NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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Executive Director

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC File No. Z.C. 03-21

FEB 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:

The National Capital Planning Commission at its meeting on February 5, 2004 approved the enclosed action on the Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Amendment to the Zoning Map for St. Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. Also enclosed, for your information, is a copy of the Staff Recommendation for the project.

Sincerely,

Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP
Executive Director

Enclosures

Office of Zoning
District of Columbia
Case 03-21
Exhibit 44

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.03-21
EXHIBIT NO.44

COMMISSION ACTION

NCPC File No. Z.C. 03-21

NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

SAINT COLETTA OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC.
CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED MAP AMENDMENT FROM UNZONED TO SP-1

Located on Square E-112, Part of Lot 800, Part of U.S. Reservation 13, District of Columbia

Submission by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

February 5, 2004

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of comments pursuant to Section 8 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8724(a)) and D.C. Code § 2-1006(a).

Commission Action

The Commission:

Concludes that the proposed consolidated Planned Unit Development and related map amendment from unzoned to SP-1 for the project known as Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. on a portion of public Reservation 13 in the southeast quadrant of Washington, DC would not adversely affect the identified federal interests and is consistent with the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

Recommends visual screening between the disabled parking area and Independence Avenue, SE so that parked cars are not visible from the sidewalk and add visual screening along 19th Street as appropriate.

Advises the District of Columbia Office of Property Management that this project and future projects on Reservation 13 must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission for review and comment under Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act.

Advises the District of Columbia Office of Planning that the master plan for Public Reservation 13 must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission for review under Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act prior to the submission of additional projects located on Reservation 13.

Deborah B. Young
Secretary to the National Capital Planning Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

NCPC File No. ZC 03-21

NCPC
NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

SAINT COLETTA OF GREATER WASHINGTON, INC.
CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED MAP AMENDMENT FROM UNZONED TO SP-1

Located on Square E-112, Part of Lot 800, Part of U.S. Reservation 13, District of Columbia

Submission by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

January 29, 2004

Abstract

The Zoning Commission has taken a proposed action to approve a consolidated PUD and related map amendment from unzoned to SP-1 for the project known as Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. on a 5.22 acre portion of U.S. Reservation 13 (a parcel of approximately 65 acres) in the southeast quadrant of Washington, DC. Reservation 13 is under the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia government. Saint Coletta, a non-profit corporation, has leased the land from the District of Columbia Office of Property Management, and will construct a school for mentally disabled and autistic children and adults. The 99-year lease allows for the development of the Saint Coletta School within the parameters established by the Reservation 13 transfer of jurisdiction from the General Services Administration to the District of Columbia, and in accordance with the Reservation 13 master plan produced by the District of Columbia Office of Planning. Saint Coletta School will occupy a site in the northwest corner of Reservation 13, at the intersection of 19th Street, SE and Independence Avenue, SE.

Federal Interests

The identified federal interests relevant to this project include Massachusetts Avenue, SE, a special street in the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, public Reservation 13, National Park Service lands immediately east of Reservation 13 along the Anacostia River, the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the Memorials and Museums Master Plan, the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, the transfer of jurisdiction for Reservation 13 between the General Services Administration and the District of Columbia, and the National Guard Armory located across Independence Avenue from the project site.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of comments pursuant to Section 8 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8724(a)) and D.C. Code § 2-1006(a).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Concludes that the proposed consolidated Planned Unit Development and related map amendment from unzoned to SP-1 for the project known as Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. on a portion of public Reservation 13 in the southeast quadrant of Washington, DC would not adversely affect the identified federal interests and is consistent with the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

Recommends elimination of the curb cut on Independence Avenue, SE that serves the disabled parking area, and use of the existing curb cuts at the northeast end of the site to serve both the general parking area and the disabled parking area.

Recommends visual screening between the disabled parking area and Independence Avenue, SE so that parked cars are not visible from the sidewalk.

Advises the District of Columbia Office of Property Management that this project and future projects on Reservation 13 must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission for review and comment under Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act.

Advises the District of Columbia Office of Planning that the master plan for Public Reservation 13 must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission for review under Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act prior to the submission of additional projects located on Reservation 13.

* * *

BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

Description of the Proposal

The Zoning Commission has taken a proposed action to approve a consolidated PUD and related map amendment from unzoned to SP-1 for the project known as Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. on a portion of public Reservation 13 in the southeast quadrant of Washington, DC. The remaining portions of public Reservation 13, to the immediate south and east of the subject property, remain unzoned as do the federal properties to the north across Independence Avenue. The three-story project being developed by Saint Coletta will occupy 5.22 acres of land, and include a school building, attached gymnasium, outdoor classroom areas and playing fields, surface parking for disabled staff and visitors, and a circulation drive for school buses. In addition, the school will utilize 112 existing surface parking spaces on an adjacent lot to the east of the school site. The project is designed by Michael Graves Associates in New York City. The remainder of Reservation 13, approximately 67 acres, houses the DC Jail and the former DC General Hospital, which has only a few buildings still in use. A portion of the Saint Coletta site

housed the old DC Jail constructed in the 1870s. The jail was demolished and replaced by the current DC Jail facility in 1976.

