

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Ellen McCarthy 
Director

DATE January 9, 2006

SUBJECT: Case No. ZC-05-34 Revised pages for Supplemental Setdown Report for a petition to amend the Zoning Map regarding Square 895, Lot 76, filed by ANC 6C

Attached are three revised pages to the Supplemental Setdown Report dated January 4, 2006. The revised pages are dated January 6, 2006. Please replace pages 2, 3 and 4 of the report with revised pages 2, 3 and 4.

The revisions to Page 2 correct an error in the tables. The revisions to Page 3 include a more expansive list of the "Permitted Nonresidential Use" in Table 4, and the additional uses are in italics. The revisions to page 4 are to Tables 6, 7 and 8 and add the number of units and average size of units proposed by the property owner to each of those tables, also in italics.

Two letters from the community received by the Office of Planning today are also attached.

EMc/sjm, AICP

Attachments

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 05-34

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO.05-34
EXHIBIT NO.23

Table 1: Northern Portion of Site

	Existing FAR	Existing Building Height	Existing Number of Stories	Existing Lot Occupancy
Buildings C & D	2.5 or 125,646 sf*	73 feet*	6*	52 % or 26,626 sf*
	Maximum FAR	Maximum Building Height	Maximum Number of Stories	Maximum Lot Occupancy
R-4	None prescribed	40 feet	3	60 % or 30,623 sf
R-5-A	0.9 or 45,934 sf	40 feet	3	40 % or 20,415 sf
R-5-B	1.8 or 91,868 sf	50 feet	No limit	60 % or 30,623 sf
R-5-B with PUD	3.0 or 153,114 sf	60 feet	No limit	60 % or 30,623 sf
R-5-D	3.5 or 178,633 sf	90 feet	No limit	75 % or 38,279 sf

Table 2: Southern Portion of Site

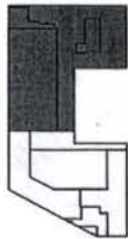
	Existing FAR	Existing Building Height	Existing Number of Stories	Existing Lot Occupancy
Buildings A & B	2.4 or 120,313 sf*	55 feet*	4*	88 % or 37,778 sf*
	Maximum FAR	Maximum Building Height	Maximum Number of Stories	Maximum Lot Occupancy
R-4	None prescribed	40 feet	3	60 % or 25,777 sf
R-5-A	0.9 or 38,666 sf	40 feet	3	40 % or 17,185 sf
R-5-B	1.8 or 77,332 sf	50 feet	No limit	60 % or 25,777 sf
R-5-B with PUD	3.0 or 128,886 sf	60 feet	No limit	60 % or 25,777 sf
R-5-D	3.5 or 150,367 sf	90 feet	No limit	75 % or 38,222 sf

Table 3: Entire Site

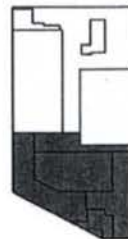
	Existing FAR	Existing Building Height	Existing Number of Stories	Existing Lot Occupancy
Buildings A,B, C & D	2.4 or 228,000 sf*	73 feet*	6*	69 % or 64,404 sf*
	Maximum FAR	Maximum Building Height	Maximum Number of Stories	Maximum Lot Occupancy
R-4	None prescribed	40 feet	3	60 % or 56,400 sf
R-5-A	0.9 or 84,600 sf	40 feet	3	40 % or 37,600 sf
R-5-B	1.8 or 169,200 sf	50 feet	No limit	60 % or 56,400 sf
R-5-B with PUD	3.0 or 282,000 sf	60 feet	No limit	60 % or 56,400 sf
R-5-D	3.5 or 329,000 sf	90 feet	No limit	75 % or 70,500 sf

Shading indicates nonconformance with the Zoning Regulations

* Indicates data received from property owner's architect



Northern Portion



Southern Portion



Entire Site

Table 4: Uses

Zone District	Permitted Residential Uses	Permitted Nonresidential Uses
R-4	Detached, Semi-detached and Row Dwellings, Flats and Conversions	Church, Parsonage, Vicarage, Rectory, Sun. School Bldg., Farm or Truck Garden, Embassy, Private Garage, Public School, Mass Transit Facility, CBRF, Youth Care Residential Home, Child/Elderly Development Ctr., Hospital, Sanitarium, Clinic for Humans, Private Club, Lodge, Fraternity, Sorority, Dormitory, Museum, Rooming or Boarding House
R-5-A	Same as R-4, plus multiple dwellings	Same as R-4, plus Greenhouse or Horticultural Nursery, Residence for Teachers and Staff
R-5-B	Same as R-5-A	Same as R-5-A, plus Hotel
R-5-D	Same as R-5-A	Same as R-5-B

