

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



MEMORANDUM

TO: Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser *JS*
Deputy Director

DATE: October 12, 2007

SUBJECT: Z.C. CASE NO. 07-23 – Request filed by Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, LLP for a special exception for further processing, a special exception and variance for a roof structure, and a campus plan amendment for Georgetown University, proposed by the President and Directors of Georgetown College at 3700 O Street, N.W.

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APPLICATION

The applicant proposes:

1. Campus Plan amendment approval to transfer density from the Multi-Sports Facility and MHC-1 Building to the Athletic Training Facility;
2. Further processing for the construction of a new Athletic Training Facility;
3. Further processing for the construction of a new Science Center building;
4. Further processing for modifications to the approved Multi-Sports Facility;
5. Special exception approval to reduce the set back of the roof structure; and
6. Variance approval to increase the height of the roof structure.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends **APPROVAL** of the application subject to the following condition:

All athletic events at the Multi-Sports Facility expected to draw over 100 visitors shall begin before 4:00 p.m. or after 7:00 p.m.

This condition is the same as the one required for the Multi-Sports Facility in 2005 in Zoning Commission Order 05-31.

BACKGROUND

Board of Zoning Adjustment Order No. 16566-F approved the 2000-2010 Georgetown University Campus Plan on April 5, 2005, subject to the following conditions:

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

1. *The Applicant's proposed campus plan is approved until December 31, 2010, subject to the following conditions intended to mitigate any adverse impacts potentially arising from the location of a university use in a residentially zoned district.*
2. *The Applicant shall not increase undergraduate enrollment above the cap of 6,016. This cap shall apply traditional full-time undergraduate students (that is, undergraduate students who require housing) and shall be calculated as an average of the total enrollment of traditional undergraduate students during the Fall and Spring semesters of the academic year.*
3. *The Applicant shall implement and enforce programs, as described in Findings of Fact No. 35-37 and set forth in Exhibit No. 191 of the record, designed to mitigate any adverse impacts associated with students living off-campus in the neighborhoods in the vicinity of the campus.*
4. *The applicant shall avoid scheduling events that attract large numbers of visitors to the campus during the peak times of 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The applicant shall employ campus personnel as necessary to direct visitors to campus parking areas and to facilitate smooth flow of traffic into and out of the campus.*
 - a) *All weekday evening performances at the Performing Arts Center expected to draw more than 100 visitors shall begin no earlier than 7:00 p.m.*
 - b) *Athletic events at Harbin Field expected to draw over 100 visitors shall begin before 4:00 p.m. or after 7:00 p.m.*
5. *The Applicant shall maintain a parking inventory of no more than 4,080 off-street parking spaces within the campus boundary.*
6. *The Applicant shall enhance its Transportation Management Program, described in Finding of Fact No. 20, so as to promote greater transit usage, including increased transit ridership of the GUTS bus service, and to work with the community, MedStar, and the Department of Public Works as part of a cooperative effort to look at mitigations strategies for Reservoir Road.*
7. *The Applicant shall prepare a revised campus plan that is consistent with this Order, accompanied by a table of changes that lists each change. In addition, the Applicant shall include in the revised Campus Plan its Code of Student Conduct; Guide to Off-Campus Living, description of its New Office of Campus Student Affairs Program, and any other documents reflecting the programs, policies and procedures it has or will institute, and to which it is required to implement and enforce, pursuant to condition no. 3 of this Order, including those described in Findings of Fact No. 35-37 and set forth in Exhibit No. 191 of the record. The Applicant shall submit an original and 10 copies of the revised plan to the Board no later than 30 days from the effective date of this Order, and shall, on the same day, serve a copy of the revised plan and table of changes on each party to this proceeding. Each party shall have 14 days in which to submit to the Board, and to serve on all other parties, its comments on the Applicant's proposed changes. Comments on the revisions shall be strictly limited to whether the revisions correctly and clearly reflect the Order. After review of the Applicant's proposed revised plan and the parties' comments, the Board shall determine whether*

proceedings are warranted or shall certify the revised copy as the approved campus plan. The revised plan shall be deemed approved 60 days after submission, absent action by the Board before that date. Copies of the approved plan shall be maintained in the Office of Zoning and the Office of Zoning Administrator.