Saint Coletta School, a non-profit private school, will serve 225 mentally disabled and autistic children and 25 mentally disabled and autistic adults. More than half of Saint Coletta's students live in the District of Columbia, with the remainder coming from throughout the metropolitan area. The school will have approximately 200 staff members.

According to the project submission, the architectural design of the project is intended to reflect the Capitol Hill neighborhood's colorful painted brick rowhouses as well as to create playful physical environs for the school's students. The building is composed primarily of two-story and three-story elements along its street fronts and incorporates residential building forms. The school is set back from 19th Street, SE due to an existing easement for the Metrorail tunnel that runs along the east side of 19th Street in this location. This building set-back is in line with other buildings that will be constructed on 19th Street as part of the master plan for Reservation 13. The building is also set back along Independence Avenue, SE in alignment with the set back established for planned buildings to the east of the site. Along Independence Avenue, the set-back is being utilized to provide convenient surface parking for the disabled, which according to the project submission, cannot be provided elsewhere on the site due to the building orientation and difficult site grades.

The project includes a total of approximately 100,000 square feet of space, including classrooms, offices, a gymnasium and supporting spaces. The one-story gymnasium is located to the rear of the building, screened from Independence Avenue by the higher, three-story portions of the building housing classroom space. Recreation fields, a drive aisle for circulating school buses and loading docks are located to the rear of the building, away from surrounding streets and residential areas.

Along the 19th Street, SE side of the property, a 6-foot to 7-foot high wall alternating between transparent cast iron sections and opaque colored concrete sections will separate the site from the adjoining sidewalk. The wall's concrete sections will be covered with evergreen and flowering vines facing the sidewalk. The entire wall will be offset from the sidewalk by approximately five feet to allow room for planting.

Because this project is a PUD and therefore granted flexibility under the zoning regulations, the applicant is required to assemble a package of public amenities as part of the project submission. Public amenities outlined by the applicant for this project include the shared use of Saint Coletta's interior and exterior meeting and recreation facilities with the surrounding community.

The legal description of the property locates it on Square E-112, Part of Lot 800, Part of U.S. Appropriation 13, District of Columbia.

Evaluation

Parking and Traffic

The applicant will provide 112 surface parking spaces by utilizing an existing parking lot east of the Saint Coletta development site. Access and egress will be to and from Independence Avenue on the north. Six parking spaces for disabled staff and visitors will be constructed along the north side of the building, between the building and Independence Avenue. According to the submission, ingress to the disabled spaces will occur using a separate driveway near the northwest corner of the site, while exiting traffic from this area will share the driveway from the larger 112-space parking lot. The applicant's traffic analysis, reviewed by the District Department of Transportation, indicates that this number of parking spaces is sufficient to serve parking demands at the Saint Coletta site. Saint Coletta's lease with the District Office of Property Management requires that Saint Coletta must vacate the surface parking lot when the District is prepared to construct 20th Street, SE and that 100 replacement parking spaces will be provided for Saint Coletta's use either beneath a new building to be constructed to the east of 20th Street or in close proximity at no cost to Saint Coletta.

Staff is recommending that the entry driveway for the disabled parking area be eliminated so as not to encumber the pedestrian-oriented corner of the site at the intersection of Independence Avenue and 19th Street. Entry and exit to and from the disabled spaces would occur using the existing Independence Avenue curb cut. **Staff is also recommending that screening be provided between the disabled parking area and the sidewalk along Independence Avenue so that parked and circulating cars will be less visible from the sidewalk.** Appropriate screening devices would include a low wall with landscaping along the sidewalk side.

Approximately 50 percent of Saint Coletta staff currently use Metrorail or some other form of transit to travel to work at the school's existing Alexandria location. Saint Coletta participates in Metro's Metrochek program, which allows employers to provide transit and vanpool fares as a tax-free employee benefit. Saint Coletta's Reservation 13 site is situated between the two entrances to the Stadium-Armory Metro station on Metro's blue and orange lines, a mere 200 feet from the south entrance on 19th Street, SE. Saint Coletta School will take full advantage of its Metro-accessible location and strive to increase participation in its Metrochek program. This will significantly reduce automobile traffic that might otherwise be introduced into the surrounding residential neighborhood because of the school's development. For analysis purposes, however, the school's existing mode split was utilized to project future traffic volumes at the site.

Approximately 63 school buses are anticipated to drop-off and pick-up students from around the District and suburban Maryland and Virginia. School buses will enter site from Independence Avenue, circulate behind the building and exit northbound on 19th Street. As part of the Saint Coletta development, Burke Street will be extended east of 19th Street and become the exit for school buses onto 19th Street. The intersection at Burke and 19th Streets will be constructed so as to allow only a right turn movement for exiting school buses. No school buses will be stored on site.

The school's loading docks are positioned to the rear of the site at the inside of the block, away from surrounding streets and residential areas. Trucks will enter and exit the site using the same drive aisles as the school buses.

Zoning

The proposed change in zoning from unzoned to SP-1 will not adversely affect the identified federal interests in this area. The SP-1 zone permits as a matter-of-right medium density development including all kinds of residential uses, with limited offices for non-profit organizations, trade associations and professionals permitted as a special exception requiring approval of the BZA, to a maximum lot occupancy of 80% for residential use, a maximum FAR of 4.0 for residential and 2.5 for other permitted uses, and a maximum height of sixty-five (65) feet. Zoning on the surrounding parcels includes R-4 for the area to the west of 19th Street, which permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses (including detached, semi-detached, row dwellings, and flats), churches and public schools. To the north, south and east of the site sits unzoned federal land, including the remainder of Reservation 13 to the south and east, as well as the National Guard Armory and RFK Stadium to the north. The SP-1 zoning for the subject property is consistent with the surrounding zoning, and is compatible with the intended uses for Reservation 13 proposed in the master plan.

