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Office of the Director

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 05-08
EXHIBIT NO. 26

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SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

DATE: September 02, 2005

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Ellen McCarthy, Director OP

SUBJECT: Supplemental Report for Zoning Commission Case No. 05-08
Capital Gateway Overlay District Text Amendment, Squares 702-706 & Res. 247

I. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: Office of Planning

Location: Squares 702, 703, 704, 705, and 706 and Reservation 247, located between South Capitol Street SE and 1st Street SE, and N Street SE and Potomac Place SE

Ward 6, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D

Proposal: A text amendment to the Capitol Gateway (CG) Overlay Zone

II. BACKGROUND

On June 2, 2005, the Zoning Commission held a public hearing for a proposal to amend zoning regulations and to establish a process by which the Zoning Commission and the public could review the siting and building design for the proposed new Ballpark. On July 11, 2005, the Commission took proposed action, but requested additional information from the Office of Planning respecting the proposed retail requirement (Sections 1614 & 1615). This report provides additional information.

In summary, the Office of Planning is not recommending any changes from the text as discussed at proposed action, but is not opposed to amending §1615 to limit the amount of relief from the retail requirements of §1614 to 50%, as advertised in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

III. ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

The text amendment as proposed by OP would require the provision of retail space equal to 20% of the total perimeter of the ballpark (§1604), and set standards for the provision of this space OP did not propose restrictions on the location of this space, to allow the retail space to be located where it is deemed most viable and able to contribute towards streetscape vitality OP also proposed a special exception process for relief from this required, subject to the applicant showing that the ballpark would continue to meet the goals and objectives of the text amendment in terms of streetscape and neighborhood character

Commission members questioned whether there should be a limit on the maximum amount of relief from required retail (Section 1605 15), possibly 50%. The Commission chose to include this limit in the advertised text, being more restrictive than not including it, and requested additional information from OP prior to final action.

Essentially, stadiums can be designed to be part of an urban fabric, or to be separate from the urban fabric. DC has examples of both types· Fedex Field for the Washington Redskins and the existing RFK

Stadium are "stand-alone" facilities with extensive surface parking lots Neither significantly contributes to the vitality of surrounding neighborhoods The MCI center is located in downtown Washington, and has helped to foster and support the liveliness and growth of the surrounding area.

Many other communities, such as ones in Baltimore, San Francisco, Denver, and San Diego have used recently constructed ballparks (all of which were designed by HOK, designers of the new DC ballpark along) to spur on the transformation of formerly desolate surrounding areas into more vibrant mixed-use areas with new retail, residential, and office development opportunities. In turn, this new development helps to activate the ballpark site and makes going to a game more of an all around experience, providing shopping, eating, and recreation opportunities before and after games.

As an example, in San Diego, the construction of the new Petco Park drove redevelopment of a formerly blighted warehouse area, the East Village District, into an exciting mixed-use neighborhood New retail in the area is being developed to serve not just Ballpark patrons, but to also serve as neighborhood and destination retail as well, to ensure its economic viability throughout the year.

The site for the new ballpark for the Washington Nationals was chosen, in part, to stimulate the redevelopment of the immediate industrial area Ground level retail is considered an important part of that program Much of this retail will be located off-site as part of other new developments However, the provision of retail at appropriate amounts and in appropriate locations around the stadium is vital to the creation of active streetscapes and a sense of continuity in the retail experience, to serve ballpark patrons, area residents, and other visitors alike.

As such, OP proposed the retail space requirement for the ballpark site OP has no concerns with the Zoning Commission limiting the amount of relief from this requirement that could be provided through special exception to 50% of the total required. In essence, 20% of the ballpark building's exterior perimeter frontage would be devoted to retail, as per §1614; and the Zoning Commission would be able to permit a reduction in this amount to 10% of the ballpark building's exterior perimeter frontage, following review against the objectives and guidelines of the overlay.

OP will continue to work with the ballpark design team to ensure that as much retail and other active use space along the streets will be provided.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The National Capital Planning Commission comments submitted with respect to this proposal are generally favorable, noting that, in itself, it would not adversely affect identified federal interests. NCPC made a number of additional recommendations, most of which OP considers adequately addressed by the text amendment as currently proposed or by the mandatory NCPC review of the Ballpark design As such, OP is not recommending any changes to the proposed text in response.

OP is not aware of any additional written comments submitted in response to the Notice of Proposed Action for this case

V. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends that this proposal to amend the Capitol Gateway Overlay text be adopted This text amendment would provide for a ballpark within the specified Ballpark Site, but would provide direction to the design team as well as an opportunity for Zoning Commission review and comment on its design. This is in keeping with District policy and recent planning initiatives for the area and for the District and region as a whole

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