

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF PLANNING



ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 66-13

EXHIBIT NO. 35

Office of the Director

**Memorandum**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
**FROM:** *ESFV*  
Ellen McCarthy, Director  
Office of Planning  
**DATE:** December 4, 2006  
**SUBJECT:** Supplemental Report - ZC #06-13 (1000 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.)  
Consolidated Planned Unit Development

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2006 DEC - 4 PM 4:40

In response to comments made by the Zoning Commission at the public hearing of October 23, 2006, the applicant, 1000 Connecticut Avenue Associates and PNC Bank, submitted amended architectural drawings. This report is a response to the information submitted, the applicants October 20, 2006 submission regarding its public amenities, and the requested FAR flexibility.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**

In their November 20, 2006 plans, the architects have made three sets of changes:

1. **Corner & Entrance:** The corner of the building joining K Street with Connecticut Avenue has been reworked, resulting in a vertical element that projects as a narrow "bay", echoing the three wider, projecting "bays" on the K Street façade. The corner entrance to the retail space in the building has also been made more prominent and now incorporates a two-story granite frame around the ground level entrances.
2. **Cornices:** The cornice elements above the bays on the K Street façade have been tapered, such that their profile now narrows as they project away from the building.
3. **Retail Base/Storefronts:** Polished stainless steel framing has been added around each set of storefront windows on K Street and Connecticut Avenue, which gives emphasis to a two-story retail base along these thoroughfares.

OP acknowledges the applicant's effort to respond to the concerns voiced at the October 23, 2006 hearing. Their stated position is that the building design embodies a coherent and refined architectural response to the site. However, while these changes have improved the relationship of parts of the building to its particular urban context, it is OP's opinion that *the whole of the building*—that is, the building as a unit, not just the sum of its parts— still falls short of adequately resolving the corner setting of this important location.

The following comments reflect the collective observations and suggestions of OP staff with regards to the most recent building design:

### 1. Corner & Entrance

The recent changes to the building add emphasis and articulation to the corner, and the “projecting bay” concept is in line with the K Street façade treatment. In particular, the two-story emphasis of the entrance through a granite frame and its use of a canopy similar to that of the primary building entrance on K Street relates to the scale of the pedestrian, and serves as an anchoring element. However, the addition of another massing element and façade treatment to the corner brings a new level of complexity to this part of the building—a level of complexity which is not currently generating a clear corner reading of the building. In OP’s opinion, there are two elements of the building which complicate its relationship to the corner of K Street and Connecticut Avenue:

- The first is the angle of the chamfered building corner. Because the corner angle of the building is currently perpendicular to Connecticut Avenue, the resulting angle formed with K Street is shallow and, from the perspective of a bystander on Farragut Square (see drawing A-31), is almost not perceivable. In other words, while the corner reading is “strong” from the vantage point of Connecticut Avenue, it is conversely “weak” from the vantage point of K Street and Farragut Square.
- The second component that poses a challenge the building’s corner design is the distinctly different façade treatment on Connecticut Avenue. When juxtaposed with the notably different façade treatment of K Street as well as another narrow “hinging” element at the corner, the building loses some of the harmony and clarity that would result from a more uniform architectural wrapping of the corner. The building presently located at the corner benefits from such an architectural treatment.

It is important to understand that, because a corner is —by definition— the point at which two or more parts of a form converge, the parts giving shape to the corner do so in concert and are therefore co-dependent. Resolving this (or any other) corner, therefore, is less a matter of addressing a single building component than it is a matter of ensuring that the *ensemble of parts* that meet at the corner actually *interlock in a graceful fashion*. In other words, 1000 Connecticut Avenue is likely to require an architectural approach which rethinks or explores, to some degree, not just one element of the corner (i.e., the central vertical zone or face), but also the flanking components on K Street and Connecticut Avenue.

In sum, while OP respects the applicant’s formal sensibility, it would recommend for studies that explore the building’s corner treatment in a more holistic fashion, as previously explained. These studies would show how a reasonable variation in elements such as, but not limited to, alternative angles spanning the corner, and variations in the relationship of the “central corner face” to its flanking facades, would affect the overall reading of the building and help it to gracefully span its corner site.

### 2. Cornices

While the compositional need for such elements could be averted through setbacks at the top of the building, the tapering of the cornices is a subtle and significant improvement over the previous design, and the result is a more elegantly proportioned and less imposing form.

### **3. Storefronts**

OP supports the expression of a retail band at the ground level that distinguishes itself clearly from the grid of office windows above the second level of the building. The new stainless steel liners framing level 1 and 2 windows on K Street, as well as the stainless steel liners framing the store frontage on Connecticut Avenue, will help to give the storefront a more nuanced presence at street level by more clearly articulating the base of the structure.

### **4. K Street Façade**

The architect has designed the K Street façade such that the spandrel panels of the three projecting “bays” are clad in honed and thermal finish granite panels, while the spandrel panels in the recessed portions of the building (the façade “behind the bays”) are clad in stainless steel panels. OP supports the visual and textural contrast generated by these different materials in the building design, as they will help to create a rhythm that attenuates the overall scale of the building along K Street. This is especially important because the proposed building—1000 Connecticut Avenue—will be occupying the consolidated space that two separate buildings currently occupy.

## **PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES**

The following is a response to the applicant’s submission dated October 20, 2006 regarding the proposed amenities.

### **1. Housing Linkage and Affordable Housing**

Item A, *Housing Linkage and Affordable Amenity*: \$841,700 is misleading because the housing amenity to be provided is actually \$172,038.

As part of the additional square footage of commercial space the applicant is requesting, they are required to provide housing by actual construction or make a financial contribution to a housing trust fund. The applicant has opted to provide financial contributions to the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO). Based on an additional 13,035 square feet of commercial space, a housing value of \$669,608 must be provided. The applicant is providing an additional 3,349 square feet of housing at a value of \$172,038. Therefore, the housing amenity has a value of \$172,038.

### **2. Other Amenities**

The applicant is also providing the following amenities as outlined in their prehearing statements:

- Dupont Circle Citizens Association: \$69,600
- Golden Triangle BID: \$50,000
- DSLBD and First Source Agreements
- Landscaping & sidewalk improvements
- Sustainable design features with clear benefits to the district, such as an extensive green roof and energy-conservation features

The final and signed agreements regarding the contributions to MHCDO, the Dupont Circle Citizens Association, the Golden Triangle BID and the DSLBD and First Source Agreements have not been submitted to-date. OP recommends that the signed agreements be provided prior to the Final Action by the Zoning Commission.

As noted in our earlier report, OP considers the amenity proffer as provided by the applicant to be weak, particularly given the lack of detail or conformity of many of the elements. OP has advised the applicant of this and has recommended augmenting the proffer to be commensurate with the density being gained through the PUD.

### **FAR FLEXIBILITY**

According to Section 2405.2, the maximum floor area ratio for the total of the project may not exceed 11.0. Section 2405.3 gives the Commission the discretion to increase the height or FAR by 5% (maximum of 11.55 FAR) if such an increase “is essential to the successful functioning of the project” and is consistent with other PUD purposes and standards. Originally, the applicant proposed a FAR of 11.11, and as highlighted in our original report, the applicant’s statement did not present any discussion or details as to the circumstances that makes the additional FAR “essential.” Neither was it addressed in the applicant’s presentation at the public hearing. The FAR has been increased to 11.12 with the redesign of the corner feature and the applicant has still not addressed why the additional FAR is essential.