Community Concerns

ANC 6-B and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society have expressed written opposition to the Saint Coletta project for reasons including:

- The ongoing development of design guidelines Reservation 13 that might otherwise apply to the Saint Coletta project.
- Use of this prominent corner site for a private school, rather than a commercial or institutional use that serves the greater Capitol Hill neighborhood.
- The appropriateness of the architectural design of the structure to the adjacent Capitol Hill East neighborhood.
- The application of SP-1 rather than R-4 zoning.
- The low cost of the lease to Saint Coletta.
- The inadequate provision of public amenities.

The applicant's provision of public amenities includes making all of Saint Coletta's interior and exterior recreation and meeting areas available to the public outside of school hours. The SP-1 zoning will allow a compatible mix of uses to that of the surrounding R-4 zone, and is consistent with the intended surrounding uses on the remainder of Reservation 13. The use of the site is consistent within the mix of uses proposed for Reservation 13.

At its, January 12, 2004 meeting the Zoning Commission disagreed that it should withhold final approval of the design of the façade of the school building until the approval of the design guidelines for Reservation 13. The Zoning Commission finds that the design of the façade of the school building meets the urban design goals of the Comprehensive Plan and complements and is

compatible with structures in the neighborhood. The Zoning Commission notes that the applicant has revised its plans for the building façades, specifically by replacing stucco with brick, and that such design modifications have satisfactorily addressed concerns regarding the compatibility of the proposed structure with neighboring structures.

Coordination

District of Columbia Office of Planning

The District of Columbia Office of Planning (DCOP) recommends approval of the project with the modification of the disabled parking area configuration. DCOP prefers that the disabled parking spaces be provided parallel to the north face of the Saint Coletta building rather than perpendicular in order to minimize the amount of land area dedicated to pavement in this location. **Staff does not concur with this recommendation, but instead recommends eliminating the driveway serving this parking area and providing access from the adjoining general parking area.** This recommendation would not allow for parallel parking.

District of Columbia Department of Transportation

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) recommends approval of the project with the condition that Saint Coletta fund a portion of the construction of Burke Street extended west of 19th Street, SE.

Federal Interest Evaluation

The identified federal interests relevant to this project include Massachusetts Avenue, SE, a special street in the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, Public Reservation 13, National Park Service lands immediately east of Reservation 13 along the Anacostia River, the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the Memorials and Museums Master Plan, the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, the transfer of jurisdiction for Reservation 13 between the General Services Administration and the District of Columbia, the Reservation 13 master plan, and the National Guard Armory located across Independence Avenue from the project site.

Reservation 13

Transfer of Jurisdiction

On October 25, 2002, the General Services Administration (GSA) transferred jurisdiction over Public Reservation 13 from the federal government to the municipal government of the District of Columbia for municipal purposes under the auspices of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 481 et seq.) Unlike a typical transfer of jurisdiction in which NCPC has approval, GSA may transfer property to the District of Columbia under this federal real property disposal statute without coming to NCPC for approval. Ownership of the 65-acre parcel remains in the hands of the federal government.

The transfer of jurisdiction requires that the District seek approval from GSA prior to entering into any leases on Reservation 13, the terms of which would exceed 15 years. GSA must certify in such cases that there are no identified future federal government uses for the property. The transfer of jurisdiction outlines conditions required to be met by the District government in order to protect certain federal interests, including:

1. District compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.
2. District compliance with federal, state and local laws relating to hazardous substances.
3. District assessment, preservation and maintenance of historic structures and archeological resources on the property (restrictions may be cancelled for good cause, upon request of the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Officer in concurrence with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and written concurrence from GSA).
4. Extension of Massachusetts Avenue, SE in line with the Avenue's present orientation and width, extending onto the adjoining Reservation 343, terminating in a cul-de-sac or traffic circle upon the southeastern boundary line of Reservation 13 with Reservation 343.
5. Recognition of the existing leasehold tenancy of the Federal Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA).
6. Prohibitions regarding air navigation over the property.
7. A restriction on leases or other outgrants exceeding fifteen (15) years without the express written concurrence of GSA.

Lease to Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc.

With GSA's approval, the District of Columbia entered into a 99-year lease for 5.22 acres of Reservation 13 with Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. in 2003. The lease was subsequently approved by the DC City Council in 2003.

