

# TILDEN STREET HOMES



APPLICATION TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ZONING COMMISSION FOR  
CONSOLIDATED REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A PLANNED UNIT  
DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

Tilden 800 LLC

JULY 27, 2005

ZONING COMMISSION  
CASE No. 05-26  
EXHIBIT No. 4

ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.05-26  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                   | Page |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Exhibits .....                                                    | i    |
| Preface.....                                                      | ii   |
| <br>                                                              |      |
| I. INTRODUCTION .....                                             | 1    |
| A. Summary of Requested Action .....                              | 1    |
| B. The Applicant.....                                             | 2    |
| C. Project Goals and Objectives .....                             | 3    |
| D. Development Timetable.....                                     | 3    |
| E. Appropriateness of the PUD process .....                       | 3    |
| <br>                                                              |      |
| II. THE PROPOSED PROJECT .....                                    | 4    |
| A. Site Location and Description.....                             | 4    |
| B. Project Description.....                                       | 6    |
| C. Development Parameters Under Existing and Proposed Zoning..... | 8    |
| D. Flexibility Under PUD .....                                    | 8    |
| E. Tabulation of Development Data.....                            | 9    |
| <br>                                                              |      |
| III. PLANNING ANALYSIS .....                                      | 9    |
| A. Land Use Impact .....                                          | 9    |
| B. Zoning Impact.....                                             | 10   |
| C. Environmental Impact.....                                      | 10   |
| D. Facilities Impact.....                                         | 10   |
| <br>                                                              |      |
| IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS .....                                  | 10   |
| A. Water Demand .....                                             | 10   |
| B. Sanitary Sewer Demand.....                                     | 11   |
| C. Storm Water Management .....                                   | 11   |
| D. Solid Waste Services.....                                      | 11   |
| E. Electrical Service .....                                       | 11   |
| F. Energy Conservation.....                                       | 12   |
| G. Erosion Control.....                                           | 12   |
| <br>                                                              |      |
| V. EVALUATION STANDARDS.....                                      | 12   |
| A. Comprehensive Plan .....                                       | 13   |
| B. Urban Design, Architecture, and Landscaping.....               | 13   |
| C. Site Planning.....                                             | 14   |
| D. Effective and Safe Vehicular and Pedestrian Access .....       | 14   |
| E. Revenue for the District .....                                 | 15   |
| F. Housing and Affordable Housing .....                           | 15   |
| G. Additional Public Benefits of the Project .....                | 15   |

|      |                                                                         |    |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| VI.  | COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN .....                            | 16 |
| A.   | Compliance with Major Themes.....                                       | 17 |
|      | 1. Stabilizing the District’s Neighborhood .....                        | 17 |
|      | 2. Respecting and Improving the Physical Character of the District..... | 17 |
|      | 3. Preserving and Ensuring Community Input.....                         | 18 |
| B.   | Compliance with Major Elements .....                                    | 19 |
|      | 1. Generalized Land Use Map .....                                       | 19 |
|      | 2. Housing Elements .....                                               | 19 |
|      | 3. Urban Design Element.....                                            | 20 |
|      | 4. Economic Development.....                                            | 20 |
|      | 5. Environment Protection .....                                         | 21 |
|      | 6. Transportation .....                                                 | 21 |
|      | 7. Ward 3 Goals and Policies.....                                       | 22 |
| VII. | CONCLUSION.....                                                         | 24 |

## **EXHIBITS**

### **DESCRIPTION**

### **EXHIBIT**

Project Plans

A

Transportation Analysis

B

Application Forms

C

Zoning Map

D

Certificate of Notice and Notice of Intent to File

E

List of Property Owners' within 200 Feet

F

Compliance with Chapter 24 of the Zoning Regulations

G

Section 2403.11 Annotated Table

H

## **PREFACE**

This statement is submitted on behalf of Tilden 800, LLC (**“Applicant”**), in support of an application for the consolidated review and approval of a Planned United Development and a corresponding amendment to the District of Columbia Zoning Map for the property known as 2950 Tilden Street, NW, Square 2234, Lot 800 (**“Property”**). The Property is currently vacant.

