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: August 25, 2003

SUBJECT: Preliminary Report - ZC # 03-21
St. Coletta of Greater Washington
Part of Lot 800 in Square E-1112

APPLICATION

St. Coletta of Greater Washington (St. Coletta) (Applicant) seeks approval of a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related map amendment for a portion of the Reservation 13 tract. The applicant requests that the property be zoned to the SP-1 District to accommodate the proposed school.

OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the Zoning Commission setdown the proposed consolidated PUD and related map amendment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The 5.23-acre subject property is located on the northwestern portion of Public Reservation 13 at the intersection of Independence Avenue and 19th Street, N.E. The site is currently vacant and is fairly flat except where there is a distinctive change in grade on the southeastern portion of the site. (Attachment 1)

To the east and south of the subject site is the remainder of Public Reservation 13, a 67-acre tract, which houses the DC Jail and the former D.C. General Hospital. Only a few of the former hospital buildings are currently utilized by an outpatient clinic, the medical examiner, and various other specialized clinics. The Stadium Armory Metro station is located on the tract to the south of the subject site. The entire tract is unzoned.

To the west of the subject property is a residential community of predominantly 2-and 3-story row houses in the R-4 District; to the north, are the D.C. Armory and the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, that are also unzoned.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
Case No. 03-21
Exhibit No. 13

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-21
EXHIBIT NO.13

BACKGROUND

History texts from the period indicate that the Washington Asylum, previously known as "the workhouse and alms house," relocated from Judiciary Square to Reservation 13 between 1843 and 1846. The main buildings of the D. C. General Hospital were constructed in the 1930's and 1940's. Additional buildings were added over time, growing to a complex of hospital and health related uses. The new Central Detention Facility (the DC Jail), constructed in 1976 replaced the Old Jail that dated from the 1870's which was located at the corner of Independence Avenue and 19th Street (the subject site).

Public Reservation 13 was originally a federal facility and therefore unzoned; 11DCMR, Section 106.4 stipulates "*Properties owned by the government of the United States and used for or intended to be used for a federal public building or use . . . shall not be included in any zone district.*" Use of the property was transferred to the city in 2002 and the property has remained unzoned. 11DCMR, Section 106.5 sets out the applicability of zoning to district owned properties and Section 106.5 (b) triggers the zoning requirement for this project. It reads in part "*. . . any change or expansion in the use of land or building, or any new construction or additions to buildings shall be subject to zoning.*"

The Office of Planning prepared a Master Plan for Public Reservation 13 that was approved by the City Council in 2003. Currently, OP is preparing a zoning plan for the remainder of the tract based on the recommendations of the Master Plan. It is anticipated that the zoning proposal for the remainder of the tract will be submitted to the Zoning Commission in fall, 2003. The zoning of this 5.23-acre site precedes the zoning of the entire Reservation because of the need by St. Coletta to begin construction in order to have the school ready for the 2005-2006 school year. The proposed location of the school was identified on the Master Plan and the proposed SP-1 District for the property is consistent with the OP's recommendation. Since the zoning of the subject site will precede the zoning on the remainder of the tract, OP has recommended that the property be developed as a PUD to allow for additional review of compatibility with the overall Master Plan.

