G ERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUM A
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

MEMORADUM

DATE: May 12, 2003

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

SUBJECT: Waiver of Rules for Late Submittal of Final Report on Case No. 02-31

The attached Final Report concerning an application to amend the regulations of the W-1 District to facilitate the construction of boathouses 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/jl

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 02-31
Exhibit 104

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-31
EXHIBIT NO.104

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

FINAL REPORT

DATE: May 09, 2003

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director OP

SUBJECT: Final Report for Zoning Commission Case # **02-31** - Zoning Regulation Text Amendment Pertaining to Boathouse Regulations within Waterfront Zones, filed by the National Park Service and Georgetown University

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Office of Planning recommends that that Zoning Commission Case No. 02-31 to amend the Zoning Regulations text to facilitate and regulate boathouses for use by not-for-profit groups for non-motorized watercraft in the Waterfront zones be denied.

II. PROPOSAL

The co-applicants, the National Park Service and Georgetown University, requested Zoning Regulation text amendments to facilitate the construction of private boathouses for non-profit clubs adjacent to the waterfront, by defining boathouse, adding boathouse as an as-of-right permitted use in the W-1 zone, and eliminating street frontage and parking requirements for boathouses. The changes would facilitate future boathouse proposals in the W-1 zone.

NPS and Georgetown University requested initial zoning of W-1 for a piece of undeveloped waterfront land area adjacent to the Potomac River, for development with a boathouse for use mainly by the Georgetown University rowing club, currently operating out of the Thompson Boat Center. The use would be non-conforming to current W-1 zoning regulations, in that it would provide no parking, and has no street frontage. The text amendments are proposed for the purpose of making this application conform to Zoning Regulation requirements.

OP has recommended the new W-0 zone for the site. The W-0 zone provides for the kinds of relief suggested in the applicant proposed changes for the W-1 zone. If the Commission proceeds with W-0 zoning for the site, the amendments proposed in this application would be unnecessary as the W-O zone would permit the boathouse use and address other issues in this application. As a result, setting down of this proposal would not be necessary.

III. BACKGROUND

"Boathouse" is currently not defined, nor is it a specifically listed permitted use in any zone. "Boat club or marina" is a permitted use in the W and CR zones. There are currently a number of boathouses on the waterfront – some are not-for-profit (such as the Washington Canoe Club and the Anacostia Community Rowing Center); others are private, for profit businesses (such as the Potomac Boat Club; Jack's Canoe Rental; and Thompson Boat Center which is located on NPS land and leased to the private business). On April 28,

2003, the Zoning Commission approved a Zoning Regulation text amendment to create a new Waterfront Open Space Recreation Zone – W-0. OP feels that this is an appropriate zone for this use and this site.

IV. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The text amendments proposed by the applicant would apply mainly to areas that are currently designated "Parks, Recreation and Open Space" on the General Land Use Map, the dominant uses being "parks and recreation centers, cemeteries, and the National Capital Open Space System." Boathouses would conform to this designation, although OP feels that the new W-0 zone in more in keeping with the land use designation than W-1. Initiatives to increase use and stewardship of the rivers conform to various Comprehensive Plan objectives, as well as other area planning initiatives such as the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI), as outlined in the OP report dated October 18, 2002.

V. EXISTING ZONING

As part of the W-0 amendment, the current term "boat club and marina" was replaced with the separate uses of boathouse, marina, and yacht club throughout the Zoning Regulation text. The W-1 District is designed to permit mixed use development of a low to moderate height and density, intended to be relatively self-contained by permitting a wide variety of uses on one site. (§900.3). The W-0 zone is intended to provide for a low density, low intensity form of maritime related use as well as waterfront open space.

VI. OP ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Amendments to the W-1 Zone, as proposed by the applicant, are not required if the Commission proceeds with W-0 zoning for the G.U. Boathouse site as recommended by OP. OP anticipates that W-0 zoning would be the preferred choice for any future boathouse application, particularly on unzoned lands, so there would be little future benefit to changing the W-1 regulations at this time. Existing facilities within the W-1 District would continue to operate under existing regulations. The Zoning Commission may, at some point, wish to consider more comprehensive changes to the W-1, 2 and 3 zones and possibly the CR zone, to bring some or all boathouse, marina and yacht club regulations in line with W-0 regulations. However, OP believes that it is not appropriate to propose comprehensive changes as part of this specific application made by Georgetown University.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of the date of drafting this report, Staff have received no public comments directly related to this proposed text amendment.

VIII. AGENCY REFERRALS

As of the date of drafting this report, there have been no District agency comments received by OP for this proposed text amendment.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

Given the new W-0 waterfront zone specifically designed to accommodate this kind of facility, and the recommendation that the Georgetown University boathouse site be zoned W-0, changes to the W-1 zone are not recommended at this time

AA/jl