The Applicant is requesting the consolidated review and approval of this application in order to create an architecturally significant, transit-oriented residential project (**“Project”**). The Project’s innovative design complements a neighborhood rich in architectural heritage. The proposed infill development is located within walking distance of Connecticut Avenue retail and two Metrorail Stations – the Van Ness/UDC and Cleveland Park stations on the Red Line. The Property is currently in the R-2 Zone District, which is inconsistent with the high density residential classification shown for it on the General Land Use Map of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan. The proposed Project provides a visual transition from the high rise residential building along two sides of the site and the lower density embassy and semi-detached housing nearby. The application includes a request for a Zoning Map amendment for the Property to the R-5-C Zone District.

Submitted in support of this application are completed application forms, a Notice of Intent to File a PUD (with property owners' list and certification of mailing), architectural drawings, and a map depicting the zoning district for the Property and the surrounding area. As set forth below, this statement and the attached documents meet the filing requirements for a PUD and Zoning Map Amendment application under Chapter 24 of the District of Columbia Zoning Regulations.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Summary of Requested Action.**

This document supports the application of Tilden 800, LLC (“Applicant”) to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia (“Commission”) for the consolidated review and one-step approval of a Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) and a corresponding amendment to the Zoning Map for the site. The Property consists of 34,686 square feet in Square 2234 (Lot 800). The site is located in the Cleveland Park/Forest Hills neighborhood of Ward 3, within the jurisdiction of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“ANC”) 3F.

The Applicant proposes to develop a residential building containing approximately 98,000 gross square feet above grade with two levels of underground parking. The Applicant requests zoning of the Property from the low density R-2 Zone District to the medium-high density R-5-C Zone District. The proposed Project would have a floor area ratio (“FAR”) of 2.8, with approximately 60 dwelling units, and a building height of less than 67 feet at its highest point.

Rezoning the site to the R-5-C Zone District is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the District of Columbia and the pattern of development along the intersection of Tilden Street, N.W. and Connecticut Avenue, N.W. The proposed design meets the challenge of bridging the high density existing uses to the west and south of the Property with the low density uses east and north of the Property. The building is articulated into three distinct masses which break down the mass of the building into discrete sections that are more intimately scaled to blend in with the semi-detached homes across Tilden Street to the north. The three building volumes are separated by open courtyards; this articulation adds significantly to the amount of exterior exposure for the building which will provide plentiful air and light to the units. The

result will be a contextually sensitive building located within walking distance of neighborhood retail and mass transportation.

## **B. The Applicant**

The Applicant, Tilden 800, LLC, is an affiliate of Clark Realty Capital, LLC (“Clark”), which was established in 1992 and is an award-winning developer of a variety of real estate in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and the nation. It has developed, or has under development, more than \$1.5 billion in real estate in the past six years alone and has completed 22 projects totaling 6,685 dwelling units with a development cost of over \$490 million within the past seven years.

Clark maintains a strong commitment to the District and to transit-oriented development. In 2003, Clark completed renovations at Columbia Heights Village located on 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW in the vicinity of Harvard Street, N.W. and Columbia Road, N.W. Through a unique partnership with the non-profit Change All Souls Housing Corporation (CASHC) and the Columbia Heights Village tenants, Clark is preserving the long-term affordability of 406 apartment units in 31 buildings. In this neighborhood, Clark developed the building at 3883 Connecticut Avenue, a nine-story residential building, located immediately adjacent to the Property. The 157-unit development won the 2003 Finest for Family Living Award.

Clark is currently developing predominantly residential projects at the Fort Totten Metrorail Station and on the H Street Corridor in Northeast Washington.

### **C. Project Goals and Objectives**

The Applicant's objective is to create high quality housing opportunities on an under utilized site in a well-serviced District neighborhood. This site is an appropriate location for the proposed medium-density development. Neighborhood infrastructure – two Metrorail stations and extensive neighborhood retail uses – is already in place. This Project would further support small businesses and attract new residents to the District and will complete the unfinished streetscape on the south side of Tilden Street, NW.

### **D. Development Timetable**

The Applicant plans to start construction in Fall 2006 and expects that the total construction period will last approximately 18 months.

### **E. Appropriateness of the PUD Process**

The PUD process provides a means of creating a “well planned development”. The objectives of the PUD process are to promote “[S]ound project planning, efficient and economical land utilization, attractive urban design and the provision of desired public spaces and other amenities.”

The notice and hearing requirements of the PUD regulations ensure that adjacent property owners and area residents will have the opportunity to express their views about the application. The use of the PUD process gives the community and District agencies an opportunity to work together with the Applicant to ensure a well-planned development.