A further processing to the 2000-2010 Georgetown University Campus Plan was approved by Zoning Commission Order 02-32 on April 14, 2003 to permit the Performing Arts Center.

A second further processing to the 2000-2010 Georgetown University Campus Plan was approved by Zoning Commission Order 05-06 on June 13, 2005 to permit a second Cyberknife facility at Georgetown University Hospital.

A third further processing to the 2000-2010 Georgetown University Campus Plan was approved by Zoning Commission Order 05-31 on November 28, 2005 to permit construction of the New Business School and renovation of Harbin Field into the Multi-Sports Facility.

CAMPUS PLAN AMENDMENT

The application requests a campus plan amendment to allow for the construction of the Athletic Training Facility, a 94,280 square foot building not designated by the 2000-2010 Campus Plan. The building is proposed to be located at a site currently developed with outdoor tennis courts, an athletic use. As the proposed building is also for athletics, the location of this building on the campus is consistent with the Campus Plan.

Reallocation of gross floor area from two other buildings is proposed to allow for the construction of the 94,280 square foot Athletic Training Facility building. Some of the gross floor area, 24,026 square feet, will be obtained as a result of the reduction in size of the Multi-Sports Facility and the transfer of those uses to the Athletic Training Facility. However, as the applicant has determined that more athletic facilities are necessary than originally anticipated to meet its needs, 70,254 square feet are proposed to be transferred from MHC-1. MHC-1 is a proposed medical/health care building that is as of yet unplanned. Therefore, this campus plan amendment will reallocate space that was originally proposed as "medical/health care" to "residential/campus life/athletics."

SPACE CATEGORIES	EXISTING SPACE DISTRIBUTION (SQUARE FEET)	PROPOSED SPACE DISTRIBUTION (SQUARE FEET)
Academic/administrative	642,027	642,027
Residential/campus life/athletics	88,500	158,754
Medical/health care	444,236	373,982
Academic/administrative/Medical health care	97,500	97,500
TOTAL	1,272,263	1,272,263

The reallocation of space does not affect the total amount of square footage permitted by the 2000-2010 Campus Plan. This reallocation of space should have no effect on student and staff populations, traffic and parking or noise. Rather, it allows the university to adapt the plan to meet its changing needs and to enable it to improve campus life for its students.

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the campus plan amendment as proposed by the applicant.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant requests special exception approval for further processing under the approved campus plan to:

1. Construct the Athletic Training Facility;
2. Construct a revised Multi-Sports Facility;
3. Construct the New Science Center;
4. Amend the Campus Plan to allow for a transfer of density from the Multi-Sports Facility and MHC-1 Building to the Athletic Training Facility;
5. Approval to increase the height of the New Science Center roof structure; and
6. Variance approval to decrease the setback of the New Science Center roof structure.

Athletic Training Facility

The Athletic Training Facility building is proposed to be a five-level 94,280 square foot building 82 feet in height. Three levels will be above ground; the other two below. It will include practice courts for basketball, volleyball, training equipment, locker rooms and office space. This building is intended to relieve overcrowding at the existing McDonough Gymnasium.

Multi-Sports Facility

The Multi-Sports Facility was approved in 2005 as a 41,000 square foot building, but was not constructed. It is now proposed to be approximately 17,371 square feet in size as a result of the athletic facilities and locker rooms being relocated from the Multi-Sports Facility to the Athletic Training Facility. The Multi-Sports Facility will now primarily contain a press box, concession sales and restrooms in a four-story building, and seating for approximately 4,500 in the stands.

