GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

DATE: April 4, 2003

SUBJECT: Preliminary Report - Zoning Commission Application #03-04C
Meridian Hill Condominium (Square 2661, Lots 54, 215, 216, and 860)
Consolidated PUD

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-04C
Exhibit 14

APPLICATION

The Bozutto Group, LLC (Applicant) seeks to develop a residential building consisting of 106 condominium units. To accommodate this development, the applicant proposes to develop the site as a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) as permitted under the R-5-B District.

OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property is approximately 0.98 acres, a rectangular shaped lot on Belmont Street, N.W. between 14th and 15th Streets in the Columbia Height neighborhood. The subject site is a combination of Lots 54, 215, 216, and 860 in Square 2661. Development on the site includes the vacant Pitts Motel and 2 vacant rowhouses.

The surrounding neighborhood consists of a mix of single-family detached and attached units and multi-family apartments and condominium buildings. To the north of the site are a 20-ft. alley and townhouse and apartments which front on Chapin Street. To the immediate east are apartment buildings with the 14th Street commercial corridor beyond. To the south of the site, across Belmont Street, are single family-attached and multi-family apartments and condominiums buildings. To the west is the Garden Towers Apartment building and the Meridian Hill beyond.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-04
EXHIBIT NO.14

ZONING

The site is currently zoned R-5-B. This zone district permits flexibility of design and all types of urban residential developments at a moderate height and density. The applicant is requesting a development using the PUD standards of the R-5-B zone to accommodate a multi-dwelling use on the site. The following table is a comparison of the development standards of the base R-5-B zone, the PUD/R-5-B, and the proposed development:

Table 1

	R-5-B Standards	PUD/R-5-B Standards	Proposal
Area	N/A	1 acre (43,560 sq. ft.)	42,750 sq. ft.
Height	50 ft.	60 ft.	55 ft.
FAR	1.8	3.0	2.7
Lot Occupancy	60%	60%	63%
Rear Yard	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.	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.	18 ft.
Side Yard	None. If provided, it must be at least 3 ins. wide per foot of height, but not less than 8 ft. wide	None. If provided, it must be at least 3 ins. wide per foot of height, but not less than 8 ft. wide	12 ft.
Roof Structure	Setback required – 18.5 ft. Height of Enclosure – 18.5 ft.	Setback required – 18.5 ft. Height of Enclosure – 18.5 ft.	Setback required – 8 ft. (portion) Height of Enclosure – 9 ft. and 12 ft. (portion)
Parking	1 space per 2 dwelling units = 53	1 space per 2 dwelling units = 53	165 spaces = 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit

The applicant is requesting a deviation from the minimum lot area requirements of 1 acre for a PUD in the R-5-B District (Section 2401.1(b). As shown in Table 1, the lot area is 42,750 square feet, 810 square feet less than required. The Zoning Regulations gives the Zoning Commission the authority to deviate from this requirement if the standards of Section 2401.2 are met;

"2401.2 The Commission may waive not more than fifty percent (50%) of the minimum area requirement of this section, provided:

(a) The Commission shall find after public hearing that the development is of exceptional merit and in the best interest of the city or country; and
(b) The Commission shall find one of the following:
(1) If the development is to be located outside the Central Employment Area, at least eighty percent (80%) of the gross floor area of the development shall be used exclusively for dwelling units and uses accessory thereto; or
(2) If the development is to be located in a portion of the Central Employment Area which is in a Hotel-Residential Incentive (HR) Overlay District, the development shall contain a minimum floor area ratio of 2.0 devoted to hotel or apartment house use."

Based on the preliminary review of the proposal, OP believes that the proposal will be in the best interest of the City. The proposed lot area is 98% of the area required or 2% less than required. Additionally, the proposed project is outside of the Central Employment Area and 100% of the gross floor area of the building will be dedicated to residential use.

To accommodate the proposed development, the applicant is also requesting a deviation from the lot occupancy requirement. The applicant is proposing a 63% lot occupancy, 3% above the 60% permitted. Secondly, since the filing of the application, the applicant has made revisions to the plans and is now requesting deviations from the roof structure requirement. Section 411.5 requires that the walls of the roof structure be of equal height. Additionally, the roof structure does not meet the setback on a portion of the west façade of the building. These requested deviations will allow for an improved development that is more aesthetically pleasing than what is permitted by-right.