The vision for the Project has been one of balance and bridging. Because the Property is located between high density and low density uses, yet is located on an east-west arterial road, input from nearby property owners and various District agencies has been a critical component of the design development. The Applicant has met with the immediate neighbors, and the broader community, including the commissioners of ANC 3F and members of the Forest Hills Civic Association. The Applicant has organized well-attended Single Member Subdistrict Meetings, and participated in numerous one-on-one and small group discussions.

As a result of these meetings, the Applicant has delayed PUD submission for six months, reduced the proposed height of the building by three and a half stories, and altered the façade treatment significantly and “softened” the overall form. For example, previously proposed glazed “bridges” were deleted because neighbors were concerned that they would create light pollution. The Applicant believes the resulting concept is far superior to its initial ideas and addresses the most critical comments from the adjacent neighbors. The PUD process is an extension of the engagement already begun and will ensure a well-planned development. The process will provide the Zoning Commission with an opportunity to review the design in connection with its consideration of the request to rezone the site.

## **II. THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **A. Site Location and Description**

The Property consists of approximately 34,686 square feet of land area with frontage on Tilden Street, NW. It is located 232 feet to the east of Tilden Street’s intersection with Connecticut Avenue on the south side of Tilden Street. Tilden Street is an east/west connector street that runs through the Rock Creek National Park. To the east of the site is the Kuwaiti

Embassy; to the west, a six-story apartment building. To the south is a nine-story condominium building. To the north is Tilden Street, a median-divided road, and on the north side of Tilden are semi-detached residences (2½ - 3 stories) elevated approximately twelve feet above the Tilden Street grade. To the southeast is the Melvin Hazen Park.

The area to the west and south of the site is in the R-5-D Zone District. The Property to the north and immediately east is in the R-2 Zone District. There is R-5-D zoning east of the Kuwaiti Embassy on Tilden Street. The Connecticut Avenue corridor, in this location (and Tilden Street west of Connecticut Avenue), is characterized by high rise residential buildings. The neighborhood is the location of the Hillwood Museum, Howard University Law School, the Levine School of Music, the Edmund Burke School, the University of the District of Columbia, Intellsat and a number of foreign chanceries.

There is extensive, walkable retail along Connecticut Avenue. There are also two Metrorail Stations on the Red Line within walking distance of the Property. Outdoor recreational amenities are plentiful and include hiking and biking in the Rock Creek Park complex.

The Property has 247.76 feet of frontage along Tilden Street and is 140 feet deep with a slope of eleven feet from street front to its rear property line. A designated twenty foot fire lane easement, serving 3883 Connecticut Avenue, exists along the rear of the Property.

The Cleveland Park Historic District lies south of the project site. This district contains a significant collection of apartment buildings and single-family residences dating back as far as the 1890's. To the north of the project site, in Forest Hills, a substantial stock of modern architecture exists.

## **B. Project Description**

The Project, as shown on the architectural plans contained in Exhibit A, takes its design inspiration from the traditions of both Cleveland Park and Forest Hills. The proposed development contains approximately 98,000 square feet of gross floor area. The FAR is 2.8 and the lot occupancy is 57%.

The building is a hybrid of a traditional multifamily building and rowhouse typology. However, it is not an apartment building simply wrapped in townhouses. Instead, at the street front, the structure is carved into three two-story elements. These components echo the scale of the semi-detached homes across the street on Tilden. Inside, they house duplex units with direct access from the street. The multiple “front doors” at the street level provide a “mews-like” feel to the courtyards.

Viewing the Project from Tilden Street, the building will appear to be three completely distinct structures. The building height steps up to four stories further from the street. Towards the rear of the Property, the three building elements become “connected”. At the deepest points of the site, with the closest proximity to the nine-story 3883 Connecticut Avenue building, the building is fully contiguous. The height rises five stories and six stories in the center and rear. The rear of the building contains a central elevator bank and the primary corridor. At its six-story peak, the building height is approximately 67 feet (not including mechanical equipment). The height of the five-story portions are less than 54 feet.

The proposed building has a rear yard of 26 feet, 4 inches. The back of the building is jogged and has terracing to create visual interest for neighboring buildings, 3901 Connecticut

Avenue, Tilden Hall (3945 Connecticut Avenue) and The Connecticut (3883 Connecticut Avenue). There are no windows on the wall closest to the Kuwaiti Embassy.

