinetics" <nutrikin@sprynet.com>
To: "Steingasser, Jennifer (OP)"
Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2002 12:53 PM
Subject: Re:
Thanks. Ginger

From: "NutriKinetics" <nutrikin@sprynet.com>
To: "Steingasser, Jennifer (CP)" <Jennifer.Steingasser@dc.gov>
Cc: "David Bardin" <bardind@arentfox.com>
Sent: Friday, August 02, 2002 10:43 PM
Attach: Lot sizes.xls
Subject: Forest Hills Tree & Slope Data base

Jennifer,

There has been a mix-up. Shortly before Karen Thomas's illness, we sent her a new version of the data base. We discovered that Squares 2028 and 2029 had been left out of the petition to the Zoning Commission, and so they were not in the overlay. The new data base (TSP_NO2028_2029) is the same as the one you were working from except squares 2028 and 2029 were deleted. These squares are in the northern part of the overlay and are all R-1-B.

Since there is agreement that any minimum lot size should apply to only R-1-A areas, it seems that statistics for the R-1-A portion of the overlay are what is relevant now. I am returning your spreadsheet with the very small vacant lots and the government owned park land separated into separate sections (in case you want to consider excluding either of these). Means and medians excluding parkland and the very small lots (half of them are less than 500 sq ft) are shown on sheet one starting at line 650 or so. These numbers are:

R-1-A developed Mean: 21,023 Median: 10,500

R-1-A vacant Mean: 32,043 Median: 9,699

R-1-A all Mean: 21,720 Median: 10,478

Could you let us know which set of numbers you are going to give to the Zoning Commission so we are all on the same page at the hearing.

Thanks.

Sincerely,

Ginger Worthington

Lot Size Statistics for Forest Hills Overlay				
Category	Description	No. of properties	Average (sq ft)	Median (sq ft)
All properties	All developed & vacant in all zones; no vacant lots <3,000 sq ft No government owned	692	20,223	9,998
All developed	All developed lots in all zones	652	19,542	10,000
R-1-A developed	Developed lots zoned R-1-A	578	21,023	10,500
R-1-A Houses	Includes Polish R-5-D residence. Excludes institutions: Hilwood, Howard, Levine School of Music, Adventist Church, Methodist Home, and Netherlands Chancery. Also excludes R-5-D Hungarian Chancery and all R-1-B developed properties.	573	17,275	10,478
R-1-A Houses <125,000 sq. ft.	Includes Polish R-5-D residence. Excludes institutions above plus Indonesian, Czech, Peruvian and Italian Residences. Natural break in data – next property is more than twice as large at ~285,000 sq ft. Also largest private homeowner has ~115,000 sq ft	569	14,044	10,432
R-1-A Houses <35,000 sq. ft.	All R-1-A houses with lots smaller than 35,000 sq ft.	549	12,218	10,257
Vacant Lots	Vacant lots > 3,000 sq ft. No govt. owned or sliver lots. includes 1 R-1-B lot.	40	24,261	9,697

ERROR IN OP REPORT

The following numbers on p. 7 of the OP report are incorrect:

1. 17,275 sq ft used as average of all developed properties should be either 19,542 for all developed or 21,023 for all R-1-A developed.
2. 9,810 sq ft as median of all developed properties should be either 10,000 for all developed or 10,500 for R-1-A developed.
3. 9,415 sq ft as median of all vacant lots. This number includes sliver lots and government owned park land. Should be 9,697 sq ft.