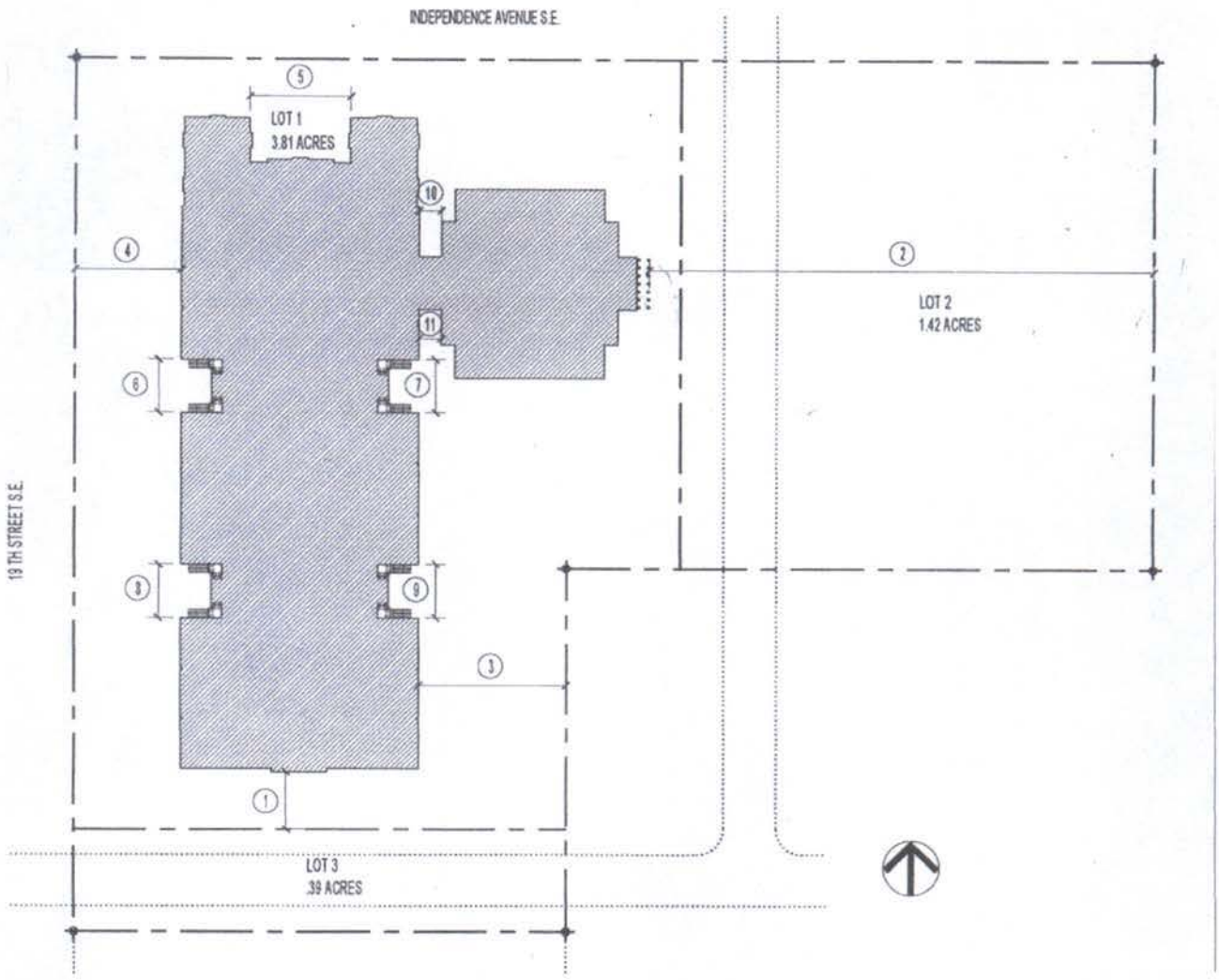
PROPOSAL

St. Coletta currently has facilities in Alexandria, Virginia and serves students with cognitive disabilities and special educational needs. A majority of the students come from the D. C. Public School (DCPS) system at a great cost. Working with the school system, St. Coletta is proposing to open a new facility at the proposed site to serve the student of the District of Columbia. The facilities in the building will include classrooms, kitchens, therapy rooms, group rooms, a gymnasium, an infirmary, a hydrotherapy room, conference rooms, and administrative offices. On the exterior of the western side of the building is a linear area approximately the length of the property that will accommodate outdoor "classrooms" and gardens.

The proposed 100,612 square foot building will accommodate 200-250 students, 25 adults in a support/supportive employment program, and approximately 205 teachers and staff. The school will operate Monday to Fridays between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. with the instructional hours between 8:00 am and 3:00 p.m. Occasionally, there will be events in the evenings and weekends. The applicant proposes to make the community room, kitchen, and the gymnasium available to community organizations on a prearranged basis in the evenings and weekends.