Anacostia Waterfront Initiative and Reservation 13 Master Plan

The Anacostia Waterfront Initiative (AWI) is a partnership among 20 federal and District of Columbia agencies that own or control land along the Anacostia River. These agencies, including the National Capital Planning Commission, have signed the AWI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The stated goal of the MOU (March, 2000) is to guide a series of projects that will "...transform the Anacostia River from the city's forgotten river to a gem that could rival any urban waterfront in the world." The draft AWI Framework Plan developed to guide the revitalization effort, outlines eight target areas for detailed study and recommendations. One such target area is the waterfront east of Reservation 13. The 2002 master plan for Reservation 13 approved by the City Council and the Reservation 13 transfer of jurisdiction require an extension of Massachusetts Avenue, SE through the Reservation 13 site to connect to a park along the Anacostia River. The street will culminate in public space suitable for use as a memorial site. In this way, the Capitol Hill neighborhood will be connected to the new riverfront park through Reservation 13, and the master plan is consistent with the Memorials and Museums Master Plan and the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

There are no identified adverse impacts to federal interests resulting from the project; however, staff is concerned with the planned construction of surface parking lots and driveway curb cuts

along Independence Avenue, SE. Although Saint Coletta School will make use of a large existing surface parking lot and its existing curb cuts, the project will also construct a new area of surface parking for disabled staff and visitors along the north face of the building. The disabled parking lot will separate the building from the sidewalk along the south side of Independence Avenue. Additionally, the disabled parking lot will be served by a new curb cut along the south side of the Avenue. The submission states that this is the only practical location for the disabled parking, given the orientation of the building and the difficult grades of the project site. Relocating this parking area would require disabled staff and visitors to travel either up hill or across unacceptable distances to reach the building.

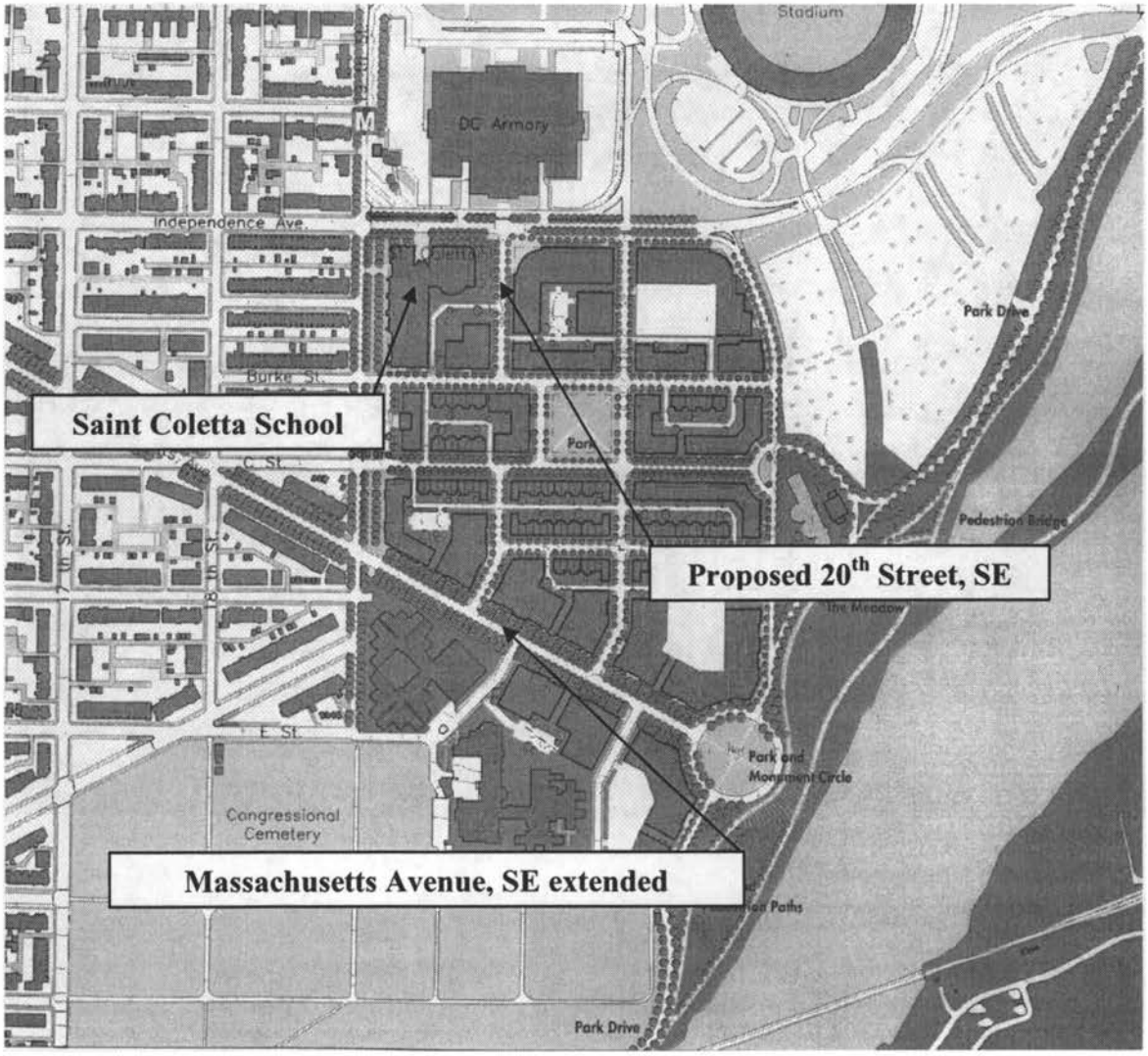
Given that the disabled parking area consists of only six parking spaces, a new curb cut along Independence Avenue is not necessary. **Staff recommends that the new curb cut be eliminated from the project and access to the disabled parking area utilize the existing curb cuts that serve the larger parking area to the east of the Saint Coletta building. Additionally, staff recommends that the disabled parking area be screened from view of the Independence Avenue sidewalk using a combination of low wall and landscaping.**