The Project is so configured to maximize sensitivity to the semi-detached homes on Tilden Street and to bridge the relationship to surrounding high density development. The unique massing creates the most distinctive element of the building. Each setback in height produces generous terraces, which will be amenities for the units above the second, fourth, and fifth floors. The terracing integrates the building into the natural surroundings of the Melvin Hazen Park and provides superb outdoor space.

At the ground floor, courtyard space will be divided into private and communal gardens. Private gardens will be reserved for exclusive use by the adjacent residential units. The communal gardens will provide green space for all building residents. The combination of uses and landscaping will provide visual texture for the entire neighborhood. A roof terrace will be available above the top floor.

A single, underground, two-level garage provides parking for approximately 130 cars. The parking exceeds a ratio of 2:1 to accommodate resident and guest needs. The garage is accessed via a twenty-foot wide driveway, with only one curb cut on Tilden Street. The proposed driveway would also accommodate loading at a twelve-foot by twenty-foot delivery area.

The Project will complete the unfinished urban landscape. It has been sensitively designed to bring a strong identity and character to the Property while respecting the urban design characteristics of the neighborhood.

### **C. Development Parameters Under Existing and Proposed Zoning**

The existing R-2 Zone District permits matter-of-right development of residential uses for detached or semi-detached structures with a maximum height of forty feet. This application requests a rezoning of the Property to the R-5-C Zone District which permits apartment buildings, as a matter-of-right, with a FAR of 3.5 and a building height of 90 feet.

### **D. Flexibility Under PUD**

The PUD process was created to allow greater flexibility in planning and design than is possible under conventional zoning procedures. The PUD regulations specifically allow the Zoning Commission to approve any zoning relief that would otherwise require the approval of the Board of Zoning Adjustment (“BZA”).

The proposed development complies with the broad parameters of the R-5-C Zone District, as set forth in the tabulation of data below. However, the design scheme proposed for the PUD has created a configuration that does not meet all the exact requirements of this zone.

Specifically, the Applicant seeks relief from the requirement that it provide a 55’ deep loading berth as required by the Regulations. Further, the Applicant seeks relief, due to variety and number of setbacks on the building’s façades, from Section 411 of the Zoning Regulations which require roof structures be set back from all exterior walls at a 1:1 ratio.

**E. Tabulation of Development Data**

|                   | <b>R-2 ZONE<br/>MATTER-OF-<br/>RIGHT<br/>STANDARDS</b> | <b>R-5-C ZONE<br/>MATTER-OF-<br/>RIGHT</b> | <b>PROPOSED<br/>PROJECT</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Gross Floor Area  | None                                                   | 121,401 square<br>feet                     | 98,000 square feet          |
| FAR               | None                                                   | 3.5                                        | 2.8                         |
| Lot Occupancy     | 40%                                                    | 75%                                        | 57%                         |
| Building Height   | 40 feet                                                | 90 feet                                    | 67 feet                     |
| Number of Stories | 3                                                      | No limit                                   | No limit                    |
| Rear Yard         | 20 feet                                                | 22 feet                                    | 26.3 feet                   |
| Side Yard         | 8 Feet                                                 | None                                       | None                        |

**III. PLANNING ANALYSIS**

**A. Land Use Impact**

The Project will create an architecturally significant building on a major east-west connector street in northwest Washington. The proposed height and massing of the Project is consistent with the adjacent zoning in the area and with the District's planning goals for the future of this neighborhood. The Property is an infill site in close proximity to two Metrorail stations.

The uses proposed in the Project and its design will have a positive impact on the residential corridor and serve as a transitional element between the high rise residential community to the south and east and the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

## **B. Zoning Impact**

The proposed Zoning Map Amendment can be granted without adversely affecting nearby and adjacent zone districts or properties. The proposed R-5-C Zone District is consistent with the high density, residential land use category on the Generalized Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **C. Environmental Impact**

As more specifically detailed in Section IV, there will be no adverse environmental impacts resulting from the construction of this Project. In addition, the increased use in water and sanitary services that will occur as a result of the Project will have an inconsequential effect on the District's delivery systems. The site is currently served by all major utilities. The Project's proposed stormwater management and erosion control plans will minimize impact on the adjacent property and existing stormwater systems. The requisite erosion control procedures stipulated by the District will be implemented during construction of the Project.

## **D. Facilities Impact**

The Project will not have an adverse impact on the public facilities on which it will rely for service.

# **IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

## **A. Water Demand**

The PUD will contain approximately 98,000 gross square feet of space. The average daily demand for water for the project is estimated to be 15 – 20,000 gallons per day. This demand can be met by the existing District water system. The proposed connection for fire

water supply will be made within the existing distribution system and will be coordinated with WASA.

