

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director Development Review & Historic Preservation

DATE: July 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Preliminary OP Report for Z.C. 06- 14 B, Modification Request for Washington Gateway PUD
Square 3584, Lots 23, 811 – 813, at Florida and New York Avenues

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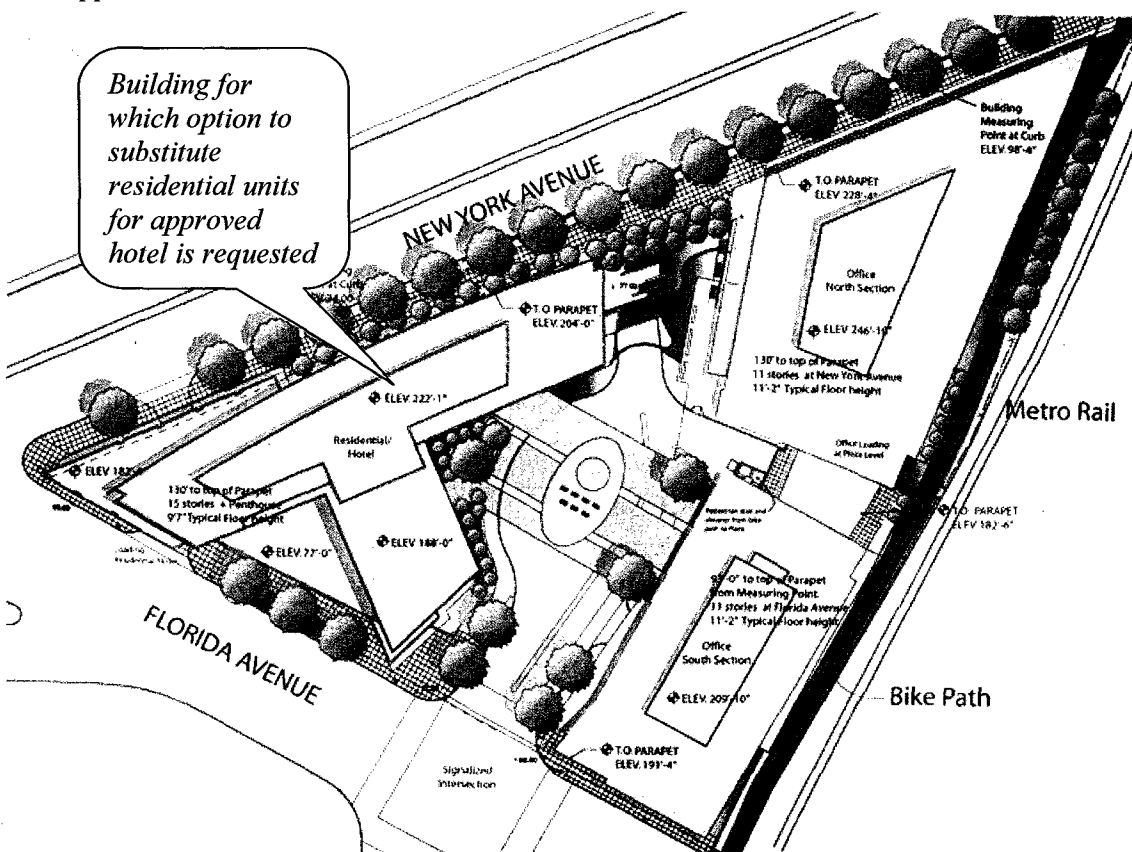
I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the Zoning Commission set down for a public hearing the proposed modification to an approved Planned Unit Development (PUD). The modifications would give the applicant the option to construct one of the proposed buildings as *either*: 1) The approved residential and hotel building, including approximately 5,000 square feet of retail space; *or* 2) An all-residential building that also includes the retail space.

II. APPROVED PUD & ITS STATUS

The Commission approved the PUD on February 12, 2007¹; and granted a two year extension on June 8, 2009. The extension is valid until June 29, 2011.

The PUD is on a triangular 3.1 acre site bounded by New York and Florida Avenues and the Metropolitan Branch (bicycle) Trail (MBT) adjacent to the right of way of Metrorail's Red Line, as shown on the approved site plan to the left. It is approved to consist of:



- A. One office building on the eastern side of the site.
- B. A residential and hotel building on the northwestern side of the site. The hotel and residences would be vertically separated and would have separate entries;
- C. A landscaped central plaza that could be entered from Florida Avenue, New York Avenue, or from an applicant-upgraded segment of the MBT.