Conclusion and Recommendation

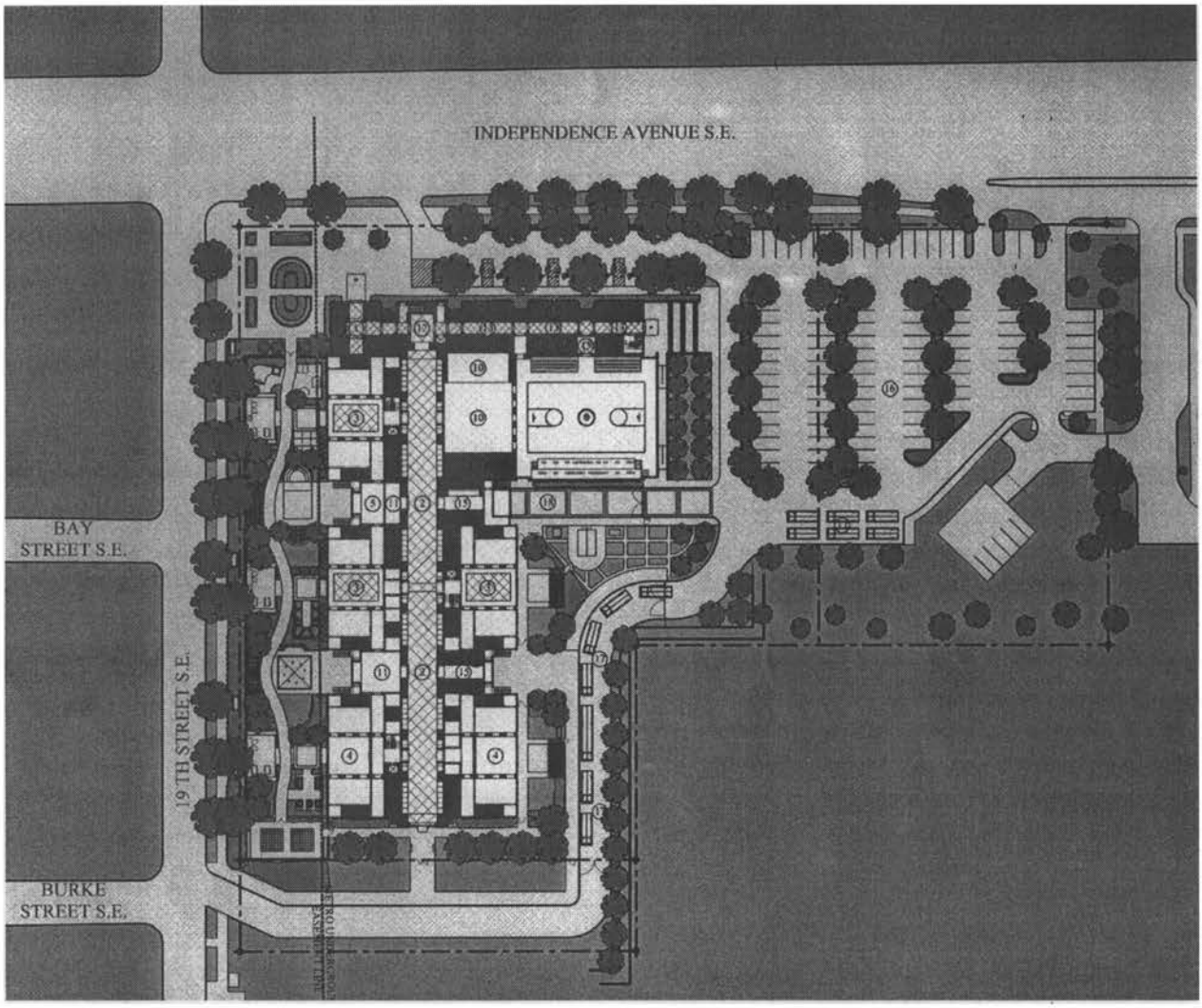
Staff recommends that the Commission conclude that the development of a school for Saint Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. on 5.22 acres of U.S. Reservation 13 near the intersection of 19th Street, SE and Independence Avenue, SE would not adversely affect the identified federal interests and is consistent with the federal elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. Staff further recommends that the Commission recommend the drive way and curb cut serving the disabled parking area be eliminated to minimize the encumbrance of vehicular traffic on this otherwise pedestrian-oriented corner and to avoid further interruption of the curb line along this street. Additionally, staff recommends appropriate screening of the disabled parking area from the sidewalk along the south side of Independence Avenue, SE using a low wall and landscaping placed between the parking area and the sidewalk.