**B. Sanitary Sewer Demand**

The average daily demand on the sanitary sewer system is estimated to be 15 – 20,000 gallons per day. The proposed connection for the sanitary sewer line will be made with the existing distribution system and will be coordinated with WASA.

**C. Storm Water Management**

The Project's storm water run-off will be accommodated by a storm water management system in compliance with standards set by the Department of Health. The proposed systems will be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with standards set by the Department of Health.

**D. Solid Waste Services**

Solid waste will be collected daily by a private contractor from covered receptacles for appropriate disposal.

**E. Electrical Service**

Electricity for the Project will be provided by the Potomac Electric Power Company in accordance with its usual general terms and conditions of service. All electrical systems will be designed to comply with the District of Columbia Energy Code.

#### **F. Energy Conservation**

The Project will be constructed in full compliance with Article 24 (Energy Conservation) of the District of Columbia Building Code. Conformance to code standards will minimize the amounts of energy needed for the heat, ventilation, hot water, electrical distribution and lighting systems contained in the buildings.

#### **G. Erosion Control**

During excavation and construction, erosion on the project site will be controlled in accordance with District of Columbia Law.

### **V. EVALUATION STANDARDS**

Section 2403 of the Zoning Regulations provides the standards for evaluating PUD applications. Section 2403.9 provides categories of public benefits and project amenities for review by the Zoning Commission.

The objective of the PUD process is to encourage high quality development that provides public benefits and project amenities by allowing applicants greater flexibility in planning and design than may be possible under matter-of-right zoning. The instant application will achieve the goals of the PUD process by creating a high quality residential project with significant housing opportunities. As demonstrated herein, the Project provides superior benefits in several of the categories listed in Section 2403.9.

## **A. Comprehensive Plan**

The proposed zoning and the PUD are consistent with, and furthers, many of the District's goals and objectives. Section VI below discusses the proposed development in light of the Comprehensive Plan in greater detail.

## **B. Urban Design, Architecture, and Landscaping**

From a sustainability perspective, high density uses located near transit nodes is good urban design. The proposed development is located in the transition area between very high density issues immediately adjacent to Metro Stations and the first tier of lower density residential development. Given the scarcity of new development sites in the neighborhood and the strength of the supporting mass transit infrastructure, the Project provides an important opportunity to provide additional housing opportunities for the District. The project is planned for all residential use which maintains the general character of Tilden Street.

Architecturally, the building is a hybrid of traditional architecture and modern design which accommodates higher density with minimal visual and physical impact on the semi-detached houses across the street from the Property. This effect is achieved by concentrating the mass of the building at the rear of the site and stepping the volume down from six stories to two stories in three distinct masses, separated by courtyards facing the street.

The progressive architecture of the Project does not mimic the classical design popular with much new construction. Instead, it blends traditional and modern elements into a special statement. The average unit size of the proposed development is larger than most new

construction in Washington. This differentiation expands the living options for potential new District residents.

The landscaping extends the green space from the nearby parkland. Although the courtyards face north, the design accommodates plentiful planting of ornamental trees and groundcover as well as canopy trees. Initial concepts for the paving in the primary courtyard includes a moss and stone design that creates a very natural environment. The combination of private gardens and courtyard space creates an intimacy similar to that found throughout Cleveland Park and helps to develop the “mews-like” feel.

### **C. Site Planning**

The Project is planned to take advantage of views across the park by stepping back at the south east corner to reveal private terraces. Large private terraces are provided throughout the building. Deliveries are accepted at the west end of the building where a ramp leads to the underground parking garage; this area also provides access to the elevators for delivery vehicles. The single curb cut allows the maintenance of substantial street parking in front of the building. With the mass of the building located nearest its southern property line, the shadows cast across Tilden Street will be minimal.

### **D. Effective and Safe Vehicular and Pedestrian Access**

The Project’s design simplifies vehicular access to promote vehicular and pedestrian safety. The garage has one point of entry and exit. The driveway is located next to an existing driveway for 3945 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Numerous pedestrian access points to building encourage walking.

Based on a transportation analysis prepared by Wells & Associates attached hereto as Exhibit B, the proposed development is anticipated to generate twenty-two AM peak hour vehicular trips and twenty-six PM peak hour vehicular trips. The proposed development would account for less than one percent of the total AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes at the Connecticut Avenue/Tilden Street intersection.