The approved design is modern, mixing glass curtain walls, aluminum and masonry. The site

plan is intended to suggest the extension of the existing street grid, and would be open to the public from all three sides.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

¹ effective June 27 2007

Since the project's approval, the applicant has fenced and partially graded the site and has demolished the above-ground portions of the gas station that had formerly occupied the site. The two jumbo billboards remain.

II. SUMMARY OF REQUESTED MODIFICATIONS

The applicant has stated it would prefer to construct the PUD as approved, but has experienced difficulty financing a new hotel in the current market contraction, where the emphasis is on small boutique hotels or the re-branding of existing hotels. Accordingly, the applicant is asking the Commission for the flexibility to construct and operate the building at New York and Florida Avenues as either:

- Option 1: The residential and hotel building, with retail, now approved by the Commission, or
- Option 2: A -residential building with a greater number of dwelling units, with the previously approved retail space, and without a hotel.

Under either option the approved building on the east side of the site, parallel to the train tracks, would remain as approved: an office building with two wings connected in the middle, and 1,930 square feet of retail space. Both options would have the same public benefits and amenities, many of which have already been delivered to the community.

Under Option 2 the building at New York and Florida Avenues would differ from the approved Option 1 in the following ways:

- Parking: A net increase of 37 parking spaces.
- Roof Structure Setback Relief: Option 2 would require relief, including two feet five inches (2' 5") of roof structure setback relief on the southeast corner of the residential building and eight feet five inches (8' 5") of relief on the south side. In comparison to Option 1, this would be more relief along Florida Avenue, and less relief facing the court and plaza.
- Architectural Design of Building at NY & FL Avenues: The general footprint, height, massing, materials and color would be very similar to the approved building. The building facades would become somewhat simpler, with the all-residential option using less metal, more and lighter tan brick, employing fewer projecting bays, and a rectangular portion of the New York Avenue facade with materials and fenestration contrasting from the major portion of that face. Masonry would be configured to provide an apparent base or podium for the building on the New York Avenue incline, and the corner of New York and Florida Avenue would be more solid and darker than in Option 1. The roof structure enclosure would be longer.

Architecture	Very similar	Hotel Rooms	<i>Option: eliminate all 140-195 rooms</i>
GSF	No change	Office Space	No change
FAR	No change	Retail Space	No change
Footprint	No change	Size of DUs	No change noted
Height	Reduction of one story, but no change in height	Loading	Residential – no change; Office – no change; <i>Hotel - eliminated</i>
Lot Occupancy	No change		
Roof Structure Setback	<i>9'11" less relief needed for SE corner of res. bldg. 1'1" more relief needed on south side</i>	Parking Spaces	Same ratio of 0.6 space/unit <i>(+) 96 res., (-) 59 hotel = (+) 37 spaces</i>
Housing	<i>Up to 160 more units</i>	Benefits/Amenities	No change
Affordable Housing	<i>Proffer remains 8% @ 80% AMI – = approx 10-15 more ADUs</i>	Table 1: Comparison of Approved NY/FL Avenue Building and Requested Option	

