GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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Office of the Director

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# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

**FROM:** JLS for
Ellen M. McCarthy
Interim Director

**DATE:** March 28, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Case No. **04-25:** Final Report for Map Amendment, Campus Plan Amendment and Further Processing for The Catholic University of America Campus Plan, 2002 Campus Master Plan for West Campus, 620 Michigan Avenue, N.E.

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## BACKGROUND

The Catholic University of America (CUA) seeks approval of:

- A Zoning Map Amendment from Unzoned to R-5-A for Parcel 121/29 of Square 3663;
- A Campus Plan Amendment to add Parcel 121/29 of Square 3663 to the Campus; and
- Further processing for development of the new parcel for university uses.

The map amendment was set down by the Commission on December 13, 2004. This report contains the Office of Planning analysis for the map amendment, campus plan amendment and the further processing request.

The map amendment is required because the site is currently unzoned. The campus plan amendment is required because the subject property is not currently included within the approved Campus Plan. The further processing is required to approve the proposed site plan for the property.

The application proposes the following uses and improvements on the parcel:

- A pavilion for outdoor performances;
- An unpaved cross-country track;
- An environmental research area;
- Two areas of spiritual repose;
- A Maintenance Truck and material storage structure; and
- Temporary housing units with approximately 50-60 beds.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-25
EXHIBIT NO. 15

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The subject property is a 49-acre parcel that is located west of the university, across Harewood Road, N.E. It is also known as the "West Campus."

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**
The Office of Planning recommends that the subject application be approved, subject to the conditions contained at the end of this report.

**BACKGROUND**
The Catholic University of America has acquired a 49-acre parcel to the west of the main campus. This parcel was formerly owned by the U.S. Government, under the control of the U.S. Soldier's and Airmen's Home, and is unzoned.

To the north of the subject property is the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center. To the east, across Harewood Road, is the main campus of Catholic University and the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. To the south is an accessory parking lot for the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. To the southwest is the Irving Street/ North Capitol Street interchange, and to the west, across North Capitol Street, is the main campus of the Soldiers' and Airmens' Home. With the exception of the Soldiers' and Airmens' Home, which is unzoned, and the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, which is zoned SP-1, all surrounding properties are located within the R-5-A Zone District.

The subject property is largely wooded and improved with several structures, including two single-family detached dwellings and various accessory buildings. The topography is varied. A private road, Scale Gate Road, traverses the northern portion of the property from Harewood Road to North Capitol Street.

Zoning Commission Order No. 02-20 approved the current Catholic University Campus Plan on May 23, 2003 with the following conditions:

1. *The approval of the Campus Plan shall be until May 22, 2012.*
2. *The approved Campus Plan boundaries shall be as set forth in the 2002 Plan. There shall be no change to the Campus Plan boundaries approved in connection with the 1992 Plan.*
3. *The maximum enrollment shall be 7,500 full-time equivalent (FTE) students based on the fall enrollment numbers. The full-time equivalent student enrollment shall be calculated as follows:*
    *(a) Undergraduate student FTE: the total number of semester credit hours awarded to undergraduate students divided by 15 semester hours.*
    *(b) Graduate student FTE: the total number of semester credit hours awarded to graduate students divided by 9 semester hours.*

*(c) Total FTE: the sum of the undergraduate and graduate student FTEs.*

4. *The number of faculty and staff shall not exceed 1,710 during the 10-year period of the Plan. A maximum of 2,340 parking spaces shall be provided on campus over the 10-year period of the Plan.*
5. *A maximum density of 0.44 FAR or a gross floor area of 2,729,175 square feet shall be permitted by the year 2012.*
6. *The areas of the South Campus where buildings may be demolished shall be graded and landscaped in a professional manner in a park-like setting (e.g., seeded) within six months of demolition of any or all buildings.*
7. *One hundred percent of the traditional, full-time undergraduate, non-commuter freshmen and sophomores are required to live on campus.*
8. *CUA shall provide a yearly report to the Zoning Commission documenting enrollment numbers, the number of beds available, and the numbers of beds utilized by undergraduates and graduates.*
9. *CUA must submit to the HPO and the Zoning Commission a historic preservation element to the Campus Plan within one year of the effective date of this Order. Until the element is submitted to the Commission, CUA will not demolish any structures other than Salve Regina and St. Bonaventure Halls.*

One other further processing under the 2002-2012 Campus Plan was approved by Zoning Commission Order No. 04-10 to allow for the continued use of temporary housing on the campus until 2009.

