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: September 22, 2003

SUBJECT: Howard University (Zoning Commission# 03-17)
New Bethune Hall Dormitory

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APPLICATION

The President and Director of Howard University (applicant) request a special exception under 11 DCMR 3104 and 210 for further processing of a proposed project within the *UniverCity 20/20 Howard University 1998 Campus Plan*. The application is to demolish the existing Bethune Hall at 2255 4th Street, N.W. (Square 3068, Lot 30) and replace it with a new Bethune Hall to house freshman women students.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, OP supports the special exception for the proposed dormitory use. However, the applicant's submission lacks information explaining why the proposed building use is being changed from a faculty center as approved by the 1998 Campus Plan to a dormitory and why is it necessary to demolish the building. OP recommends that prior to the approval of the special exception, an amendment to the Campus Plan be submitted for review by the Zoning Commission.

If the Zoning Commission sees fit to approve the special exception, for further processing under the *UniverCity 20/20 Howard University 1998 Campus Plan*, for construction of a new Bethune Hall, OP recommends the following conditions:

1. The new Bethune Hall will be used to house female underclassmen.
2. The new Bethune Hall will be developed in substantial conformance with the revised plans dated August 19, 2003.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case 03-17
Exhibit 11

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-17
EXHIBIT NO.11

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located on the eastern portion of the campus, generally south of the McMillan Reservoir and was developed with Bethune Hall, an old, unused dormitory that was recently demolished. On the same parcel and to the south is the Bethune Hall Annex which is a dormitory consisting of a building with a 3-story central structure and 2 seven-story "wings". These buildings enclose a central, open space quadrangle. The property is in the SP-2 District.

To the north of the site is Frazier Hall, a 5-story female residence hall; to the west is the university's television station, WHUT and the Chemistry Laser Research building; and to the east is a Washington Sewer and Water Authority (WASA) building that houses the pumping station for McMillan Reservoir.

PROPOSAL

The applicant replace the demolish the Bethune Hall with a 7-story, 109,278 square feet, 85.58 feet high dormitory. The application states that the new dormitory is to house 326 female freshmen, however, the design of the building has been refined and will now house 312 students. The applicant has also stated that the building may have other students such as transfer sophomore or junior students, but it will be limited to underclassmen.

In addition to housing students, the dormitory will have the following auxiliary uses:

Lower level: Fitness center, aerobics/exercise room, and mechanical equipment

1st Floor: Lobby, cyber-café, convenience store[1], reading verandah, mailroom, office, directors and student aid apartments, and public bathrooms.

Typical on upper 6 Floors: Study rooms, lounge laundry lounge and dorm rooms.

THE ADOPTED CAMPUS PLAN

The current Howard University Campus Plan, *UniverCity 20/20,* was adopted in1998 and will expire in 2008 (BZA Order 16330). For the period of the campus plan, the University proposed to construct 2 new buildings and 9 existing buildings were slated for renovations, one of which was Bethune Hall. One of the buildings proposed in the Campus Plan for construction, the Medical Library, had been completed and a number of the projects scheduled for renovation have been completed. Bethune Hall was an old dormitory that was to be reconfigured and renovated to house the Bethune Hall Faculty Center. The Faculty Center was to consist of Residence Life offices and a Student Leisure Center including a fitness center, media canter, billiards and other table games and a quiet social/entertainment area on the first floor. Floors 2 through 8 would have 200-250 faculty offices and conference and meeting rooms.

[1] The convenience store will only be available to students who live in the dorm and probably to students who live in Bethune Hall Annex.