**E. Revenue for the District**

The District will benefit from additional tax revenues in the form of recordation, transfer, property, income, sales, use and employment taxes.

**F. Housing and Affordable Housing**

Recognizing the need for on-site affordable housing within the new projects, the Applicant will provide three affordable housing units within the Project. This designation will provide affordable housing in a neighborhood where the lack of large development drives up overall housing prices.

**G. Additional Public Benefits of the Project**

In this Project, the architectural detailing sets it apart from a matter-of-right building. The architectural concept for the Project is a fresh, innovative, forward-looking design. The building will have a number of terraces and the building will incorporate sustainable development features. The approval of this PUD application will result in a myriad of benefits for Ward 3, including exemplary urban design, affordable housing and new housing opportunities.

The Applicant has been working with various individuals and community organizations in the area surrounding the Property proposes a community amenities package that is both targeted and tangible including a financial contribution of \$100,000 dedicated to the maintenance and up-keep of the historic Peirce Mill and the Rock Creek National Park with the help of the Friends of Peirce Mill. Friends of Peirce Mill is dedicated to the restoration of Rock Creek Park's historic Peirce Mill. Peirce Mill has received historic designation from the National Register of Historic Places and is located off of Tilden Street. When this District landmark is restored, it will be one of the few operational mills in the country and will accommodate educational tours for school children.

## **VI. COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The proposed PUD is consistent with and fosters the goals and policies enumerated in the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan ("**Comprehensive Plan**") D.C. Law 12-275, 10 DCMR (Planning and Development) § 100 et seq. (1998).

The purposes of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Act are to:

(1) Define the requirements and aspirations of District residents, and accordingly influence social, economic and physical development; (2) Guide executive and legislative decisions and matters affecting the District and its citizens; (3) promote economic growth in jobs for District residents; (4) Guide private and public development in order to achieve District and community goals; (5) Maintain and enhance the natural and architectural assets of the District; and (6) Assist in conservation, stabilization and improvement of each neighborhood and community in the District.

(D.C. Code § 1-245(b) (1994 Supp.))

The proposed Project significantly advances these purposes by furthering the physical and economic development of the District through the construction of a modern and welcoming residential building that will be an important step towards achieving the District's housing goals.

**A. Compliance with Major Themes**

Three major themes, applicable to this Project, were adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Applicant's proposal is consistent with these themes as follows:

**1. Stabilizing the District's Neighborhood.**

The proposed development maintains the general character of the Cleveland Park/Forest Hills neighborhood. The Project is entirely residential and provides a substantial amount of on-site parking which reduces the potential for additional on-street parking demands. In recent years, significant numbers of projects with a predominance of small units have been constructed. This Project has relatively larger units that can meet the needs of a diverse District population and successfully compete with new developments in the suburbs. Furthermore, vacant land with this site's proximity to the Metrorail station, does not benefit the neighborhood or the District. If people live within walking distance of everyday conveniences and public transportation, they become contributors to vibrant urban life.

**2. Respecting and Improving the Physical Character of the District**

Currently, the vacant lot does not enhance the physical character of the District. Instead, a visual valley or canyon is created by the three neighboring buildings which range in height from two to nine-stories. The proposed building creates gentle tiers of landscaped terracing. The architecture is an interpretation of the terracing of the homes and hills across the median on Tilden Street and gains inspiration from the architecture of hillside villas and Frank Lloyd

Wright. The restrained ornamentation and light façade provide a soft backdrop in the midst of the varying brick colors and architectural styles of the neighboring buildings. Nonetheless, the richness of detail and material are comparable in quality to the existing community.

### **3. Preserving and Ensuring Community Input**

The Applicant made great efforts to integrate the surrounding community into the project's creation. The Applicant sponsored two Single Member Subdistrict Meetings in the fall and winter and engaged in one-on-one meetings with the head of the Forest Hills Civic Association, several ANC Commissioners, and every community member who requested a one-on-one meeting. Moreover, the Applicant met with the Office of Planning and small groups of neighbors for interactive design discussions. In those meetings, the Applicant brought building models, "building blocks", and a team of architects. Together, massing was shuffled and various design ideas explored on a real-time basis. The Applicant also created a website specifically for the proposed development to respond to Frequently Asked Questions and provide information, such as the traffic study.