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 replace buildings that have been vacant, dilapidated, and an eyesore in the community for some time. The proposed development will bring back these properties to a viable use and 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." The PUD is intended to facilitate a site-specific project and the assurance of a quality development.

Based on the information provided and with further discussions to address issues of concern, OP believes that any potential negative impact on the neighboring community will be minimized. The proposed planned unit development approach provides the beneficial site planning and design flexibility that this project requires to be incorporated smoothly into this residential community.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PUBLIC POLICIES

The Generalized Land Use Map recommends the subject site for medium density residential with multi-unit and mid-rise apartments as the predominant use. 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 density and residential unit type proposed in this multi-unit development is not inconsistent with the recommendation of the Generalized Land Use Plan.

The PUD is also not inconsistent 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 . . ."

Further, the application is consistent with many of the Ward 1 Plan policies;

<u>Housing</u>

- Section 1206.1(a), "To encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future Ward I residents at locations consistent with the ward's land-use policies and objectives . . ."
- Section 1206.1(b), "To target residential development opportunity areas where significant housing development can appropriately occur and encourage 'multi-unit' housing development, including market rate and low density housing, where appropriate. . . ."

<u>Urban Design</u>

- Section 1222.1(b) "To design new residential, commercial, and other buildings to complement or enhance Ward 1's physical character."
- Section 1222.1(c) "To design Ward 1's buildings to include the use of appropriate arrangements of building materials, height, scale, massing, and buffering to complement the immediate area."

- Section 1222.1(d) "To encourage development adjacent to areas of strong architectural character to provide a physical transition in building design detail in order to create a complementary form of transition."

Land Use

- Section 1230.1(a) "To promote the conservation, enhancement, and revitalization of Ward 1's residential neighborhoods for housing and neighborhood related uses."

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 number of amenities including the following.

Garnet-Patterson Middle School

The ANC has requested that a contribution be made to the Garnet-Patterson Middle School. The applicant proposes to provide funds for their after-school program and purchase of specific items. The applicant will provide the labor for repair, replacement, and installation.

The Metropolitan Boys and Girls Clubhouse #10

The Metropolitan Boys and Girls Clubhouse provides a number of services and educational programs to neighborhood children. The applicant is proposing to setup a fund to provide continuous support to the Clubhouse. The fund will be used towards the after-school program, athletic equipment and the annual awards banquet. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to donate and install desktop and laptop computers in their library/computer room to replace their existing outdated equipment.

Affordable Dwelling Units

The applicant has committed to providing affordable dwelling units on-site and is working with the Office of Planning as to the number of units to be provided.

Streetscape Plan

The applicant has proposed to provide landscaping along the entire frontage of their property. Additionally, they propose to provide complementary landscaping on the west side of Belmont Street. OP will work with the Department of Public Works, property owners, and the applicant on a maintenance program.

The Office of Planning will continue to work with the applicant and the community to address the specifics of these amenities and how they will serve and impact the community. Further, OP will evaluate and assess whether the proposal is adequate in relation to the flexibility sought through the PUD process.

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;
7. Department of Health

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicant has had a number of meetings and discussions with ANC-1C and residents in close proximity to the site to get their input and comments on the proposed development. This dialogue will continue if the application is setdown.

RECOMMENDATION

Following review of the application, 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 a consolidated PUD be setdown for public hearing.