New Science Center Facility

The New Science Center Facility building is proposed to be a five-story, 109,335 square foot building 66 feet in height. It will include classrooms, faculty offices, teaching laboratories, research laboratories and support space to accommodate multiple scientific disciplines. It is designed to LEED Silver certification and will be connected to the existing Leavey Center, the campus student center.

ZONING REGULATIONS

Section 210 of the Zoning Regulations, Colleges and Universities, sets forth the criteria required for approval of university uses within residential zone districts.

- 210.1 *Use as a college or university that is an academic institution of higher learning, including a college or university hospital, dormitory, fraternity, or sorority house proposed to be located on the campus of a college or university, shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-1 District if approved by the Zoning Commission under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.*

The subject application requests special exception approval by the Zoning Commission to permit the construction of university buildings on the main campus of Georgetown University within a residential zone district.

- 210.2 *Use as a college or university shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other objectionable conditions.*

The proposed New Science Center, Multi-Sports Facility and Athletic Training Facility will not result in an increase in the number of students, noise, traffic or other objectionable conditions. The New Science Center will provide additional space for science programs already existing on campus. The Multi-Sports Facility will be reduced in size from what has already been approved, and the Athletic Training Facility is proposed include the facilities that were taken out of the Multi-Sports Facility and provide adequate athletic facilities for the existing campus population. However, as the Multi-Sports Facility is still proposed to host the events that currently take place at Harbin Field, the Office of Planning recommends that the condition that was included in Zoning Commission Order 05-31 still apply to the Multi-Sports Facility. That condition requires that any event anticipated to attract more than 100 visitors should begin either before 4:00 p.m. or after 7:00 p.m.

- 210.3 *In R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5-A, and R-5-B Districts, the maximum bulk requirements normally applicable in the districts may be increased for specific buildings or structures; provided, that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-B District. In all other Residence Districts, similar bulk increases may also be permitted; provided, that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-D District. Because of permissive increases as applicable to normal bulk requirements in the low-density districts regulated by this title, it is the intent of this subsection to prevent unreasonable campus expansion into improved low-density districts:*

The subject application proposes to increase the FAR from 1.13 to 1.215, which is less than the maximum FAR of 1.41 permitted by the 2000-2010 Campus Plan, and less than the maximum 1.8 permitted by the R-3 District.

210.4 *As a prerequisite to requesting a special exception for each college or university use, the applicant shall have submitted to the Commission for its approval a plan for developing the campus as a whole, showing the location, height, and bulk, where appropriate, of all present and proposed improvements, including but not limited to the following:*

(a) Buildings and parking and loading facilities;

(b) Screening, signs, streets, and public utility facilities;

(c) Athletic and other recreational facilities; and

(d) A description of all activities conducted or to be conducted on the campus, and of the capacity of all present and proposed campus development.

The 2000-2010 Campus Plan, approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment of April 5, 2005, does not include a plan for all of the proposed improvements. The New Science Center and the Multi-Sports Facility are included within the plan. The Athletic Training Facility is not included within the Campus Plan, and an amendment to the campus plan is required in order to permit this building to be constructed as proposed.

210.5 *Within a reasonable distance of the college or university campus, and subject to compliance with § 210.2, the Commission may also permit the interim use of land or improved property with any use that the Commission may determine is a proper college or university function.*

The subject application does not propose interim use of land located off-campus.

210.6 *When a major new building that has been proposed in a campus plan is instead moved off-campus, the previously designated site shall not be designated for, or devoted to, a different major new building unless the Commission has approved an amendment to the campus plan applicable to the site; provided, that for this purpose a major new building is defined as one specifically identified in the campus plan.*

No major new buildings are proposed to be moved off-campus as a result of this application.