As shown on Exhibit 1, the subject property PUD lot is divided into 3 sections. The building will be located on Lot 1 (3.81 acres) with Lot 2 (1.42 acres) designated for temporary parking to serve the school. As a part of the lease agreement between St. Coletta and the District of Columbia, Lot 2 is to be returned to the District when it is ready for development consistent with the Master Plan and the parking will be provided elsewhere on Reservation 13. Lot 3is not a part of the lease, but St. Coletta proposes to landscape it until it becomes an extension of Burk Street.

Exhibit 1



Project Location

The development of the school is of great significance as it will be the first building in the redevelopment of Reservation 13 and is at the critical location on the tract, the intersection of 19th Street and Independence Avenue, SE. Independence Avenue and 19th Street are the only two existing streets and form the spines on which the remainder of the site will be redeveloped. It is therefore critical that the development of the site be sensitive to the school's function and thoughtful in its relationship to both the Capitol Hill area and the future development of the Reservation. The urban design qualities of this

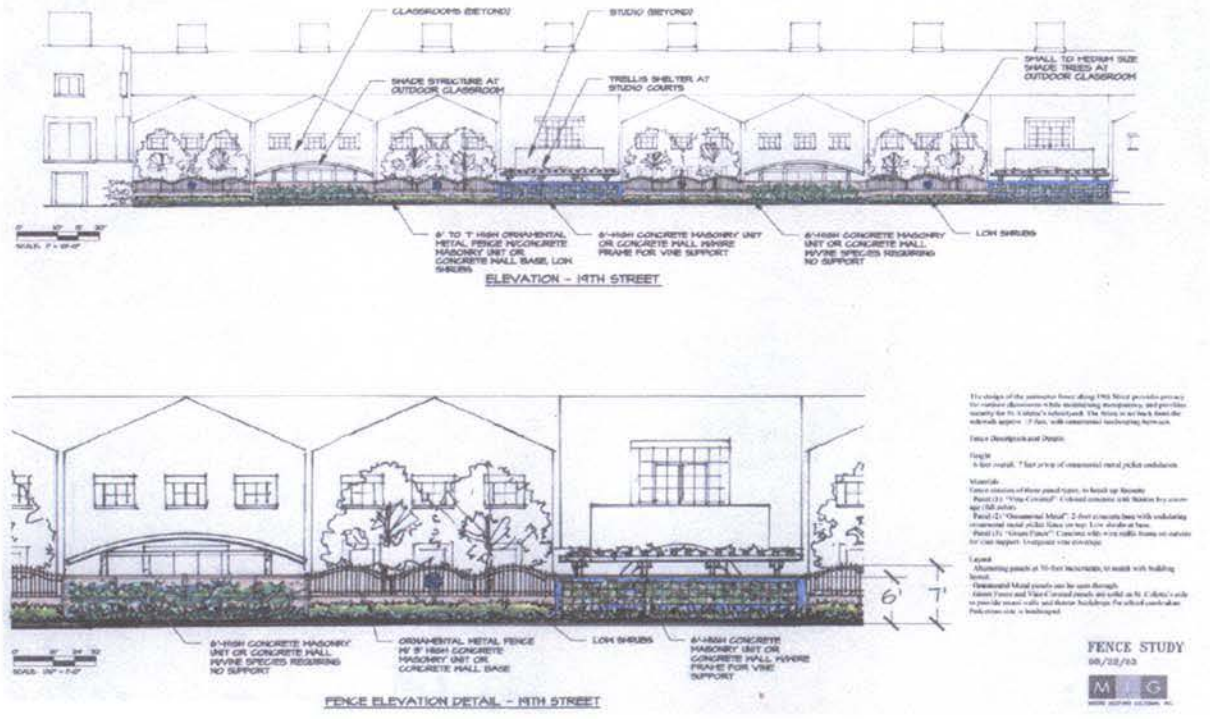
project will set the stage for other developments to follow in order to fulfill the vision of the Master Plan.

19th Street Wall

An element of the school's proposal that has caused some concern in the community and to OP is the proposed wall that extends along a portion of the 19th Street frontage. The applicant has stated that the wall is necessary for the security of the students. The original proposal was for the wall to be concrete, approximately 6 feet high, with alcoves where seating would be provided. The wall would be setback 15 to 20 feet from the sidewalk. However, the community has viewed this design of the wall as a barricade separating the school from the community. Additionally, they have expressed concerns about crime in the general area around the site and whether the separation will encourage unwanted activities outside the wall, especially in the seating areas.