Parking

The amount of parking required per unit is based on the zone district and type of dwelling unit, as prescribed under § 2101.1 of the Zoning Regulations. Therefore, the amount of parking required will be determined by the type of dwellings, the number of dwellings and the zone district. The amount of parking required for the different uses in the various zone districts is as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Parking Ratios

USE	ZONE DISTRICT	PARKING RATE
Detached, Semi-detached, Row Dwellings	All	1 space per unit
Flat	R-5-A	1 space per unit
Flat	All other	1 space per 2 units
Apartments or Multiple Family	R-4, R-5-D	1 space per 3 units
Apartments or Multiple Family	R-5-A	1 space per unit
Apartments or Multiple	R-5-B	1 space per 2 units

R-4 Conversion

The Office of Planning prepared an analysis of the subject property with reference to conversions as permitted under § 401.3 of the Zoning Regulations. For purposes of this exercise an average core factor of 17.5 was assumed. The core factor allows the common areas of an apartment building, such as hallways and lobbies, to be subtracted out of the total area of the building for unit size computation purposes. Typically, the Office of Planning assumes the core factor to somewhere between 15 and 20 percent. The figure of 17.5 is midway between these numbers. As a result, the average unit sizes calculated below are approximations only.

Table 6: R-4 Conversion Table for Entire Site

Site Area	94,000 square feet
Existing Building Area	228,000 square feet
Maximum Number of Units Permitted (1/900 square feet of lot area)	104
Average Core Factor (228,000 x 17.5)	39,900 square feet
Average Unit Size (228,999/104)	1,809 square feet
No. of Units Proposed by Property Owner*	224-244*
Avg. Unit Size Proposed by Property Owner*	1,100 square feet*

Table 7: R-4 Conversion Table for Northern Portion of Site

Site Area	51,038 square feet
Existing Building Area	125,646 square feet
Maximum Number of Units Permitted (1/900 square feet of lot area)	56
Average Core Factor (125,646 x 17.5)	21,988 square feet
Average Unit Size (125,646/56)	1,851 square feet
No. of Units Proposed by Property Owner*	94*
Avg. Unit Size Proposed by Property Owner*	1,100 square feet*

Table 8: R-4 Conversion Table for Southern Portion of Site

Site Area	42,962 square feet
Existing Building Area	102,313 square feet
Maximum Number of Units Permitted (1/900 square feet of lot area)	47
Average Core Factor (102,313 x 17.5)	7,518 square feet
Average Unit Size (102,313/47)	1,795 square feet
No. of Units Proposed by Property Owner*	130-150*
Avg. Unit Size Proposed by Property Owner*	1,100 square feet*

*The property owner has informed the Office of Planning that it currently only has a proposal for the southern portion of the site. However, the owner has also stated that any proposal for the northern portion of the site would most likely be for an average of 1,100 sf per unit, resulting in the calculations shown above for the northern portion of the site and for the entire site.

January 5, 2006

Stephen Mordfin
Development Review Specialist
Office of Planning, Government of the District of Columbia
801 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20002

Via email:

Re: Case No. 05-34 – Petition by ANC 6C of
Map Amendment to Square 895, Lot 76

Dear Mr. Mordfin:

I am writing to you to express my unequivocal support for the petition by Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C to have the District of Columbia Zoning Commission approve a proposed amendment to change the zoning classification of Lot 76, Square 895 to R-4. At the Commission's December 19, 2005 Special Meeting, I understood that the Commission indicated a desire to confirm whether there was consensual support for the petition by the ANC and an understanding of possible consequences of the proposal.

I have lived on Capitol Hill for sixteen years within a block and a half of Square 895, and I am a long-standing and active participant in each of the neighborhood organizations in the affected area, including the Capitol Hill Coalition for Sensible Development and the Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

I believe that in order to fully evaluate the proposed zoning classification change, some understanding of the history of the current zoning of the site is in order.

The Capitol Hill neighborhood represents a rare and valuable resource which is greater than the sum of its parts and is characterized by low-rise row houses, mostly 2 or 3 stories, with a few reaching 4 stories. The entire neighborhood east of the major public buildings on its western edge is low rise with one exception: the MedLink Hospital site.

This exception is no accident: in 1973, when its predecessor, the Capitol Hill Hospital, needed to expand to better serve the community, the neighbors agreed to allow the zoning to be increased to R-5-D, permitting high density and allowing buildings as high as ninety feet. It was believed to be a legitimate need that justified such a dramatic concession from the neighborhood in order to accomplish a worthy goal.

It was never intended to produce what it has now become: a windfall profit in the financial value of the hospital's real estate for the owner to cash in upon developing the site for profit.

The pity is that the good neighbors of 1973 weren't savvy enough instead to grant a variance or special exception instead of a zoning change, and may never

have considered that a gift made in good faith to assist the hospital in providing enhanced medical services to the neighborhood would instead end up by providing an incentive to cash out.

