NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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Executive Director
Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC File No. Z.C. 03-04

JAN 12 2004

Zoning Commission for the
District of Columbia
2nd Floor, Suite 210 South
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Members of the Commission:

In response to your request, pursuant to delegation of authority adopted by the Commission on August 6, 1999, I have reviewed the proposed Planned Unit Development for a residential condominium located in Square 2661, Lots 54, 215, 216 and 860, at 1451 Belmont Street and found that the proposal would not adversely affect the identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

A copy of the Delegated Action of the Executive Director is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director

Enclosure

Case 03-04
Exhibit 45

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-04
EXHIBIT NO.45

NCPC File No. ZC 03-04

NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AT 1451 BELMONT STREET, NW, MERIDIAN HILL CONDOMINIUM (SQUARE 2661, LOTS 54, 215, 216, AND 860)
Washington, DC

Delegated Action of the Executive Director
DEC 30 2003

Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority adopted on August 6, 1999, I find that the proposed Planned Unit Development for a residential condominium located in Square 2661, Lots 54, 215, 216, and 860, at 1451 Belmont Street would not adversely affect the identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

* * *

The District of Columbia Zoning Commission has taken proposed action to approve a Consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) in Square 2661, Lots 54, 215, 216, and 860, designated as 1437-1451 Belmont Street, NW, for a residential condominium known as Meridian Hill Condominium. The site is on the north side of the 1400 block of Belmont Street, NW, one block to the east of Meridian Hill Park, a federal park under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. The site is currently improved with the former Pitts Motel and two rowhouses, which will be demolished in order to construct the condominium building. The site consists of 42,750 square feet of land area in the Columbia Heights neighborhood. The area is a mix of single-family detached and attached units, and multi-family apartment and condominium buildings.

The proposed building would be a five-story condominium building with 105 units. The building would contain 115,200 square feet (a maximum of 2.7 FAR). The building would have a maximum height of 55 feet. One hundred sixty-five parking spaces (1.6 spaces per unit) would be provided in a two-level garage and adjacent space at the rear. Access to parking would occur at the rear of the building and from Belmont Street, NW.

The R-5-B District permits matter-of-right moderate development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats, and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 60%, a maximum FAR of 1.8, and a maximum height of 55 feet. PUD/R-5-B Standards allow an FAR of 3.0 and a height of 60 feet, both of which are greater than the FAR and height requested by the applicant.

The applicant, The Bozzuto Group, requests three waivers: 1) A waiver of the minimum lot area required for a PUD (which is one acre; the property is .98 acres). 2) A deviation from the lot occupancy requirement (which is 60%; the project would occupy 63%). 3) A deviation from the roof structure requirements (which requires a 1:1 setback of the roof structure; most of the roof complies with this requirement but a sixteen-foot-high portion of the roof structure in the southwest corner of the roof is set back eleven feet from the west wall, thereby exceeding the 1:1 ratio. Further, the code requires that walls of roof structures be of equal height. The architects have lowered the roof structure to eleven feet in order to reduce the mass of the roof structure, but a portion of the roof structure at the southwest corner of the roof is sixteen feet in height.)

The Office of Planning (OP) supports the PUD, which it states will bring needed housing to the District of Columbia that will be sold for home ownership, as well as the offered public amenities, which OP states are commensurate with the deviations requested by the applicant. Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 1B voted unanimous support for the PUD application at its meeting on August 22, 2003. The ANC had earlier raised concerns about the height and massing of the building and stated in its approval that the applicant's revisions to the design had addressed their concerns. The ANC's request to include affordable units resulted in the inclusion of one of each type of unit, for a total of four units. Further, the ANC stated that it supported higher density in transit-oriented developments, and that, in this case, it was supporting the redevelopment of a parcel with a troubled history in the community.

The federal interest is the effect of the proposed PUD on Meridian Hill Park, a reservation under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. The PUD will face south in the middle of the 1440 block of Belmont Street. Parking access to the building will be from Belmont Street and the rear alley, rather than from 15th Street adjacent to the park. Further, while the building will likely be visible from points in the southeast corner of the park, the PUD will not face the park itself. An existing apartment building facing 15th Street separates the PUD site from the park. Further, other multi-unit residential buildings face the park. Therefore, I have determined that the proposed Zoning Commission action on the consolidated PUD would not adversely affect the federal interests, nor be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director