The applicant has responded to this concern and has redesigned the wall to address these concerns (Exhibit 2). The new design shows a fence with a maximum height of 7 feet and broken into 30-foot panels with three designs. Panel 1 will be colored concrete with Boston Ivy coverage; Panel 2 will be a 2-foot concrete base with undulating ornamental metal picket fence on top and low shrubs at base; Panel 3 will be concrete with wire trellis frame on outside with covered with evergreen vine. The solid panels on the St. Coletta's side will be used as mural walls and theater backdrops for school curriculum. OP will continue to work with the applicant to achieve a compromise that enhances public safety along the street while providing adequate security for the children.

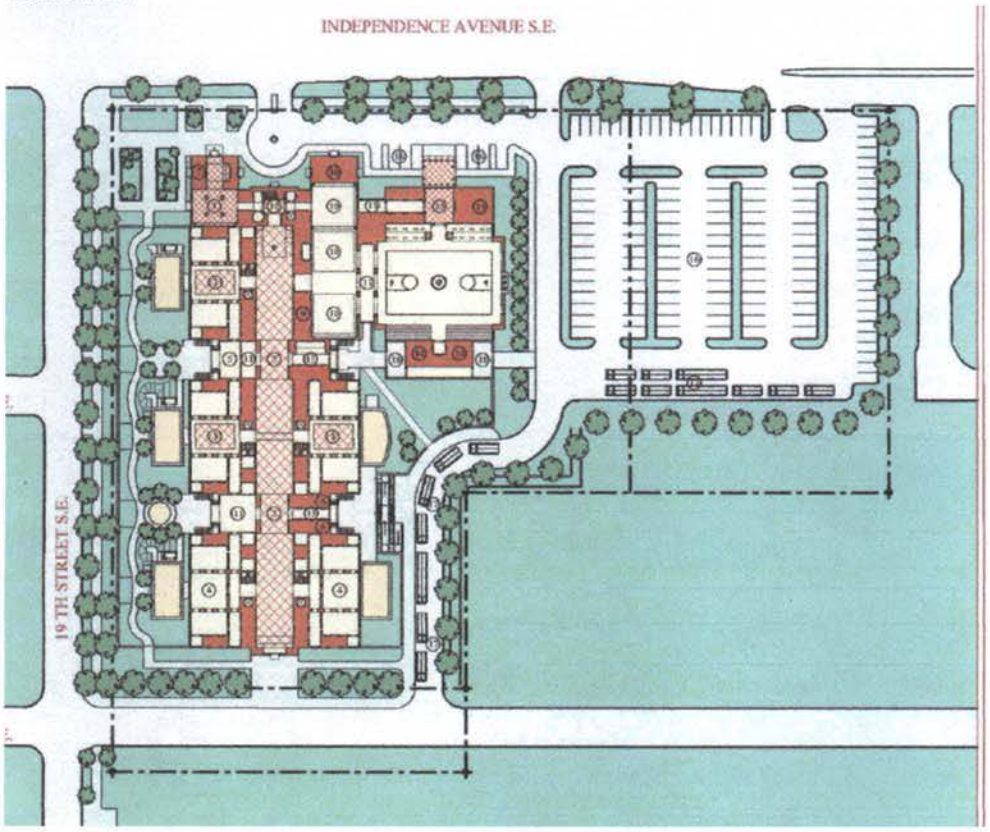
Exhibit 2



Continuation of Streets
One of the guiding principles of Public Reservation 13 Master Plan is that the existing pattern of local streets will be extended through the site. The southern end of the site would therefore be adjacent to the extension of Burke Street in an east-west direction and the extension of 20th Street will be adjacent to the eastern boundary of Lot 1 in a north-south direction. The Site Plan submitted in the application shows development of a park and play-area in the proposed Burke Street right-of-way and other property to the south. This area is not within St. Coletta's lease and neither is it a part of this zoning and PUD application.