**REQUEST**

The applicant proposes to increase the boundaries of the campus by adding Parcel 121/29 of Square 3663, a 49-acre parcel located on the west side of Harewood Road, across from the Main Campus. The boundary change requires a modification to Condition No. 2. The following uses and structures are proposed for the new parcel:

- A pavilion for outdoor performances with lawn seating in a terraced field;
- An unpaved cross-country track;
- An environmental research area;
- Two areas of spiritual repose;
- A maintenance truck and material storage structure; and
- Temporary housing units for 50-60 beds for the 2005-2006 school year.

There are no proposed changes in enrollment, personnel or faculty associated with this campus plan amendment. However, it will:

- Expand the campus boundaries beyond those approved by the current Campus Plan; and
- Increase the total building square footage permitted through the enlargement of the acreage of the Campus.

**Building Development**

The West Campus will add 6,500 square feet of existing gross floor area (GFA) through the addition of the existing South Gatehouse (4,800 sf) and North Gatehouse (1,700 sf). The existing sheds, totaling approximately 1,100 square feet, are proposed to be demolished. The proposed pavilion will add 800 square feet of gross floor area, the 6 temporary housing units will add 9,600 square feet of GFA and the Maintenance Truck and Material Storage Structure will add 3,200 square feet of GFA. This brings the total proposed building gross floor area for the entire campus to 2,748,265 square feet, an increase of 19,090 square feet. Despite this, the addition of 49 acres to the campus results in a net decrease in FAR from 0.36 to 0.33, less than the maximum permitted FAR of 0.44 permitted by the 2002 Campus Plan by the year 2012. As a result, Catholic University will remain in conformance with the Campus Plan for total FAR.

The temporary housing is intended for the 2005-2006 school year only. Catholic University is anticipating increased demand for on-campus housing for the coming year and may also require the use of temporary dorm space during the fall of 2005 while Gibbons Hall is undergoing renovation.

The addition of the West Campus will increase the total maximum building square footage for Catholic University to 2,748,265, in excess of the maximum gross floor area stipulated in Condition No. 6 of the approved Campus Plan. However, no increase in FAR is proposed because of the increase in the acreage of the Campus. Therefore, although the total amount of GFA permitted will increase, the maximum will FAR permitted will remain unchanged, in conformance with the density approved in the 2002 Campus Plan.

**Parking and Circulation**

Additional parking and circulation provided on the West Campus will be for service vehicles only. The temporary housing, pavilion, event field and areas of spiritual repose will be accessed mainly by pedestrian and bicycle paths. The Truck and Material Storage Yard will be accessed from the existing private road along the northern boundary of the West Campus (Scale Gate Road). Total campus parking for faculty, personnel and students will remain unchanged and continue to be in conformance with the maximum of 2,340 permitted under Condition No. 5 of the 2002 Campus Plan.

The proposed facilities are for university use only and will not be available to the general public. As a result no additional parking is necessary to serve these facilities because no increase in students, faculty or personnel is proposed.

**Landscaping and Open Space**

The vast majority of the West Campus will remain wooded open space.

**ZONING**

This application proposes the rezoning of the subject property to the R-5-A Zone District, "*low density general residence district*". (§ 105.1(a)(5)(A))

> "*The R-5 Districts are General Residence Districts designed to permit flexibility of design by permitting in a single district, except as provided in §§ 350 through 361, all types of urban residential development if they conform to the height, density, and area requirements established for these districts under chapter 4 of this title. The R-5 Districts shall also permit the construction of those institutional and semi-public buildings that would be compatible with adjoining residential uses and that are excluded from the more restrictive Residence Districts.*" (§ 350.1)

The R-5-A Zone District is a low and moderate density general residential zone and is an appropriate zone for university uses. Universities are a use permitted by special exception only within the R-5-A, subject to approval of a campus plan by the Zoning Commission.

The Main Campus and the North Campus are currently located within the R-5-A Zone District. The South Campus contains a mixture of R-4, R-5-A, C-1, and C-M-1 Zone Districts. Land to the north of the proposed West Campus is located within the SP-1 Zone District and land to the south is located within the R-5-A. Unzoned federal land is located to the west.

The R-5-A Zone District also permits single-family detached and semi-detached dwellings as a matter of right. With Board of Zoning Adjustment approval, low-density development of general residential uses, including row houses, flats, and apartments to a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.9 and a maximum height of 40 feet and 3 stories, may be permitted. The R-5-A Zone District is generally mapped in moderate density residential areas as identified on the Comprehensive Plan General Land Use Map.