III. ZONING ANALYSIS

TABLE 3: PROJECT DATA	C-3-C PUD	As Approved	Requested PUD Modification Option
[134,665 SF lot] <i>Lot Area – Residential: 48,035</i> <i>Lot Area, Office Bldg- 86,630</i>			
Gross Square Feet (GSF) – Aggregate Total	1,077,320	951,120	926,601 Comm., Res., Retail
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - Aggregate	8	7.06	6.97
Building Height	130'	130' measured from NY Avenue	Same
Gross Square Feet (GSF) - Commercial -Building	693,040SF	594,896 office 7,000 retail ² 601,896 total SF	591,753 office 5,038 retail 599, 205 total No change requested
Gross Square Feet (GSF) - Residential & Hotel Building	384,280 SF	229,690 residential ³ 120,443 hotel 350,133 total GSF	346,405 GSF 0 SF hotel
Number of Dwelling Units & Hotel Rooms		230-270 DU; 140-195 hotel rms.	430 DU max 0 hotel rooms
Affordable Dwelling Units @ 80% AMI		8% of residential GFA Approx. 18,375 GSF (Approx. 20 ADUs @ 900 GSF/DU)	8% of residential GFA Approx. 27,712 GSF Approx. 30 ADUs@ 900 GSF/DU
FAR - Commercial		6.9	6.83, No change requested
FAR - Residential & Hotel		7.3	7.21 residential No change requested
Lot Occupancy (non-res. uses)	100%	55%	Same
Roof Structures	18'-6"max height 1:1 setback	18'-6" max. height Relief: setback of 6' on SE; 12' on S of res/hotel	18'-6" max. height <i>Residential bldg relief:</i> <i>setback of 16'1" on SE</i> <i>corner and</i> <i>10'11" on south side.</i>
Parking Total	349	681 (incl. 2 for car sharing)	258 res. + 331 office = 589 (incl. 2 for car sharing)
Parking (Office Use)	277 required	1/1800 GSF Approx. 331	Same
Parking (Residential Use)	63 required	0.6/ DU	.6/DU— Proposed: 258
Parking (Hotel Use)	59 required	.25/sleeping room + 1/300 SF in largest function / exhibit space	0
Parking (Retail use)	9 required	9 provided	Same
Loading Berths (North Office)	3 @ 30'deep 1 @ 20'	3 @ 30' deep; 1 @ 20'	Same
Loading Berths (South Office)	2 @ 30' deep 1 @ 20'	2 @ 30' deep 1 @ 20'	Same
Loading Berths (Residential use)	1 @ 55' 1 @ 20'	1 @55' deep 1 @ 20'	Same
Loading Berths (Hotel use)	1 @ 30' 1 @ 20'	1 @ 30' deep 1 @ 20'	0
Loading Berths (Retail use)	none (is < 8,000 SF)	none (is < 8,000 SF)	Same
Residential Recreation Space	22,969 SF 10% of required GFA	14,344 SF (6.2%)	21,447 SF (6/2%)

² 1,930 SF of retail in office building and 5,070 SF of retail in residential and hotel building.

³ Ibid.

IV. OVERALL ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION NEEDED BY A PUBLIC HEARING

The requested modifications remain consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and with 11 DCMR Chapter 24's requirements for the setdown of a PUD modification. The proposed alternative plans respect the general intent of the previously approved PUD. Under either alternative the project would develop high performance uses for a strategically located tract that has been long-neglected. The requested flexibility would enable the applicant to respond more quickly to the uncertain futures for residential and hotel uses, thus increasing the chances of securing financing in a very challenging market.

OP recommends the Commission set down the modification request for a public hearing.

There are few items that OP will continue to discuss with the applicant prior to the public hearing.

Design: The following are preliminary comments based on comparisons of the finished renderings from the approved PUD with the more rudimentary auto-cad drawings in the requested modification option.

- *Ground Level, NY & FL:* Refine the treatment of the ground level façade at the corner of New York and Florida Avenues to reduce the visual impact of loading docks and "blank walls, and to provide a more welcoming and interesting treatment.
- *NY Ave. Façade:* As rendered on Sheet 251 the New York Avenue façade may have been simplified too much; additional consideration is needed of the balance among the glass corner block, the expanse of tan brick, the contrasting window treatments within the tan brick façade, and the shades of darker brick on the lower levels.

Distribution of Affordable Units and Unit Types: Plans will need to indicate how the expanded number of affordable units will be equitably distributed on all but the top floors. The applicant should specify the types and approximate square footages of the proposed units.

Roof Structure Screening: Due to grade changes this will be one of the District's taller buildings and will be prominent from several locations. The roof structure for the second option would appear to be larger than for the first option. The applicant should consider bringing more interest to the design of the screening.

Loading Berths: OP encourages the applicant to improve the design of the garage doors and loading dock gates near the NY/FL intersection.

The applicant has not submitted a revised traffic study for Option 2, and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has not asked for one. OP notes that while Option 2 would provide more parking, the absence of a hotel could result in fewer catering and delivery trucks, fewer peak traffic events, and fewer taxi pick-ups and drop-offs.

JS/slc AICP

Case Manager: Stephen Cochran, AICP