ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-10
Exhibit 13

Williams, Lindsley (WAS - X71873)

From: Lindsley Williams [LWilliams@his.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2003 10:18 AM
To: jerrily.kress@dc.gov
Cc: alberto.bastida@dc.gov; jennifer.steingasser@dc.gov; Nero, Richard (DCOZ)
Subject: Comments on Library Text Case (03-10)

Lindsley Cover

Ms. Kress and Mr. Bastida:

Kindly provide this email in hard copy to the members of the Commission as they take up the case of Public Libraries this evening. I will not be able to attend the hearing. I will provide a signed copy of this email later this week for the official record.

I am pleased to see this continuation of the effort to establish rules governing various uses that the DC government establishes on land over all of the District of Columbia. Earlier cases looked, or are still examining, rules for recreation facilities and police functions; another is looking at use of historic properties for certain DC government functions.

The instant case focuses on a use that is dominated by, but is not the exclusive province of, local government -- libraries. I make this point since the initial text of the case focuses, appropriately, on the definitions and starts out, too narrowly in my opinion, by limiting the domain to PUBLIC libraries.

To me, the critical definition should be that accorded to the simple term LIBRARY, with refinements and restrictions being imposed at the relevant zone rules as warranted.

Apart from the "public" limitation, the definition also establishes a maximum size for three classes of public libraries. Again, this seems appropriate for the zone district rules, not the definition itself.

The definitions "community public library" and "kiosk library" also have a strange and unexplained (in the hearing Notice) ties to both "portable" and "structure" instead of "building." Each of these uses, even if small in size and moveable (with effort), is a complete protective environment covered by a roof and meets the elements of being a "building" as already
defined: "a structure having a roof supported by columns or walls for the shelter, support, or enclosure of persons, animals, or chattel." So why, then, "structure?" And, what does the term "portable" add to the mix?

Finally, I feel the term library ~~is~~ as proposed fails to grasp (or permit) the range of activities contemporary libraries can, and should, fulfill, particularly as to communications portals and internet access/research and the range of accessory uses that could add to the quality and income generated by uses in libraries (more on this later).

I recommend revising the definition to just "library" and and then regulating its scope and nature thereafter along the following lines:

Section 201(r) - District of Columbia public library, not to exceed 20,000 square feet. [This limits matter of right libraries to those of the local government, not private ones or ones of institutions such as colleges or universities, which would be located as approved under campus plan provisions.]

I further suggest that the Board be authorized to grant establishment of DC public libraries over 20,000 square feet in Residence zone districts by Special Exception.

The definition, or at least the dicta of the implementing Order, should clearly be such that the functions of maintenance of library vehicles, book repair and binding in specialized buildings are to be evaluated in terms of the use at hand, not the Agency the specialized function may be "under."

Other sections (CR, C, W and SP and C by extension) would be handled, to my way of thinking, as just the term "library" without restriction as to ownership or size. This

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would also cover the present MLK main library, which the regulations seem to have left out of the picture as well as any replacement for it should some current OP thinking on this question emerge over the coming years.

Parking should be required, probably as proposed. Please, however, look at the parking provisions, and confirm my impression that they lack, at this time, a specific schedule of requirements for museums, be they operated by the DC government or otherwise. If confirmed, that institutional use could face the enormous impact of the 600 square foot rule allocated to such unknowns. The proposed library schedule of requirements might be quite appropriate for museums, as well.

Loading and service delivery spaces should be required for libraries, for the same reasons as parking -- but this is curiously omitted for the advertised text. Consider, again, the question of loading for museums in the same context as above.

Additionally, I recommend the Zoning Commission clarify the allocation of library space in terms of whether it is allowable as a "residential" use in those zones where differential limits are applied to residential and "other permitted" uses.

Finally, I would like to see the Residence series of zones allowing the Board of Zoning Adjustment to permit, as a special exception, establishing small (perhaps allowing up to 400 square feet or 10% of the gross floor area of a given facility, whichever is the larger) privately operated (e.g., as concessions) for sale of non-alcoholic beverages and prepared food, such as those operated in commercial bookstores by major "coffee" chains. Such an amenity could add to the service a library provides and provide a small income stream to the DC Government itself. No parking or loading should be required for this use if the basic requirements for parking are being met.

Thank you very much.

Lindsley Williams
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