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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

DATE: February 24, 2003

SUBJECT: Preliminary Report - Zoning Commission Application #02-50C (St. Luke's Condominium)
Zoning Map Amendment and Consolidated PUD

Case 02-50C
Exhibit 15

APPLICATION

St. Luke's Condominium, LLC (Applicant) seeks approval for a map amendment and consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the development of a residential building with 44 units. A portion of the subject property is currently developed with the St. Luke's United Methodist Church. The site is in the Naval Observatory Precinct District (NOPD) with the R-1-B District as the base zoning (NOPD/R1-B). The applicant requests that the property be rezoned to the NOPD/R-5-B District to accommodate the proposed development.

OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends that the Zoning Commission setdown the proposed map amendment and consolidated PUD for public hearing.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property is an irregularly shaped lot on the northeastern quadrant of the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Calvert Street and is approximately 1.79 acres. The site is currently developed with the St. Luke's United Methodist Church and is accessed from Calvert Street. The church is centrally located on the property with a parking lot on the east. The western portion of the site is vacant and is either paved or grass.

The area surrounding the site is a combination of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. To the west of the site, across Wisconsin Avenue, is a large, 9-story, apartment building and the Russian Embassy that are in the R-5-B District. Immediately north of the site is the 8-story, Savoy hotel. Further north and east the neighborhood is developed with single-family detached houses in the NOPD/R-1-B District. To the south, across Calvert Street, are the Guy Mason Recreation Center and

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EXHIBIT NO.15

the 2-story office building that house the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 9, also within the NOPD/R-1-B District. South of the site and fronting on Wisconsin Avenue are predominantly neighborhood serving, commercial retail uses.

PROPOSED ZONING

The site is currently zoned NOPD/R-1-B. The NOPD was established to promote the "public health, safety, and general welfare on land adjacent to or in close proximity to the highly sensitive and historically important Naval Observatory . . ." The R-1-B District is designed to "protect quiet residential areas developed with one-family detached and adjoining vacant areas likely to be developed for those purposes."

The R-1 District does not have a maximum FAR designation. However, based on maximum height and lot occupancy requirements, the subject site could be developed at a maximum FAR of 1.2 or 93,000 square feet. The proposed building has a FAR of 1.27 or 99,141 square feet, which is 5,541 square feet above what is permitted by-right and therefore the proposed development is closer to the intensity allowed by-right than allowed under the R-5-B District.

The proposed development of the site is not contrary to the purpose the Naval Observatory Overlay. The proposed R-5-B District permits flexibility of design and all types of urban residential developments at a moderate height and density. The applicant is requesting a rezoning to the R-5-B zone with a PUD to accommodate a multi-dwelling use on the site in keeping with the urban nature of Wisconsin Avenue. The NOPD stipulates that a PUD in this overlay shall not be permitted to exceed the 40-ft. height limit or the area, bulk, and yard requirements that apply in the underlying zone (Section 1534). The following table is a comparison of the development standards of the NOPD/R-5-B zone and the proposed development:

Table 1

	NOPD/R-1-B Standards	NOPD/R-5-B Standards	Proposal
Area	5,000 sq. ft.	N/A	78.000 sq. ft.
Height	40-ft./3 stories	40 ft.	40 ft.
FAR	N/A	1.8	1.27
Lot Occupancy	40%	60%	36%
Rear Yard	25 ft.	4"/foot of vertical distance from the mean at the middle of the rear of the structure to the highest point of the main roof or parapet wall, but not less than 15 ft.	15 ft.
Side Yard	8 ft.	None. If provided, it must be at least 3 ins. wide per foot of height, but not less than 6 ft. wide	15 ft.
Parking	1 space per dwelling unit	44 Condo units - 22 spaces Church - 58 spaces provided	Condo - 90-100 spaces Church - 58 spaces

Section 5-413 of the Zoning Act sets out the criteria that the Zoning Commission must apply in adopting zoning regulations. The underlying purpose of the regulations is "to promote the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, or general welfare of the District of Columbia and its planning and orderly development as the national capital", zoning with the condition that should not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The R-5-B District on the property will allow the development to be at a scale that does not negatively impact the existing residences and is consistent with the intensity of the adjacent neighborhood. The proposed map amendment coupled with the accompanying PUD is intended to facilitate a site-specific project and the assurance of a quality development.

PURPOSE AND STANDARDS FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. A PUD is "designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits." The proposed development will be constructed on a property that is currently underutilized and will aid in the objective of the City to increase the number of residents within the City.