**ZONING REGULATIONS**

Section 210 of the Zoning Regulations, Colleges and Universities, sets forth the criteria required for approval of university uses within residential zone districts.

210.1 *Use as a college or university that is an academic institution of higher learning, including a college or university hospital, dormitory, fraternity, or sorority house proposed to be located on the campus of a college or university, shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-1 District if approved by the Zoning Commission under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.*

The application proposes to extend the R-5-A Zone District to the West Campus for university uses, consistent with the zoning of much of the surrounding area, including the

zoning of the Main Campus and the North Campus. The West Campus is located adjacent to the existing Main Campus, on the west side of Harewood Road.

210.2 *Use as a college or university shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other objectionable conditions.*

The use of the West Campus as a part of Catholic University's campus is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions. The addition of the West Campus will result in no increase in the number of students or faculty and the only vehicular access will be for maintenance vehicles via the existing private road. Access to the site will be primarily by foot. In combination with the low intensity uses proposed for the site, the separation of the site from most of the adjoining properties by roads and the buffering of adjoining properties by existing woodlands, neighboring properties will not be adversely affected by noise or objectionable conditions.

210.3 *In R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5-A, and R-5-B Districts, the maximum bulk requirements normally applicable in the districts may be increased for specific buildings or structures; provided, that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-B District. In all other Residence Districts, similar bulk increases may also be permitted; provided, that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-D District. Because of permissive increases as applicable to normal bulk requirements in the low-density districts regulated by this title, it is the intent of this subsection to prevent unreasonable campus expansion into improved low-density districts.*

The subject application proposes no increase in the maximum bulk requirements permitted by the 2002 Campus Plan. The minimal amount of gross floor area proposed for the West Campus is consistent with the maximum FAR of 0.44 permitted by the Campus Plan by the year 2012. However, because the total acreage of the site will increase by 49 acres, the total gross floor area that could be supported by an FAR of 0.44 will increase by 19,090 square feet. Despite this, the permitted FAR for the entire campus, including the West Campus, will remain constant and will not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-D District.

210.4 *As a prerequisite to requesting a special exception for each college or university use, the applicant shall have submitted to the Commission for its approval a plan for developing the campus as a whole, showing the location, height, and bulk, where appropriate, of all present and proposed improvements, including but not limited to the following:*

*(a) Buildings and parking and loading facilities;*

*(b) Screening, signs, streets, and public utility facilities;*

*(c) Athletic and other recreational facilities; and*

*(d) A description of all activities conducted or to be conducted on the campus, and of the capacity of all present and proposed campus development.*

The subject application includes a plan for all present and proposed improvements. Proposed improvements are discussed above under "Building Development" on Page 4.

210.5 *Within a reasonable distance of the college or university campus, and subject to compliance with § 210.2, the Commission may also permit the interim use of land or improved property with any use that the Commission may determine is a proper college or university function.*

The subject application does not propose interim use of land located off-campus.

210.6 *When a major new building that has been proposed in a campus plan is instead moved off-campus, the previously designated site shall not be designated for, or devoted to, a different major new building unless the Commission has approved an amendment to the campus plan applicable to the site; provided, that for this purpose a major new building is defined as one specifically identified in the campus plan.*

No major new buildings are proposed to be moved off-campus as a result of this application.

210.7 *In reviewing and deciding a campus plan application or new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the Commission shall consider, to the extent they are relevant, the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.*

District Elements relevant to the subject application are discussed below within the Comprehensive Plan section of this report.

210.8 *As an integral past of the application requesting approval of new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the college or university shall certify and document that the proposed building or amendment is within the floor area ratio (FAR) limit for the campus as a whole, based upon the computation included in the most recently approved campus plan and the FARs of any other buildings constructed or demolished since the campus plan was approved.*

The subject application contains documentation of the existing and proposed FARs for the campus as a whole, including the proposed West Campus. The proposed FAR is

0.33, less than the maximum 0.44 permitted by the 2002 Campus Plan by the year 2012, and the 0.9 permitted by the R-5-A Zone District and the 1.8 permitted by § 210.3.

210.9 *Before taking final action on an application for use as a college or university, the Commission shall submit the application to the D.C. Office of Planning and the D.C. Department of Transportation for review and written reports.*

The subject application was referred to the Office of Planning and the Department of Transportation for review and written reports. No response was received from the Department of Transportation.

The subject application is in conformance with the provisions of the § 210, provided the applicant addresses the issue regarding how long the temporary housing will be use and for whom it is intended to house.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The subject application will contribute toward achieving many of the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, as documented below.