The community and OP are concerned that the proposed landscape plan includes this area and shows expensive landscaping, a schoolyard, and a park and that it will jeopardize the construction of Burke Street at a later date. OP has advised the applicant that the site development objectives should be designed fully within the boundaries of their site and not within adjacent public land. The applicant has since submitted a revised plan to address these concerns (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4



Independence Avenue
The Office of Planning is also concerned about the parking lot that is proposed adjacent to Independence Avenue. The parking lot is for seven handicap spaces, and OP has asked the applicant to look for an alternative that could relocate the parking so that is not a prominent element interrupting the possibility of a continuing the building line along this important streetscape as anticipated on the Reservation Master Plan. In response to this concern, the applicant has revised the Site Plan showing an awning extending from the gymnasium into the disabled parking lot, aligning with the north side of the community room and north side of the entry therefore creating a continuous edge facing Independence

Avenue. OP encourage the applicant to continue investigating alternatives to maintain the continuity of the building line on Independence Avenue.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN and PUBLIC POLICIES

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."

Public Reservation 13 Master Plan

The adopted Master Plan for Public Reservation 13 serves as supplemental guidance to the Comprehensive Plan and outlines nine guiding principles for the development of the tract. The proposed school meets the following principles:

1. Connect and integrate Reservation 13 with adjacent neighborhoods, and the new waterfront park along the Anacostia River;
2. Utilize the site to meet a diversity of public needs including health care, education, employment, government services and administration, recreation and housing;
3. Extend the existing pattern of local streets to and through the site to create simple, well-organized city blocks and appropriately scaled development;
4. Maintain a human-scale of building heights that match existing neighborhood buildings and increase in height as the site slopes downward to the Anacostia waterfront;
5. Connect the Hill East neighborhood and the city at large to the waterfront via tree-lined public streets, recreational trails and increased access to waterfront parklands;
6 Demonstrate environmental stewardship through environmentally sensitive design, ample open spaces, and a great waterfront park that serve as public amenities and benefit the neighborhood and the city;
7. Promote the use of mass transit by introducing new uses near Metro stations and create an environment where the pedestrian, bicycle, and auto are all welcome, complementary, and unobtrusive, reducing the impact of traffic on adjacent neighborhood street;
8. Create attractive "places" of unique and complementary character. . . "

St. Coletta School was recommended for this site and the proposed height of the buildings are reflective of the residences to the west of 19th Street. The open space along 19th Street will include at least 3 rows of trees and landscaping to provide an attractive pedestrian walkway. The applicant proposes to encourage use of Metro by its employees to maximize the benefits of being within easy walking distance of the Metro.

The Master Plan identifies the Reservation 13 tract as been divided into 4 districts, and St. Coletta is within the Independence Avenue District which is described as providing " . . . easy access from Independence Avenue and the surrounding regional network of roads and will be devoted to city-wide uses, St. Coletta School and services including health-care, recreation, and education." Additionally, the Plan recommends that "Building sites closest to 19th Street SE will approximately match the townhouse neighborhoods to the west in two to four story heights."

The Staging Plan for the Master Plan envisions that redevelopment of Public Reservation 13 will take place over a period of years and through a series of planned construction phases. The Plan recommends,

"St. Coletta will be part of this first phase and is important to initiating the plan at the 19th Street edge of the site and the Village Square."

OP will continue to work with the applicant on the relationship of the proposed building and site design with the existing neighborhood.

Comprehensive Plan
The Generalized Land Use Map recommends the subject site for local public facilities (Attachment 2). The proposed zoning to the SP-1 district is consistent with these recommendations as the school is being constructed to facilitate the DCPS students.

The PUD is also consistent with other sections of the Comprehensive Plan including the following Major Themes of the Comprehensive:

- Section 102 - Stabilizing and Improving District Neighborhoods
- Section 106 - Respecting and Improving the Physical Character of the District
- Section 110 - Promoting Enhanced Public Safety
- Section 111 - Providing Diversity and Overall Social Responsibilities

Specifically, the application is consistent with the following chapters of the Plan:

Chapter 7, Urban Design Element:

- Section 701, Urban Design Goal which is to "promote the protection, enhancement, and enjoyment of the natural environs and to promote a built environment that serve s as a complement to the natural environment, provides visual orientation, enhances the District's aesthetic qualities, emphasizes neighborhood identities, and is functionally efficient."
- Section 710.1, Areas of Strong Architectural Character, which is to "protect areas of strong architectural character and to provide that the architecture of any new development in these areas be complementary to the existing architectural character."