The situation might be different were there any other examples of such zoning or existing buildings in the area, but this designation is a complete anomaly, and contrary to the principles of the Comprehensive Plan.

Furthermore, I understand that some of the suggestions for the new Comprehensive Plan are to develop strategies specifically to protect the architectural character of row house neighborhoods, with possible approaches including new zoning districts and controls against demolition.

And while I endorse the recognition of the existing 1928 building at the southeast corner of the site as currently contributing, and therefore useful as a compromise limiting factor to the scale of height and massing for any proposed future development, I would emphasize that it is a relatively contemporary 20th Century replacement of the original structures of the square, which were, like the lone surviving original structures, St. James church and rectory, and the existing structures ringing the perimeter of the site, uniformly low-rise 19th Century row houses.

As for the concern of intended or unintended consequences, from the point of view of the neighborhood, the fear of "excessive nonconformities" is relative, as we believe that significant nonconformities exist already; and that the question is whether any potential new construction on the site should conform to what now exists within the square or to the surrounding structures which bound the square. We are fully aware that the more restrictive the new zoning, the more valuable every square inch of the existing nonconformities becomes, along with the greater the chance they will be retained for the foreseeable future.

I anticipate that the granting our request may guarantee the survival of every currently existing building, and personally, my distaste for the proposed project is such that I would prefer the existing utilitarian brick boxes (once their ill-advised, mid-century "banding" is removed) for their simple, organic sincerity, to the pomposity of a statement of current fashion.

For these reasons I respectfully urge the Commission to set down a hearing date to consider the proposed amendment. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Verma
Taxpayer

cc: Michael G. Sherman, Commissioner, ANC 6C
William Sisolak, Commissioner, ANC 6C

January 9, 2006
609 Acker Place NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 546-8230

Carol J. Mitten
Chairman, DC Zoning Commission
441 4th St NW
Suite 210 South
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Mitten:

We are writing as residents of ANC-6C in reference to the proposed redevelopment of the Capitol Hill Hospital site located at 7th Street and Massachusetts Avenue Northeast. We wish to express our support for the current design of the project submitted by the architects (Shalom Baranes Associates), and to ask that the commission retain the current R-5-D zoning applicable to the site. We are confident that the proposed redevelopment of this site will add to the vibrancy of our neighborhood in a manner consistent with Capitol Hill's history and current function, and contribute to the broader health of our city.

As you are aware, the Historical Preservation Review Board has endorsed the basic concept of the project, and the architects have worked diligently with the Board and local residents over the past year to modify initial designs to respond to concerns. We were personally impressed by the architect's designs. In light of the fact that a considerable portion of the redevelopment site has existed in its current form since 1928, the larger-scale buildings envisioned by the design are very much in keeping with this neighborhood's historical character. Moreover, they would represent a vast improvement over the lifeless nature of the current site.

Retaining the site's R-5-D zoning is critical for achieving redevelopment of this site in the near future, and the proposal to "down-zone" the site to R-5-B does not afford a workable compromise. The Office of Planning's recommendation would render the existing buildings on the site non-compliant, effectively requiring that a developer purchase the existing structure, tear it down, and re-build at lower density. Such a re-zoning would thus make the return of this site to residential use prohibitively expensive for most developers, or render the resulting residences affordable to only the very wealthiest Washingtonians. We feel that neither outcome is in the best interests of the neighborhood and the city.

Preserving the ability to build at higher densities throughout D.C. serves the city's economic and social interest. Because the city is in the unfortunate position of being unable to tax its commuters, and because so much of its land is owned by non-taxable government entities, increasing the city's residential population remains the primary strategy by which D.C. can achieve long-term fiscal stability. Attracting more residents

to the city, and indeed to the Capitol Hill neighborhood, would also bring social benefits in the form of increased retail (especially to an area as large as the Hill that is served by only one major grocery store) and more vibrant public schools.

We believe that most D.C. residents share the goal of increasing the city's population, but when faced with the prospect that those new residents will live close by, are far too willing to oppose development in favor of the status quo. While we do not live immediately adjacent to the MedLink site, it is difficult for us to imagine that D.C. will ever be competitive with its suburbs on jobs, public services, tax rates, and general quality-of-life factors if the city does not embrace quality redevelopment opportunities that exist in all of its neighborhoods, especially those so close to its commercial core. Down-zoning the MedLink site would threaten the continued revitalization of an important area, and send a message that residents of Capitol Hill—and the Zoning Commission itself—feel that the challenges facing D.C. can best be solved elsewhere. We do not share that view.

We urge the commission to retain the R-5-D zoning currently applicable to the Capitol Hill Hospital site, thereby facilitating the ongoing residential rebirth of our neighborhood in a style consistent with its rich history and its relevance to the broader health of our city. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan Berube
Cristina Boccuti