In response to community input, the Applicant made the following changes to its original thinking for the Project:

- Reduced height from 9 to 5- and 6-Stories
- Eliminated "floating" glass walkways connecting the 3 building components
- Increased the "mews" feeling of intimacy by adding numerous private front doors
- Increased the width of the driveway access point and improved loading accommodation
- Carved terracing into the back of the building to add visual interest, light, and air
- Increased the number of trees

- Eliminated connection to 3883 Connecticut Avenue driveway
- Added more traditional elements to the architecture
- Delayed submission of PUD application to work on issues with the community
- Expressed willingness to execute a construction management plan

Input from the community has made the proposed project a better development. Neighbors' comments challenged the development team to think creatively about contextually-sensitive design. The Project does not attempt to hide the higher density components of the building with a layer of townhouses plastered on the surface. Instead, the resulting plan balances rowhouse and apartment architecture in an organic and natural way.

## **B. Compliance with Major Elements**

The Comprehensive Plan also contains 11 major elements. The Project furthers the goals, objectives and policies of several of these elements.

### **1. Generalized Land Use Maps**

The Generalized Land Use Map, adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan, includes the Property in the high density residential category. The proposed PUD/rezoning is consistent with the Generalized Land Use Map.

### **2. Housing Element**

It is the goal of the District to:

“Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the need of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land-use policies and objectives” (10 DCMR § 302.2(a)).

“Encourage housing on suitably located public or private properties that are vacant surplus, underutilized, or unused, ...” (10 DCMR § 302.2(e)).

“Encourage the private sector to meet housing needs through the development of infill housing ...” (10 DCMR § 302.2(f)).

The Property is a vacant, infill location located within walking distance of two Metrorail Stations. Immediately adjacent properties are high density residential uses. The Property’s location makes this site a prime opportunity to increase the District’s housing stock.

### **3. Urban Design Element**

It is the goal of the District to:

“Preserve and enhance the outstanding physical qualities of District neighborhoods” (10 DCMR 702.1(b)).

“Encourage well-designed developments in areas that are vacant, underserved or deteriorated. These developments should have strong physical identities” (10 DCMR § 712.2(a)).

Currently, the project site is a vacant, private lot. From Tilden Street, the view corridor exposes the side of a highrise building, 3883 Connecticut Avenue. The proposed Project improves the visual quality of the space through thoughtful urban design and compelling architecture.

### **4. Economic Development**

It is the goal of the District to:

“[G]eneration of sufficient tax revenues to fund the District’s budget ...” (10 DCMR § 200.13).

Place a high priority on stimulating and facilitating a variety of commercial, retail and residential development investments ... consistent with the Land Use element ... and with sensitivity to surrounding areas” (10 DCMR § 204.2(m)).

The Property, outside of real estate taxes, currently contributes little to economic well-being of the District. The approximately 60 residential units will enhance economic development by contributing significantly to the District's population and also to the District's tax base through substantial property, income, and other tax revenues. New residents will patronize neighborhood retail along Connecticut Avenue and throughout the District. The increased property values will increase property tax income.

## **5. Environment Protection**

It is the goal of the District to:

Protect the environment, to resist threats to its overall quality, and to act to maintain and enhance its positive features in the interest of residents, workers and visitors (10 DCMR § 401.1).

Promote land use patterns and transportation services which decrease reliance on automobiles for commuting or other routine trips (10 DCMR § 403.2(c)).

The Project will comply with all the applicable rules and regulations of the District to promote energy conservation, improve air quality and protect the natural environment.

## **6. Transportation**

It is the goal of the District to:

“Support land use arrangements that simplify and economize transportation service ...to promote high density residential development at strategic locations, particularly near appropriate Metrorail stations” (10 DCMR § 502.2(a)).

The site's proximity to the Cleveland Park and Van Ness Metro Stations reduces the impact of vehicular traffic. Additionally, its position at Connecticut Avenue and Tilden Street limits the traffic impact on small, neighborhood streets. Furthermore, sufficient parking of over two spaces per unit will be provided in an underground garage. The proposed project will

contain designated space for bicycle storage. The single driveway curb cut limits the reduction of on-street parking spaces.

## **7. Ward 3 Element**

The Comprehensive Plan also contains an Element specific to the needs of Ward Three.

These goals and policies of this Element include:

“The District Government should ... work with the private sector ... to identify sites and increase housing opportunities in appropriate locations ... [which include giving] zoning preference to projects that include housing near ... the Ward’s Metrorail stations” (10 DCMR §§ 1402.4(a) and 1402.4(c)(5)).