Chapter 11, Land Use Element:

- Section 1101, Land Use Goal, which is to "assure the efficient use of and resources within legal, economic, fiscal, environmental, and other public policy constraints to meet neighborhood, community, and District-wide needs and to help foster other District goals."

Specifically, the application is consistent with the Ward 6 plan:

- Section 1721.1(b), Ward 6 Plan, specifically calls for the assurance that the "new development that occurs in Ward 6 complements and translates land uses into compatible, physical settings and preserves and enhances the outstanding qualities of the natural park areas;"
- Section 1721.1(c), "encourage a high quality of architecture consistent with the styles and character of the buildings in Ward 6."

PROPOSED ZONING

The Office of Planning has preliminarily reviewed the proposed map amendment and concluded that the SP-1 District is an appropriate designation for consideration and public hearing. The uses proposed on the property are consistent with the SP-1 District.

Section 5-413 of the Zoning Act sets out the criteria that the Zoning Commission must apply in adopting zoning regulations. The underlying purpose of the regulations is "to promote the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, or general welfare of the District of Columbia and its planning and orderly development as the national capital" and zoning should not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The predominant zoning in the neighborhood around the site is R-4, residential. The Armory and the RFK Stadium to the north of the site are unzoned. The zoning plan for the remainder of Reservation 13 will be presented to the Zoning Commission in October 2003. The zoning is envisioned to reflect the Master Plan and will include a variety of uses, "including health care, civic, residential, educational, community and other public uses." (Public Reservation 13 Master Plan Vision Statement)

The proposed SP-1 district is designed to "*stabilize those areas adjacent to C-3-C and C-4 districts and other appropriate areas that contain existing apartments, offices and institutions; and mixed use buildings*"(§ 500.1, emphasis added). Further, the major purpose of the SP District is to ". . . *act as a buffer between adjoining commercial and residential areas, and to ensure that new development is compatible in use, scale, and design with the transitional function of this zone district.*" (§ 500.2).

Designating the SP-1 district on the subject property will allow for compatibility with the R-4 zoning, the existing land uses, and the Master Plan. Although the surrounding zone districts are not C-3-C or C-4 Districts, the SP-1 zone is appropriate because it is a buffer between the lower density residential to the west and the more intensive uses to the east and south.

Mapping the SP-1 district on the property will allow the development to be at a scale that does not negatively impact the existing residences and will be consistent with the intensity projected for the remainder of the tract as envisioned by the Master Plan. As stated in the Master Plan, developments along 19th Street will provide a transition from residential use to the west and from the more intensive uses to the north along Independence Avenue to the more intensive uses envisioned for developments to the east of the subject site.

The SP-1 district allows an FAR of up to 3.5 for non-residential uses; the applicant is proposing a 0.60 FAR that is much less. Further, the PUD allows for review to ensure an intensity and scale that is compatible with the homes to the west of the site. The PUD will provide assurance of the site's development and use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The table below identifies the development standards permitted as a matter-of-right, through the PUD process, and as proposed by this applicant.

Table 1

	SP-1	SP-1 PUD	SCHOOL	
			With Parking Lot	Without Parking Lot
Lot Area	N/A	15,000 sq. ft.	227,276 sq. ft.	165,963 sq. ft.
FAR Non-residential Uses	2.5	3.5	0.60	0.44
Height	65 ft	75 ft	43.5 ft.	43.5 ft.
Lot Occupancy	None Required	None required, May be specified by ZC	28%	38%
Parking	2 per 3 teachers and other employees – 138 spaces	2 per 3 teachers and other employees - 138 spaces	122 spaces	Most parking will be provided elsewhere

The applicant is proposing fewer parking spaces than is required. The applicant submits that the reduction will not cause any adverse impacts as they subscribe to the Metrocheck program as an incentive to use public transportation. Additionally, many parents and guardians of students rely on public transportation to attend meetings, training, and other school functions.