Pursuant to Section 2402.3, the applicant has elected to file a two stage PUD. 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, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project."

Based on the information provided, OP believes that the project will be not negatively impact the neighboring community. The proposed PUD site is relatively underdeveloped and the planned unit development approach provides the beneficial site planning and design flexibility that this project requires to be incorporated smoothly into a community that is comprised of a mixture of uses such as single-family detached houses and apartments, office, retail, and hotel.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PUBLIC POLICIES

The Generalized Land Use Map recommends the subject site for low density residential with single-family detached and semi-detached housing as the predominant uses. Section 2403.4 of the Zoning Regulations 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 proposed moderate density residential use is not inconsistent with the Map, which outlines the predominant uses for the area but does not preclude the existence of other residential unit types if appropriate. Single-family detached units are inappropriate for this location based on the fact that it is an infill site, orientation to Wisconsin Avenue, and the surrounding uses. However, as was apparent from the comparison chart above, the overall density proposed is only marginally more than would be permissible as a matter-of-right under the zoning category that corresponds to the low-density land use designation.

The subject property is a portion of a property that is developed with a church. The property is underutilized because the church is setback approximately 300-feet from Wisconsin Avenue and is oriented towards Calvert Street. This property is the only quadrant of the Wisconsin Avenue/Calvert

Street intersection that is not intensely developed. Further, this location is more appropriate for apartments because of its orientation with Wisconsin Avenue, a busy thoroughfare. A multi-unit building at this location will be more compatible to the adjacent retail, office, and high-rise residential uses at this intersection. The proposed apartment will be of a lower scale and elevation than the existing apartment building across Wisconsin Avenue and the adjacent Savoy hotel. The proposed building and the church will provide a transition to the single-family residences to the east.

The PUD is also consistent with other sections of the Comprehensive Plan including the following Major Themes of the Plan:

- Section 102 - Stabilizing and Improving District Neighborhoods,
- Section 106 - Respecting and Improving the Physical Character of the District,
- Section 107 – Preserving and Ensuring Community Input

Specifically, the application is consistent with Chapter 3, Housing, of the Comprehensive Plan including the general objective for Housing which is to "stimulate production of new and rehabilitated housing to meet all levels of need and demand and to provide incentives for the types of housing needed at desired locations". To support this goal, the Plan establishes policies such as:

- Section 302.1(a), which is to "encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with the District land use policies . . ."
- Section 302.1(e), which is to "encourage housing on suitably located public or private properties that are vacant, surplus, underutilized, or unused . . ."
- Section 302.1(f) which is to "encourage the private sector to meet housing needs through the development of infill housing . . ."

Specifically, the application is consistent with the Ward 3 Plan:

- Section 14016.9(a), Ward 3 Plan, which addresses urban design, states that "Height-Relate the overall height of new construction (including additions) to that of adjacent structures. As a general rule, construct new buildings to a height roughly equal to the average height of existing buildings. Avoid new construction which greatly varies in height (too high or too low) from older buildings in the vicinity."
- Section 1406.9 (b), states that "Scale: Relate the size and proportions of new construction to the scale of adjacent buildings, regardless of size. Avoid new construction which in height, width, or massing violates the existing scale of the area."
- Section 1409.2(h) states that, to protect the land use character of the ward "when development of institutional holdings and large estates or other parcels occurs it is compatible with the physical character of the ward, has no adverse effects on surrounding areas, and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan."

Public Benefits and Amenities

Sections 2403.5 through 2403.13 discuss the definition and evaluation of public benefits and amenities. The applicant has proposed a contribution of $150,000 to the District's Affordable Housing Trust Fund

for affordable housing throughout the City. The applicant is also recommending landscaping around the site. However, OP has not been given a detailed landscape plan for review. The applicant has cited the St. Luke's Shelter, St. Luke's Shelter Next Step Kitchen, and Grate Patrol as social services that the church currently provides to the community and has proposed that these services will be expanded. However, the applicant needs to provide information on how the existing social services will be expanded. If the application is setdown, OP will further evaluate the amenities proposed, to assess whether they are adequate in relation to the flexibility sought on the application.

AGENCY REFERRALS AND COMMENTS

If this application is set down for a public hearing, it will be referred to the following District government agencies for review and comment:

1. Department of Transportation;
2. Metropolitan Police Department;
3. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department;
4. Park and Recreation;
5. Department of Public Works, Tree and Landscape Division;
6. District of Columbia Public Schools.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicant has had a number of meetings and discussions with various community organizations such as the Glover Park Citizens Association, the Massachusetts Avenue Heights Citizens Association, ANC-3C, and ANC-3B to get their input and comments on the proposed development. These organizations generally support the application.