Section 5 Review Requirement

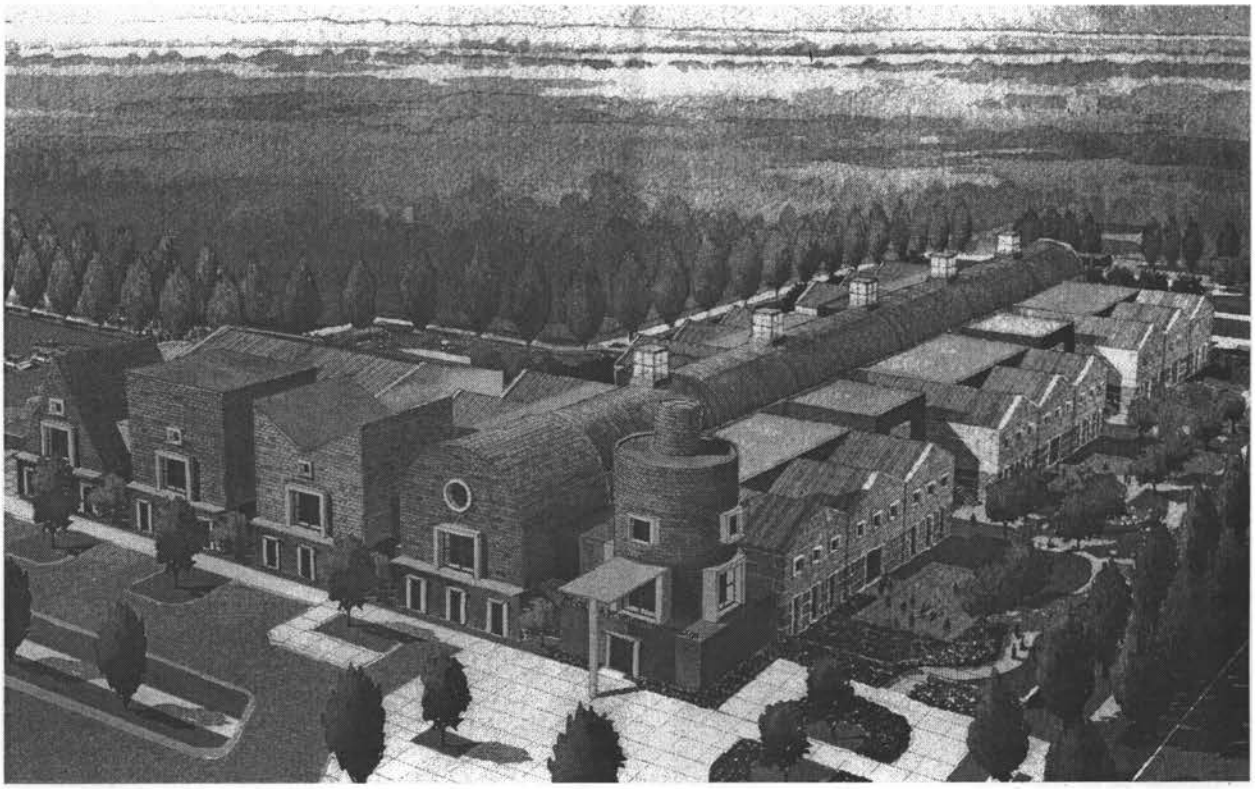
Staff also advises the Commission that the DC Office of Planning is required to submit the master plan for Reservation 13 to NCPC for review under Section 5 of the National Capital Planning Act, and also that the DC Office of Property Management (the lease holder for the Saint Coletta parcel) is required to submit the Saint Coletta project for Section 5 review. Section 5 requires that "To ensure the comprehensive planning and orderly development of the National Capital, a federal or District of Columbia agency, before preparing construction plans the agency originates for proposed developments and projects or before making a commitment to acquire land, to be paid for at least in part from federal of District amounts, shall advise and consult with the Commission as the agency prepares plans and programs in preliminary and successive stages that affect the plan and development of the National Capital."