PURPOSE OF A 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." This new school will be a state-of-the-art facility that will represent a major advance in the education of students with special educational needs. It is a major District of Columbia policy to provide education to its special needs children within the District of Columbia if possible instead of transporting them to neighboring jurisdictions. The new school will be functionally designed to meet the special needs of these students and provide an excellent environment for students, teachers, and other professionals who use the facility.

STANDARDS FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

As demonstrated in the table above, the application meets the minimum 15,000 square foot area requirements of Section 2401.1(c). Pursuant to Section 2402.3, the applicant has elected to file a consolidated 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."

Based on the information provided, OP believes that the project will be favorable and an improvement to the ability of the City to bring about needed improvements in the education of students who require special educational and other required services that will result from the project. The applicant has elected to pursue the planned unit development approach, which provides beneficial site planning and design flexibility that this project requires to meet the special needs of the people it serves while allowing the Zoning Commission, the Office of Planning, and community interests to review the plans.

Public Benefits and Amenities

Section 2403.5 through 2403.13 discusses the definition and evaluation of public benefits and amenities. Some of the proposed amenities the applicant proposes are as follows:

- The school itself is considered an amenity as providing this school in the District will save a significant amount of money that DCPS now pays for transporting the children daily to and from Virginia. Additionally, the transportation will be greatly reduced especially in times of inclement weather. The site's close proximity to the Stadium Armory Metro station will encourage employees to use mass transit.
- Extensive landscaping along 19th and Street and Independence Avenue.
- Health and dental care services to provided free to persons in the community with cognitive disabilities.
- Use of the gymnasium, recreational facilities, and community gardens by the community organizations.

St. Coletta proposes to invite community groups such as PTA's, churches, scouting troops, Boy's and Girl's clubs, public and parochial school groups and other organized entities such as Soccer on the Hill to use their facilities in the evenings and on weekends. Groups will be required to carry liability insurance with St. Coletta as an additional insured. Groups will be required to have a minimum requirement of $1,000,000 in general umbrella liability insurance plus a $1,000,000 per incident and $3,000,000 aggregate general liability. St. Coletta submits that the facility will be ideal for ANC and other community meetings that are open to the general public since the building will be completely accessible. The applicant has posted a notice on the *Voice of the Hill* web site encouraging groups to let them know who they are and what are their needs.

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. Department of Public Works, Tree and Landscape Division;
5. District of Columbia Public Schools;
6. D.C. Historic Preservation Officer.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicant has had a number of meetings with the ANC-6B and the community. There exists both support and opposition to the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning believes that the proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, the policies of the Public Reservation 13 Master Plan and the requirements of the Zoning Regulations. OP recommends that the application for the consolidated PUD and related Map

