GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

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ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-11
EXHIBIT NO. 45

To: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Office of Zoning

From: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

Date: November 23, 2004

Subject: **PUD No. 04-11 - 611 Emerson Street, NW, Lot 811, Square 3788**
Consolidated Planned Unit Development and Map Amendment

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application and attached materials for the subject site. DDOT supports the application with certain conditions that DDOT would like to have added to the zoning decision. This report addresses the transportation impacts of the proposal.

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing concrete manufacturing plant and replace with a new townhouse development and also requests an amendment to the zoning map to rezone the entire site to an R-4 district. The site is bounded by Emerson Street, NE on the north, CSX and Metrorail train tracks on the west by the, 7th Street, NE on the east and on the south by the Thomas Somerville Company. Three underlying zoning districts and one overlay currently exist for the site including general industry (M), commercial-light manufacturing (C-M-1) and residential (R-2), with the M and CM districts also being subject to the Fort Totten Overlay

Directly to the east of the site is a residential neighborhood comprised mostly of semi-detached single-family housing units with a few single-family detached homes interspersed in the community. The community is zoned entirely R-2. The subject site and its neighboring properties immediately to the north and south along the CSX/Metrorail train tracks consist of industrial uses including the DDOT Salt Dome facility and other DDOT support facilities to the north, and the Thomas Somerville Company to the south, a firm in the field of industrial heating, air conditioning and plumbing

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The primary vehicular access to the site is provided by a private drive located off Emerson Street, NE aligned with an existing curb cut. The private drive links to an internal alley network that provides vehicular circulation for the site. Two other access points are proposed via an existing public alley and a private alley, both located by Emerson Street, NE. Parking garages accommodating either one or two automobiles are to be provided at the rear of each housing unit, accessed directly from the alleys.

One of the alley entrances is proposed to be placed adjacent to the DDOT Salt Dome lot, immediately to the north of the project site. This area in the past served as an entry point to the DDOT Salt Dome, however the entrance was recently closed and the access point to the DDOT facility was shifted to Gallatin Street, NE. DDOT will require that the developer obtain approval from DDOT and the District Office of Property Management (OPM) to move the existing security fence to the far western end of the proposed private alley. All costs of fence relocation shall be borne by the developer.

The front entrances of the new housing face internal courts and other landscaped areas. The project proposes new six-foot wide sidewalks throughout the project along the internal drives, and within the main courtyard linked to each housing unit. The sidewalks connect to the community at Emerson Street, NE. The site is near the Fort Totten Metro Station however pedestrian access is limited to a dirt path crossing Fort Totten Park, under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service (NPS), and the distance between the Metro Station Entrance and the project site is approximately 2,000 feet as measured using the pathway and route provided in the application. This pathway is not illuminated nor ADA accessible. A pedestrian using a wheelchair could not use this path and would be forced to use South Dakota Avenue, NE for access to the Metro Station. The applicant has contacted the NPS Superintendent of Rock Creek Park with a proposal to pave the dirt pathway At this time NPS has only agreed to study the proposal.

A traffic impact study was conducted to determine the project's impacts on the transportation network. The study not only included future traffic demand projections for project site, but also two other major proposed residential development projects in the immediate area. Based on the 75 units proposed, the site is projected to generate 20 AM peak-hour trips and 30 PM peak-hour trips and 247 total daily trips. Of concern to DDOT is the intersection of 8th Street and South Dakota Avenue, NE. This un-signalized intersection has significant delays for traffic traveling on 8th Street, NE in both directions. Site-generated traffic should instead be encouraged to use the signalized intersection of South Dakota and Faraday Street, NE to cross or head westbound on South Dakota Avenue as this intersection operates more efficiently.

Upon site visits, DDOT staff observed that a paved vehicular drive exists in the general location of 6th Street, NE, as shown on submitted site plans, and provides vehicular access to the employee parking lot of the Thomas Somerville Company (TSC) located immediately south of the project site. The subject "street" is aligned with the proposed main entry drive of the proposed housing development, but does not extend completely through the project site on the development plans as the southern portion abutting TSC is shown with landscaping. The applicant provided information that identifies the segment of roadway as a "proposed street" on the DC Highway Map (1968). DDOT will require the applicant contact the DC Surveyor's Office for information regarding the street and alley closing process The developer will be required to obtain District government approval to remove that portion of the 6th Street, NE right-of-way proposed for landscaping from the DC Highway Plan.

DDOT supports the findings of the traffic study that concluded the proposed project would not adversely impact the level of service at nearby signalized intersections, and will have a negligible impact on traffic conditions on nearby streets However, the applicant must provide documentation on the following items that are not clear in the application:

1) A determination from the DC Surveyor's Office on the proposed removal of a portion of the 6th Street, NE right-of-way within the project site from the DC Highway Plan; and

2) A resolution on the proposed use of an easement by DDOT and OPM to move the existing fence and provide a curb-cut for access to a private alley near the DDOT Salt Dome property

DDOT has no major objections to the proposal, as the project will not create dangerous or unacceptable traffic conditions. However, the first two items of concern listed above require resolution prior to project approval as they may impact the current site plan and access points proposed Accordingly, DDOT supports the application provided the two issues described above are successfully resolved.

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