Major themes within the Comprehensive Plan relevant to this development are:

1. Stabilizing and improving the District's neighborhoods;
   - ◊ CUA's housing policies can directly impact the stability of surrounding neighborhoods through provision of adequate on-campus housing and pro-actively encouraging neighborly behavior among off-campus students housed in adjoining residential neighborhoods. By providing additional temporary housing on the West Campus, CUA continues its goals to supply adequate on-campus housing for its students.
2. Preserving and Promoting Cultural and Natural Amenities;
   - ◊ CUA provides opportunities for the arts through its educational programs and sponsorship of concerts, performances and exhibits. The new pavilion and outdoor amphitheater will provide a new venue for summertime cultural performances.
   - ◊ The addition of the West Campus provides the campus with greater open space and landscaped areas and the proposed uses of the West Campus are respectful of this natural resource.
3. Preserving the historic character of the District;
   - ◊ A major new element of the 2002 Campus Plan was the inclusion of a Historic Resources Element and a new inventory of historic resources on the Campus. CUA should provide an addendum to that element that documents and evaluates historic resources on the new property.

The subject application will further the following provision and action of the Ward 5 Plan.

> *"...The National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, located in the Brookland/CUA area, also attracts many tourists each year. The Franciscan Monastery and Catholic University of America also reinforce the historic and visual image of the ward and city".* (§ 1619.2)

The development of the Historic Preservation Element of the Campus Plan will further this provision.

> *"Determine the appropriate mix of uses, scale, density and design of development in the Brookland/CUA Metrorail area to protect the surrounding residential areas from potential adverse impacts such as commuter traffic and parking:"* (§ 1630.1(c))

The proposed uses on the West Campus will not adversely impact surrounding residential areas. The density proposed is the same as that which was approved for the rest of the campus and the application proposes no increase in students or faculty.

The subject property has bends identified on the Generalized Land Use Map as being located split between two land use designations. The area of the subject property to the north of Scale Gate Road is recommend for the "institutional" land use category, which is described as follows:

> *"Land and facilities occupied by colleges, universities, hospitals, religious institutions and similar facilities are the predominant uses."*

The area of the site south of Scale Gate Road is recommended for the "federal" land use category on the Generalized Land Use Map, which is described as follows:

> *"Land and facilities occupied by the federal government, excluding parks and open space, are the predominant uses; also includes the International Center. For a more specific identification of federal facilities, see the Federal Facilities Element."*

Surrounding land use designations include institutional to the north and east, and federal to the west and south.

The federal government no longer occupies the subject property, with the result that the existing land use recommendation for the majority of the property is no longer appropriate. However, a portion of the site is recommended for the institutional land use category, consistent with this application and university use. Therefore, use of the entire parcel for the West Campus, which is consistent with the institutional land use designation of the northern portion of the site, is appropriate.

**AGENCY COMMENTS**
The following District government agencies commented on the subject application:

1. The **Fire and Emergency Medical Emergency Medical Services Department** "*has no objection to this request, provided that the proposed development has acceptable Fire Department access.*"
2. The **Department of Health** "*expects them to comply with the District's Environmental Laws as well as federal NPDES Regulations related to MS-4 Permits for construction activities involving an acre or more of land disturbance.*"

Comments were also solicited from the District Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Board of Education and the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. However, none were received.

**COMMUNITY COMMENTS**
The Office of Planning received the following from **ANC 5C**:

> *"At its monthly meeting on March 15, 2005, ANC 5C voted unanimously to approve the low intensity use that The Catholic University of America plans for its west campus".*

Comments were solicited from **ANC 5A**; however, none were received.

