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SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: Ellen McCarthy, Director, Office of Planning
DATE: November 28, 2005
SUBJECT: Supplemental Report for Zoning Commission Case # 04-14/01-31TE/98-17F/95-16P
Florida Rock Property, 100 Potomac Ave. SE. (Ward 6, Sq. 707, 708, 708E, 708S)
Application for a Stage II Planned Unit Development and Map Amendment

I. RECOMMENDED ACTION

OP recommends that the Zoning Commission defer action on Zoning Commission Case #04-14, Florida Rock Property Stage II PUD until April, 2006, pending completion of South Capitol Street and Ballpark Area master planning initiatives and incorporation of potential site plan alterations to the Florida Rock site which may result; and resolution of the applicant's amenity package.

II. BACKGROUND

At its July 12, 2005 meeting, the Zoning Commission set down for a public hearing Case # 04-14, Stage II review of redevelopment of the Florida Rock property (FRP) located on the south side of Potomac Avenue SE, between South Capitol and First Streets SE. The 5.8 acre waterfront site is currently occupied by Virginia Concrete, and there is no public access to its 800 linear feet of waterfront. The site slopes down from Potomac Avenue to the bulkhead along the river. The site is within the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative and the Near Southeast Target Area, and within the Buzzard Point / Near Southeast Development Opportunity Area.

The proposed project includes just over 1 million square feet of office, residential, hotel and retail development in three buildings connected by underground parking, all within Squares 707, 708, 708E, 708S. Square 664E, which was included in past versions of applications for this site, is no longer part of the application. Retail development will line the streets, and the waterfront is proposed to be landscaped as a promenade and bike trail, part of the Anacostia Riverwalk system.

A more comprehensive review of the application, the planning history for this site, and OP analysis is provided in the attached OP reports for setdown, dated July 2, 2004 and September 3, 2004.

III. CURRENT PROPOSAL

The overall form of development, as described in the Applicant's November 18, 2005 Supplemental to the Pre-Hearing statement (dated May 3, 2005), has not changed significantly from that which was proposed as part of the original application. Minor changes include:

- Improvements to the location and functioning of loading and parking access from Potomac Avenue SW – OP is supporting of these changes in concept.
- Alternatives for the design of the west building, as it relates to various potential configurations of a new form of intersection at Potomac Avenue and South Capitol Street.
- The two changes noted above result in opportunities for some ground floor changes which may increase the amount and location of retail space.
- A correction to the FAR calculation, to increase the residential floor area by just over 14,000 square feet. The revised amount is still within that permitted under Stage 1 approval.
- Removal of a significant amenity item, the landscaping and maintenance of Reservation 247, as this site is now part of the Ballpark site. The applicant has committed to providing an open space amenity with a monetary amount equivalent to that proffered for Res. 247, but the submission does not describe an alternative for this amenity item. OP concurs that resolution of this issue is dependant on additional discussion and planning for the overall area.
- Additional resolution of the affordable housing component, which would consist of 9,600 square feet of residential area (equivalent to 15% of the bonus residential density), available as “workforce” housing at 80 – 120% AMI.

IV. OP ANALYSIS

OP remains supportive of the overall design intent for the site, and supportive of the densities and heights approved as part of Stage 1 review and as proposed in the current submission. However, as noted by the applicant, there are significant issues which are unresolved, but for which greater resolution is expected in the near future. These include resolution of the nature of improvements to the South Capitol Street corridor by DDOT; the nature of improvements and alterations to Potomac Avenue SE and First Street SE; the nature of public open space along this section of the Anacostia waterfront; and the nature of other development within the general area. These outstanding issues may impact the design of the project, as well as the nature and scope of the amenity package.

DDOT has advised OP that they have not had an opportunity to review the most recent plans in detail. Decisions regarding property acquisition for the South Capitol Street corridor are imminent, so additional detail and certainty will be available over the next few months.

With regards to ballpark and area development, a submission for review of the ballpark design by the DC Sports and Entertainment Commission (DCSEC) is also eminent, and a Commission hearing to consider the design is anticipated early in 2006. The form and character of the ballpark structure, the location of retail within that structure, and the design of surrounding plazas and landscaping may impact use allocation and site planning on the FRP site.

OP has also been advised by the Anacostia Waterfront Corporation (AWC) that a Request for Expressions of Interest (“RFEI”) for Ballpark-Related Development was issued on September 16, 2005. The evaluation committee is expected to make a final recommendation of one or more developer teams, who will be able to negotiate development rights for land assets the AWC may acquire in the Ballpark District, for presentation to the AWC president and AWC Board in

December. This is expected to initiate a 90-day master planning process for the ballpark district (i.e. March, 2006 completion).

In addition, AWC anticipates that the draft Ballpark District Development Strategy Summary (posted on the AWC website September 23rd, 2005) and a draft South Capitol Street Plan will also be presented to the AWC Board in December. Following community review, submission of a final plan for AWC board approval is anticipated at either the February or March Board Meeting.

For these reasons, OP feels that by mid April 2006, the information needed to more fully assess this proposal against important broader planning initiatives will be available, with opportunity for the applicant and OP to assess potential impacts and opportunities for the FRP site.

V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

While OP remains supportive of the applicant's overall development program, including the proposed heights, densities, and use mix, the nature and extent of outstanding issues and planning initiatives which directly and indirectly impact development on this property are significant. In particular, decisions regarding the layout of South Capitol Street and how it will meet Potomac Avenue and the proposed new Frederick Douglass Bridge (and the resulting impacts on size and configuration of the FRP site as well as off-site grading); the nature of development on surrounding properties; and the nature of the applicant's amenity package remain outstanding. As such, OP recommends that the Commission either postpone this public hearing, or conduct a public hearing but not close it to allow an opportunity for discussion of a more refined and certain proposal in the spring of 2006. To date, the applicant has been responsive to the changing nature of this part of the District, and discussions between the applicant, OP, AWC, and DDOT are ongoing. However, to permit greater certainty through the completion of the necessary planning work currently underway, a delay to allow the Commission to review a more finalized and resolved proposal is recommended.

EM/jl

Attachments:

1. OP setback report, dated July 2, 2004.
2. OP supplemental setback report, dated September 3, 2004.