“While new housing is needed, all development proposals must be evaluated to avoid adverse impacts on neighborhood stability, traffic, parking, and environmental quality” (10 DCMR § 1402.1 (h)).

“Relate the overall height of new construction (including additions) to that of adjacent structures. As a general rule, construct new buildings to a height roughly equal to the average height of existing buildings. Avoid new construction that greatly varies in height (too high or too low) from older buildings in the vicinity” (10 DCMR § 1406.9 (a)).

“Break up uninteresting box-like forms into smaller, varied masses. Variety of form and massing are elements essential to the character of the streetscape” (10 DCMR § 1406.9 (c)).

The area of Forest Hills/Cleveland Park is an attractive urban neighborhood. Its predominantly residential character and convenient transportation make it a desirable alternative to the suburbs. However, the predominance of low density detached and semi-detached housing severely restricts development opportunities. Potential new residents have limited options. The proposed medium density project expands housing stock without adversely impacting the existing community.

Through creative design with extensive community feedback, the Project visually “bridges” the semi-detached homes across the Tilden Street median, the lowrise Kuwaiti Embassy next door and the three adjacent multifamily buildings. A series of setbacks achieves this height parity. The front of the Project (two-stories and four-stories) relates to the two-and-a-half to three-story heights of the semi-detached homes across the street, but gradually steps up to six-stories, a height slightly lower than the adjacent apartment building at 3945 Connecticut Avenue. The proposed building not only steps back in height, but also has three protruding, lowrise “arms” containing one-level and two-level residences. The sculptural form of the architecture is its most defining feature.

The building is setback 22 feet from the curb. The “rhythm of opening” mirrors the semi-detached homes across Tilden Street. Each lowrise “arm” has front doors facing the street. These doors serve individual residences and also reduce the building’s scale. Additional private entrances, accessed off of the two open gardens, create intimacy. These entrance elements capture the coziness of mews desired by neighbors. The entrance to the main lobby is also located off of the open garden closest to Connecticut Avenue. These doors are more discreet than those found on typical multifamily buildings.

The building’s façade will be made of precast concrete. Tilden Street is notable for its front yard walls. The Kuwaiti Embassy, immediately to the East of the project site, has a security wall separating the front yard and the sidewalk. The semidetached homes across Tilden Street are elevated 12 feet from street level. Retaining walls made of stone, punctuated by stairs, line the sidewalk. On the project site, the Applicant proposes garden walls for portion of the site. Because the building is recessed three feet below street level, these walls are necessary for

safety. They also define private garden space for ground floor units. However, wide steps open to two landscaped courtyards that are visually unencumbered.

The architecture of the Project responds to site and contextual constraints with elegance, creating a superior design unlike anything else in Washington.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

At this location, Tilden Street is full of contrast and contradiction. On one hand, it functions as a major east-west vehicle connector street. It is a median-divided four lane street; and, the site is close to Connecticut Avenue, major regional thoroughfare. Stately, high rise buildings fill the corridor and spread east and west on Tilden and on neighboring streets like Van Ness. The infrastructure is perhaps the best in the city – walkable and well-served by not one, but two, Metrorail Stations, and multiple bus lines. Retail shopping and urban buzz is alive just a few blocks away. On the other hand, Cleveland Park/Forest Hills are true to their origins as escapes from hectic city life. Ward 3 has a reputation for its number of trees, low density and residential character. The retail and residential core quickly transitions to single family and semi-detached homes.

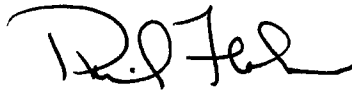
The Project balances the concerns of the community and needs of the District. The requested PUD would transform a passive, vacant lot into a compelling new housing community. The Project would soften the transition between existing high density and low density uses. The approximately sixty new households would contribute significantly to the District's economic development and add to the texture and range of housing in the city. The Project's architecture displays the depth of the local design community and proves that progressive architecture can be warm and humanly-scaled.

For the foregoing reasons, 800 Tilden LLC submits that the PUD application meets the standards of Chapter 24 of the Zoning Regulations; is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Map; will enhance the health, welfare, safety and convenience of the citizens of the District of Columbia; satisfy the requirements for approval of a PUD; provide significant public benefits; and advance important goals and policies of the District of Columbia.

Accordingly, we respectfully request the Zoning Commission to set this application down for a public hearing at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully,

Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Feola", written in a cursive style.

Date: July 27, 2005

Phil Feola