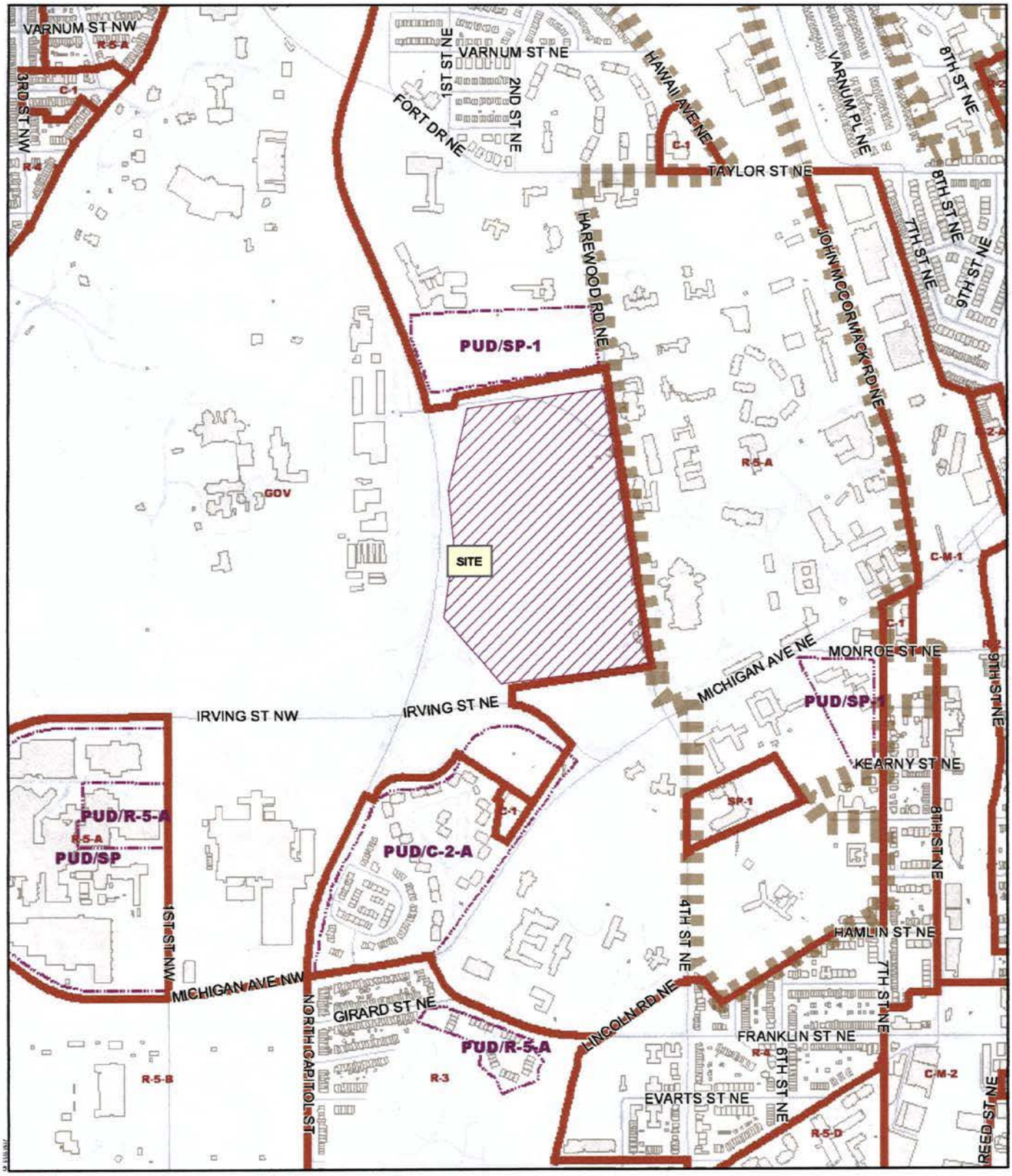
**RECOMMENDATION**
The Office of Planning recommends that the Campus Plan be extended onto the subject property. It is adjacent to the existing campus and its extension onto it is therefore logical. The Office of Planning also recommends approval of the request for further processing to permit the proposed uses on the plan as they are in conformance with the bulk requirements of the approved 2002 Plan and are low intensity in use, minimizing the effect the use of the West Campus will have on the surrounding neighborhood. Finally, the Office of Planning recommends approval of the requested map amendment to locate the subject property within the R-5-A Zone District, consistent with the zoning on the existing campus and consistent with the provision of the R-5-A Zone.

The Office of Planning recommends that the application be **APPROVED** as submitted by the applicant, subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall incorporate an evaluation of the historic resources on the new property into its current historic resources inventory that was developed as part of the last campus plan.

2. The conditions of the Z.C Case 02-20, the approval of the 2002 Campus Plan remain in force, with the exception of Conditions No. 2 and 5.
3. Condition No. 2 of the 2002 Campus Plan shall be amended as set forth by this application to include Parcel 121/29 in Square 3663.
4. Condition No. 6 of the 2002 Campus Plan shall be amended to permit a maximum gross floor area of 2,748,265 square feet by the year 2012.
5. The proposed 50 to 60 beds of temporary housing are removed at the conclusion of the 2005-2006 school year.

EMMc/sjm$_{AICP}$




★ ★ ★ Government of the
District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

Office of Planning ~ November 17, 2004

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.

# Zoning Map
# CUA West Campus

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