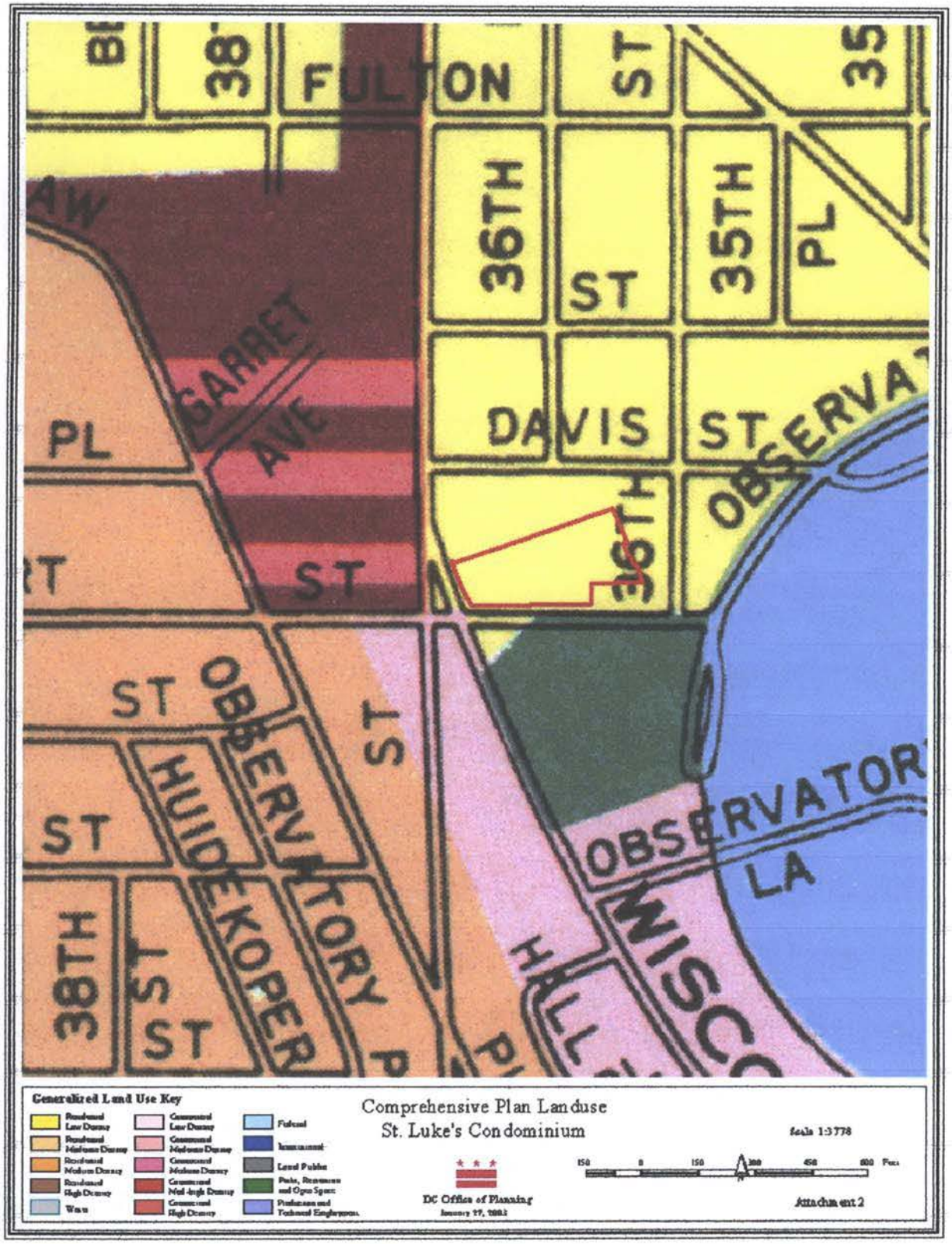
RECOMMENDATION

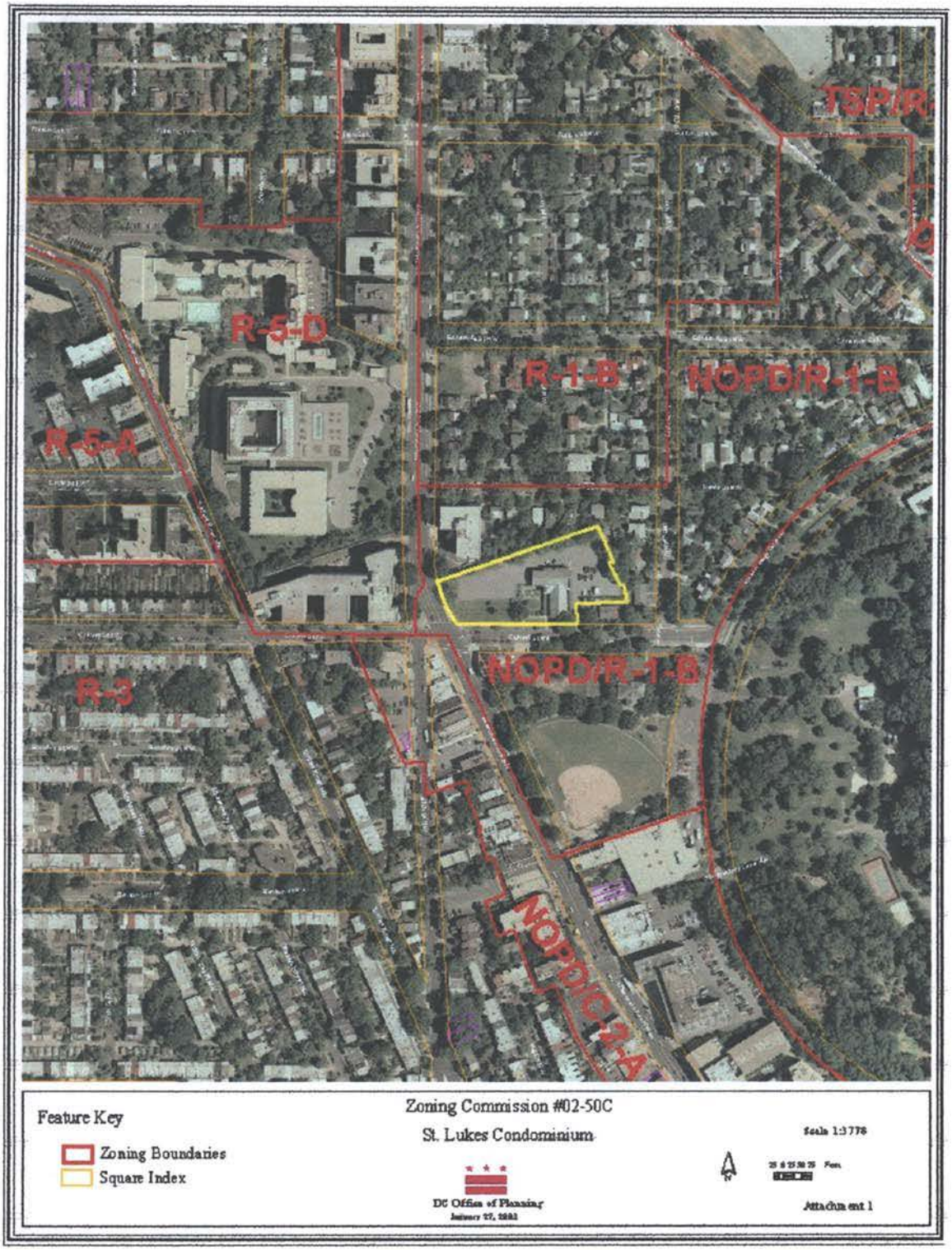
The Office of Planning believes that the proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the requirements of the Zoning Regulations and elements of the Comprehensive Plan. OP recommends that the application for map amendment and consolidated PUD be set down for public hearing. The applicant should provide detailed information on of the requirements outlined in Section 2406 for a complete review to be undertaken prior to the public hearing.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Zoning Map
2. Comprehensive Plan Map

AA/mbr AICP


FULTON ST
36TH ST
35TH PL
DAVIS ST
GARRET AVE
PL
ST
OBSERVATORY
HUIDEKOPER
38TH ST
OBSERVATORY LA
Generalized Land Use Key
Comprehensive Plan Landuse
St. Luke's Condominium
DC Office of Planning
Attachment 2


R-5-D
R-1-B
NOPD/R-1-B
R-5-A
R-3
NOPD/R-1-B
NOPD/C-2-A
Feature Key
Zoning Boundaries
Square Index
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St. Lukes Condominium
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Attachment 1