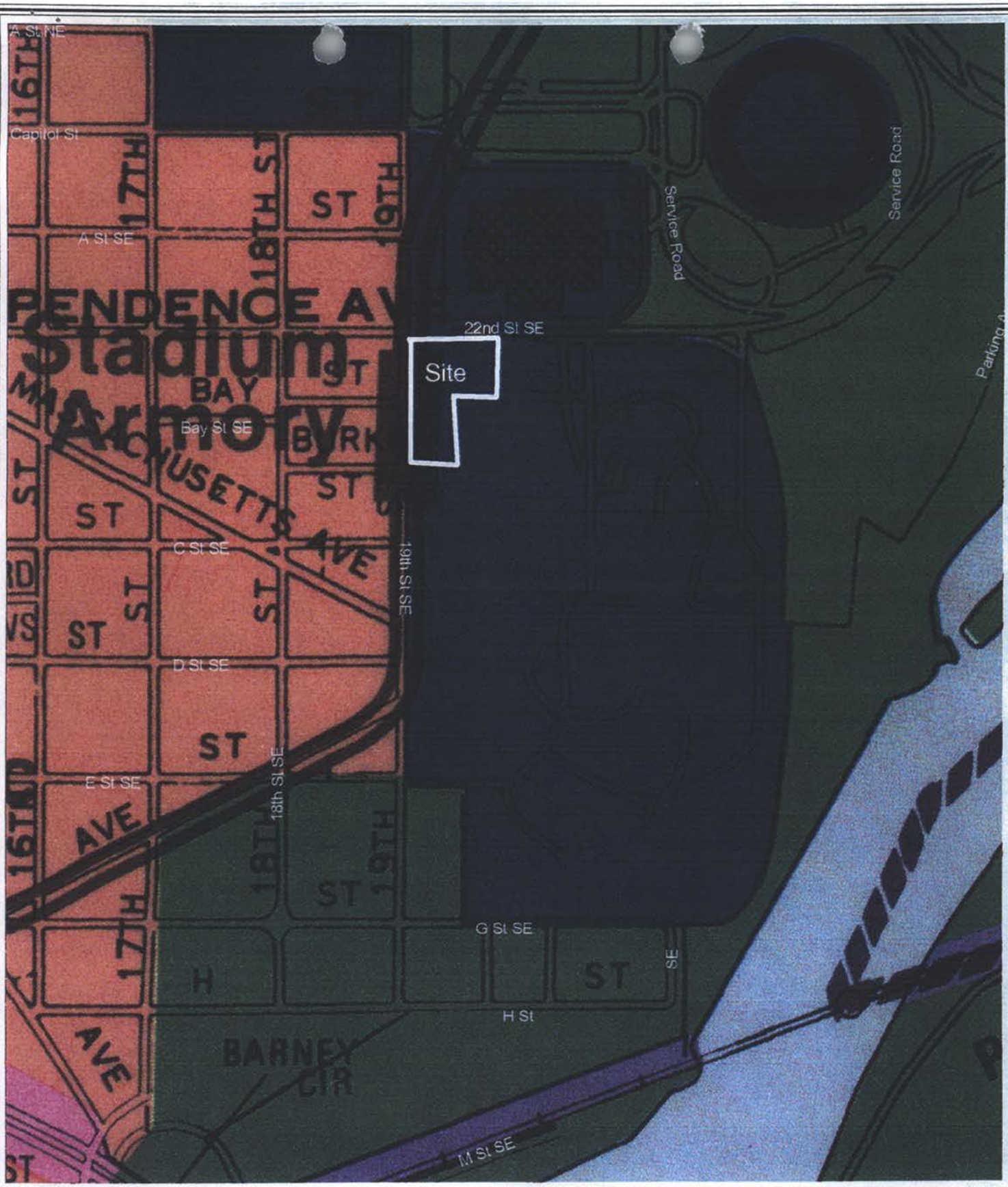
Amendment be set down for public hearing. Working toward the public hearing, OP will work with the applicant to further define the proposal. OP has requested the applicant provide the following information prior to public hearing:

1. Building materials description to explain the building's final appearance.
2. Details of landscaping, site lighting, fences and retaining walls (including materials, heights)
3. A Grading Plan of the proposed driveway along the Burke Street extension.
4. A Storm Water Management Plan.
5. Details on which community organizations will use the gymnasium, recreational facilities, and community garden, etc. and what are the conditions of their use.
6. Signed First Source Agreement with the Department of Employment Services (DOES) and/or other employment organizations within ANC-6B.

Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph and Zoning
2. Comprehensive Plan

AA/mbr AICP



Generalized Land Use Key

- Residential Low Density
- Residential Moderate Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Residential High Density
- Water
- Commercial Low Density
- Commercial Moderate Density
- Commercial Medium Density
- Commercial Med.-high Density
- Commercial High Density
- Federal
- Institutional
- Local Public
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space
- Production and Technical Employment

Comprehensive Plan Land Use
St. Coletta of Greater Washington
ZC # 03-21

DC Office of Planning
August 4, 2003

N

Scale 1:6115

150 0 150 300 450 600 Feet

Attachment 2



Feature Key

Zoning Boundaries

Square Index

Ortho-Photography was taken in 1999.

St. Coletta of Greater Washington

Zoning Commission Case No. 03-21

DC Office of Planning

August 4, 2003

Scale 1:4912

N

250 25 0 75 Feet

Attachment 1