

TORTI GALLAS AND PARTNERS · CHK

Architects of Community

September 7, 2004

Ms. Ellen McCarthy
Ms. Toni Griffin
Government of the District of Columbia
Office of Planning
801 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Re: Office of Planning Proposed Mount Vernon District
5th and K

Dear Ellen and Toni,

In reviewing the draft of the above mentioned document provided us, we offer the following analysis of the proposed Mount Vernon District as it relates to our competition design and resubmission design of the 5th and K project. Excerpts from the preliminary report are in italics.

Office of Planning Preliminary Report.
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Paragraph one: refers to large tract review for Square 515.

The proposed district, other than Square 515, is in the Central Employment Area. As such, Square 515 remains subject to Large Tract Review, if applicable based on the size of the project.

5th & K is located on Square 515, and we do not anticipate going through Large Tract Review, as the land is owned by the city.

Paragraph 3, number 1:

A minimum ground floor height is established that ensures 14-foot high clear space for a depth of at least thirty-six feet back from the building line.. that within the clear space there shall be no elements of building structure other than columns and no components of mechanical electrical or plumbing system..

This is problematic. As designed in the competition and later resubmission, our building has a 15'-0" floor to floor height from the ground floor to the mezzanine. With any dropped ceiling, for plumbing from above or HVAC and lighting for the ground floor space we would not be able to comply with this requirement. There will very likely be space above the ground floor within 35 ft of the perimeter that will have plumbing fixtures.

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Paragraph one:

OP contracted for a design and massing study for this, the intersection within the context of the district...and its recommendations are in the proposed zoning text...OP expects to provide a summary of the study to the Commission ..

This size and orientation of the corner space as shown in the OP study differs from both our competition design and resubmission design in both orientation and size.

Last paragraph:

Principals

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Require that, for new or substantially rehabilitated buildings in Squares 483, 484 and 515 (this is us). . there be double-height spaces in the half of the 72 foot by 72 foot zone that is nearest the corner.

Both our competition design and our resubmission design do not contain any double height space in this area

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Last paragraph:

Driveways prohibited on. Both sides of K Street between 4th and 7th Streets, NW; other than anew driveway in Square 515 (Wax Museum) aligning with the existing north-south public alley in Square 516.

Our new private alley will not align exactly with the one across the street. Additionally, the Museum Square project also has an existing curb cut on K Street.

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The 4th paragraph:

.. The ground floor shall measure at least 14 feet clear to the underside of the next floor's structure for a depth of 18 feet from the building line. Beyond the 18-foot depth, the ground floor shall measure at least 12 feet clear to the underside of the next floor's structure.

This alternate measurement is better, but we would still not be in compliance.

Mount Vernon Triangle District: Proposed Text

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Number (c):

..ground floors shall measure at least 14 feet clear, as clear height is defined in 170x 99 (a)...

Again, the ceiling height requirement is problematic

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Paragraph one:

...it would still permit 11 additional office floors measuring 10 38 feet from the floor of an office to the finished floor of the next slab (i e, assuming a 1 foot dropped ceiling.

A one foot dropped ceiling is not sufficient for plumbing drops from above and HVAC and lighting for the ground floor space.

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Diagram:

The 36' x 36' squares indicated in the attached diagram differ from our competition design and resubmission design.

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Number (c):

. Each "A" sub area shall have a ground floor height of at least 22' clear,

Both our competition design and our resubmission design do not contain any double height space in this area

Number (d):



For all four corners, there shall be no direct lobby entrances within 72 feet of the corner of 5th and K.

The secondary entry to Safeway, as well as retail parking and mezza nine retail, is close to the 72' exclusion area

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Number (e) and sub-number (ii):

not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the surface area of the street wall(s) at the ground floor of each building subject to the provisions of 1706.9C, to a height of at least twenty-two feet (22 feet) shall be devoted to display windows and to entrances to commercial uses or to the building provided:...(ii) At least seventy-five percent (75%) of the surface area . shall be clear or clear/low-emissivity glass ..

We may require grilles and/or louvers in the upper zone of the storefront to accommodate supply air requirements for the retail space.

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Number (b):

If the building contains residential space, the court covering must either be LEED-compliant and/or provide more recreation space than is otherwise required under the zoning regulations...

This is technically incorrect A *building* is LEED certified by USGBC, not *components* of a building A roofing product can achieve points that contribute to achieving LEED certification, and this only happens when a *building* successfully completes the LEED certification process.

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Number (iii):

. . it shall align with the north-south public alley in Square 516 existing on the effective date of these regulations;

Again, our proposed new private alley does not align with the existing alley on the south side of K street and there is already a curb cut at the existing Museum Square building.

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Number (a):

. there shall be no more than two driveways per block-face and such driveways shall be separated by no less than sixty (60) feet.

Same problem as above. Also, we do not meet the 60 ft separation, our alley is approximately 20 ft away from the existing Museum Square curb cut. On 9/3/04 we have had a preliminary meeting with Mr. Bah of DCDOT for a preliminary review of our private alleys and curb cuts and he agreed conceptually that they looked acceptable

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170x.11:

If all or a portion of a parking lot, parking garage, or parking spaces at-or-above-grade is otherwise permitted within a building in the MVT District, the requirements of 170x.8 shall apply

Will this exclude temporary parking and staging during construction?



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170x.23-

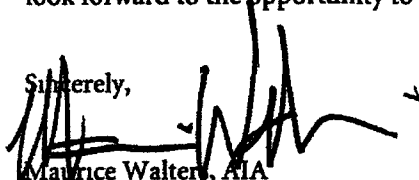
The permitted uses do not mention apartment and condominium lobbies. We also need exit stair discharge, as well as lobbies and secondary entries for below grade parking, mezzanine retail space and a grocery store. We are currently approximately 90 feet from the corner with the condo lobby.

Plan Diagram of 5th and K corner at back:

Again, the quantity and orientation of open space differs from our competition design and resubmission design.

We have done some preliminary studies of the re-orientation of the space on the corner of 5th and K, and it looks like we may be able to work with the recommendation on re-orientation of the space. Dimensionally, the space would be approximately 60 ft wide x 28 ft deep with some cantilevered overhang at approximately 30 ft. in the air. Please note the dimensions of the space we are proposing are generally consistent with our competition and resubmission designs. We look forward to the opportunity to share our schematic designs with the Office of Planning.

Sincerely,



Maurice Walters, AIA
Principal
Torti Gallas and Partners

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