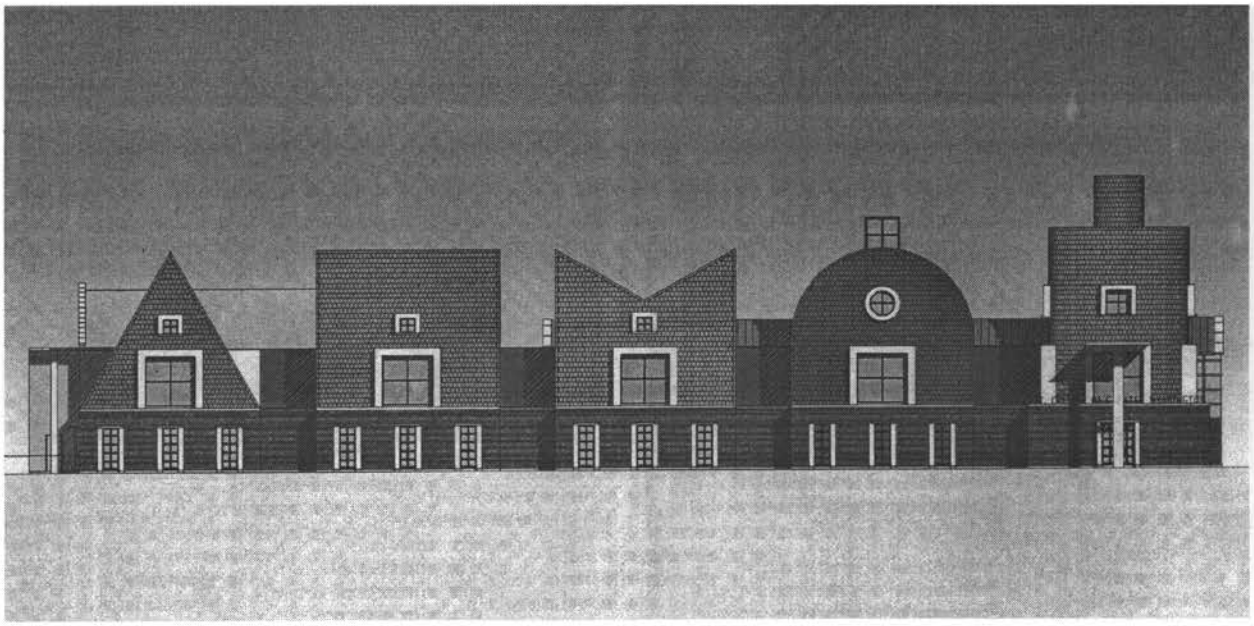
Reservation 13 Master Plan



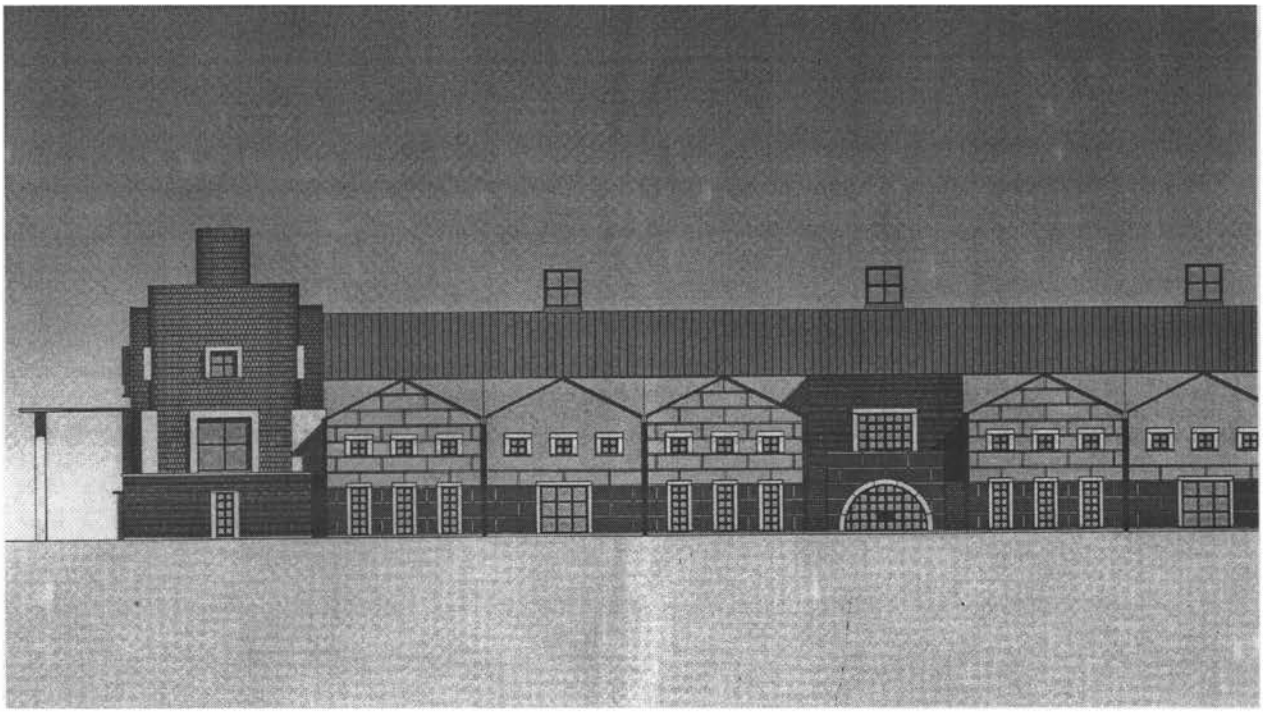
Saint Coletta Site Plan



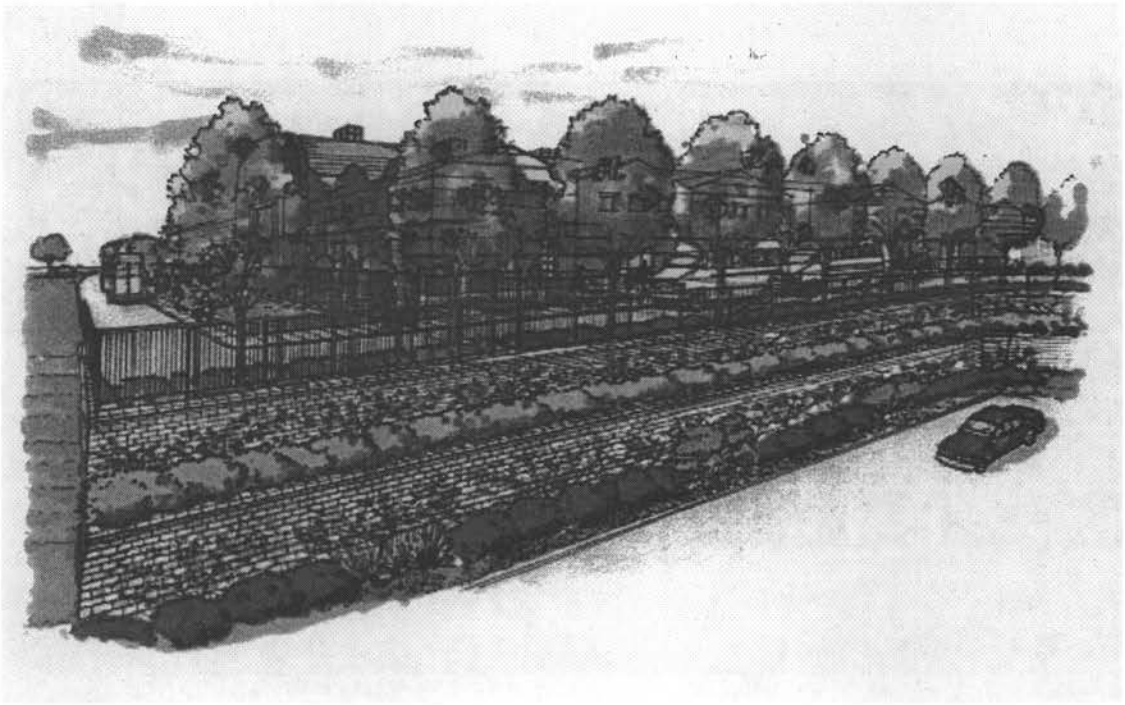
Saint Coletta Perspective from the Northwest