Office of Planning recommends that the applicant provide the following information for further review prior to the public hearing:

1. A detailed landscaping plan;
2. Written details on stormwater management and sediment control;
3. The impact of loading and the secondary entrance on vehicular movements in the alley;
4. First Source Employment Agreement;
5. Construction Management Plan;
6. Details of the Belmont Avenue garage door.
7. Detailed Amenity Package

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Zoning Map
2. Comprehensive Plan Map

AA/mbr AICP



Feature Key

Zoning Boundaries
Square Index

Zoning Commission
Meridian Hill Condominiums

Case No. #03-04

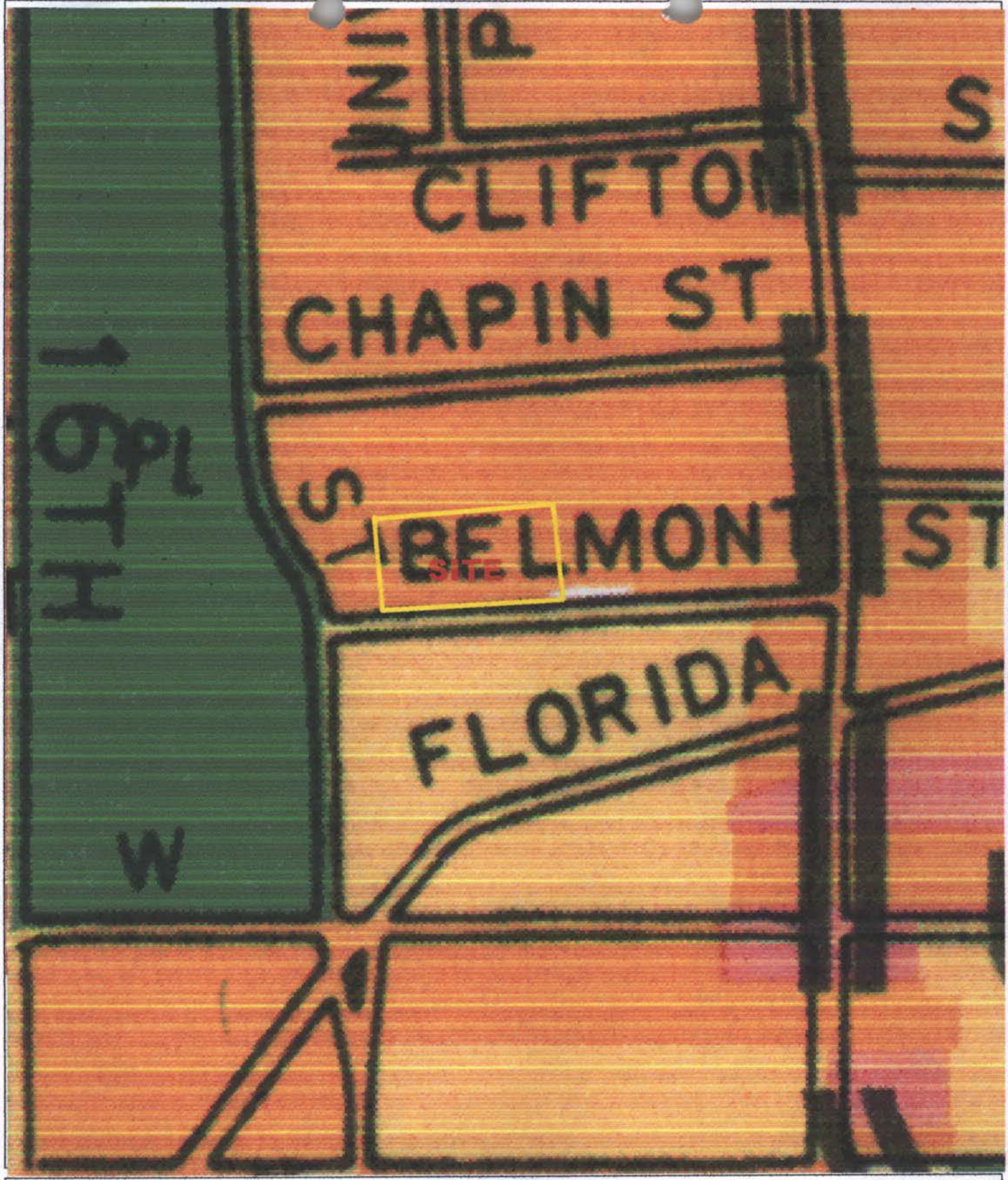
DC Office of Planning
January 31, 2002

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Attachment 1



Feature Key

Zoning Boundaries
Square Index

Zoning Commission
Meridian Hill Condominiums
Case No. #03-04

DC Office of Planning
April 4, 2003

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Attachment 1