GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

DATE: November 10, 2003

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

At the Zoning Commission's public hearing on October 9, 2003 the Commission requested that the applicant submit additional information for review and specifically asked the Office of Planning (OP) to ascertain the status of the Garnett-Patterson Middle School. OP's review is outlined below.

Revised Roof Plan

The revised roof plan shows a roof deck to offer recreational activities for the residents of the building. The roof deck is approximately 1,020 square feet and OP thinks that the area is very small and could be the expanded by extending its length towards the end of the north-south portion of the egress access walkway. The applicant did not provide a rational such as constraints that would limit the size of the roof deck.

Requirements for review of roof structures are outlines in Section 400.7.

400.7 If housing for mechanical equipment, a stairway or elevator penthouse is provided on the roof of a building or structure, it shall be erected or enlarged as follows:

(a) It shall meet the requirements of §411;

(b) It shall be set back from all exterior walls a distance at least equal to its height above the roof upon which it is located; and

(c) It shall not exceed eighteen feet six inches (18 ft. 6 in.) in height above the roof upon which it is located. Mechanical equipment shall not extend above the permitted eighteen foot six inch (18 ft. 6 in.) height of the housing.

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The submitted roof plan shows a stair penthouse and a mechanical penthouse. The mechanical penthouse meets the above requirements as it is setback 21 feet from the closest wall and has a height of 17 feet. The stair penthouse is setback 7 feet 7-1/2 inches from the closest wall and has a height of 10 feet, and therefore does not meet the requirements stated above.

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EXHIBIT NO.41

411.3 All penthouses and mechanical equipment shall be placed in one (1) enclosure, and shall harmonize with the main structure in architectural character, material, and color.

It is impractical to enclose the stair and mechanical penthouses because they are located on different parts on the roof and the enclosure would be very large and not present a pleasant view from the ground. The stair penthouse is required to provide a second means of egress from the roof deck. Relief from this provision is necessary through the PUD. The color used on the penthouses be exterior wall finish divided into squares by cast stone arch and is consistent with the colors uses on the main building.

411.4 When roof levels vary by one (1) floor or more or when separate elevator cores are required, there may be one (1) enclosure for each elevator core at each roof level.

Not Applicable as there is only a single roof level.

411.5 Enclosing walls from roof level shall be of equal height, and shall rise vertically to a roof, except as provided in §411.6.

The roof plan identifies the penthouse structures with walls of equal height and continuous roof.

411.6 When consisting solely of mechanical equipment, the equipment shall be enclosed fully as prescribed in §§411.3 and 411.5, except that louvers may be provided. A roof over a cooling tower need not be provided when the tower is located at or totally below the top of enclosing, walls.

Not Applicable

411.7 Solely for the uses designated in this section, an increase of allowable floor area ratio of not more than thirty-seven hundredths (0.37) shall be permitted.

The roof structure data sheet identifies the FAR as 0.031 (penthouses/lot area = 1,347/42,770).

411.8 Roof structures shall not exceed one-third (1/3) of the total roof area for those districts where there is a limitation on the number of stories.

The area enclosed by the penthouses is only 0.05 or 1/20 of the total roof area, therefore it does not exceed 1/3 the total roof area.

411.9 In addition to the floor area ratio allowed by §411.7 mechanical equipment owned and operated as a roof structure by a fixed right-of-way public mass transit system shall be permitted in addition to roof structures permitted in this section.

Not Applicable

Based on the above review, the applicant should request waivers to the requirement to have one enclosure for all penthouse and mechanical equipment and setback of the stair penthouse.

Garnett-Patterson Middle School

The Commission requested that OP ascertain if the Garnett-Patterson Middle School was targeted for closure in the near future. OP contacted the District of Columbia Public School (DCPS), Office of Planning, Design, and Construction and was informed that the Garnett-Patterson is not a school that their Master Plan recommends for closure. In fact, it has been identified s a school that needs modernization. The improvements proposed by the applicant will assist in this modernization.

Additional Relief

The applicant has requested waivers from the side yard requirements and the loading requirements. Section 405 requires a side yard setback of 13 feet, 9inches, however the applicant is providing 12-foot side yards. OP supports this waiver, as it will not impact adjacent residences.

OP supports the requested waiver for the loading requirements to provide a 55-ft. loading berth and a 200-ft. loading platform. In conversations with DDOT, they have stated that large trailer trucks could not use such a loading berth due to the difficulty in maneuvering in the alley. Additionally, the applicant has stated that most of the residents will use smaller trucks that can be accommodated in the alley and the 35-foot loading dock that will be provided. The large trucks that may will to the building could use the Belmont Street entrance but these incidences will be infrequent.

Recommendation

OP believes that the above mentioned waivers should be granted as they will not be detrimental to the provisions of the Zoning Regulations and will not be harmful to the surrounding community or the residents of the new building. OP therefore recommends approval of the PUD.

AA/mbr