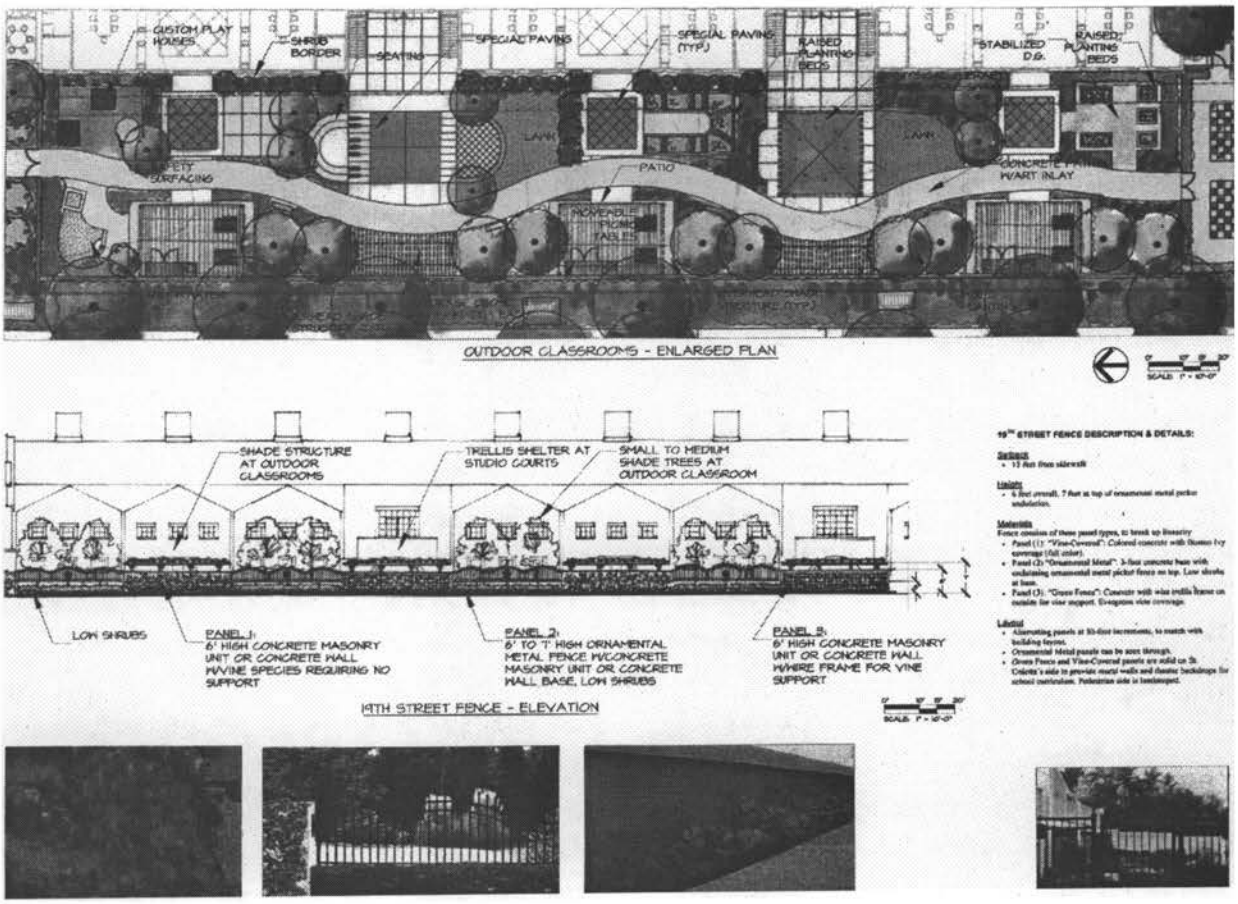
Saint Coletta North Elevation



Saint Coletta West Elevation



View of Retaining Wall from Parking Lot East of School



Details of Wall along 19th Street, SE