210.7 *In reviewing and deciding a campus plan application or new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the Commission shall consider, to the extent they are relevant, the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.*

The proposal is consistent with the policies of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, including the following:

“Policy EDU-3.3.2: Balancing University Growth and Neighborhood Needs

Encourage the growth and development of local colleges and universities in a manner that recognizes the role these institutions play in contributing to the District’s character, culture, economy, and is also consistent with and supports community improvement and neighborhood conservation objectives. Discourage university actions that would adversely affect the character or quality of life in surrounding residential areas.” (§ 1214.6)

The proposed academic building and athletic facilities are reasonable additions to the campus and will not adversely affect the character or quality of life in surrounding residential areas.

- 210.8 *As an integral part of the application requesting approval of new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the college or university shall certify and document that the proposed building or amendment is within the floor area ratio (FAR) limit for the campus as a whole, based upon the computation included in the most recently approved campus plan and the FARs of any other buildings constructed or demolished since the campus plan was approved.*

The subject application contains documentation of the existing and proposed FARs for the campus as a whole. The proposed FAR is 1.215, less than the maximum 1.41 permitted by the Campus Plan.

- 210.9 *Before taking final action on an application for use as a college or university, the Commission shall submit the application to the D.C. Office of Planning and the D.C. Department of Transportation for review and written reports.*

The subject application was referred to the Office of Planning and the Department of Transportation for review and written reports. The District Department of Transportation had no objection to the proposal in a written report dated October 10, 2007.

Based on the analysis above, the Office of Planning concludes that the subject application is in conformance with the provisions of the § 210, provided the campus plan amendment to allow the Athletic Training Facility is approved.

Special Exception

Special exception approval pursuant to § 400.7 of the Zoning Regulations is required to allow the roof structure of the New Science Center to be set back a distance from the edge of the building a distance less than its height. The proposed roof structure is designed as a peaked roof atop the New Science Center building, in harmony with design of the McDonough School of Business. In addition, as a science building with practical laboratories that must be ventilated, ductwork and mechanical equipment associated with the venting of these laboratories must be located on the roof and located outside of the required roof structure setback area. In order to conceal this equipment the roof structure must be expanded to cover the entire roof area. However, as the roof is proposed to be sloped the impact of this structure is lessened. This is because as it increases in

height, so too does the distance of the edge of the roof structure from the exterior walls of the building. Therefore, the intent and purpose of the Zoning Regulations will not be impaired and light and air of adjacent buildings will not be adversely affected.

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the special exception to roof structures as requested by the applicant.

Variance Relief

Variance relief is requested to allow a 41.38 foot high roof structure atop the New Science Center building, or a variance of 22.78 feet. This variance will allow for a steeply sloped roof, consistent with other buildings within the academic quadrangle, such as the McDonough School of Business. It will also allow the applicant to accommodate elevator overrides, and mechanical equipment and ductwork necessary for the adequate venting of the laboratories that will be located within this science building.

The extraordinary or exceptional situation in this case is that the design of the building must fit into the context of the existing surrounding university campus, as it must be approved by the Old Georgetown Board, and that additional rooftop ventilation equipment is required to adequately vent the science laboratories, resulting in a unique situation. As an academic science building with practical laboratories, a ventilation system superior to that which is typically found in an academic building is necessary to ensure that the building can be adequately and properly ventilated. The mechanical equipment and ductwork necessary for this ventilation is proposed to be located within the roof structure. The additional height is necessary to accommodate the additional equipment. The design of the proposed building with peaked roof is similar to that of the McDonough School of Business, which has a peaked roof.

The practical difficulty is that the building must be designed to accommodate the additional ventilation equipment and must harmonize architecturally with surrounding buildings. The provision of the steeply peaked roof, which would harmonize with the McDonough School of Business building, provides the applicant with a suitable location in which to place the additional ventilation equipment. The applicant informed the Office of Planning that it is necessary to place this equipment on the roof and the proposed roof structure provides such a location.

The requested variance will not substantially impair the purpose and integrity of the zone plan. The roof structure would appear to be the roof of the building, and not a structure located on the roof of the building. As a result it would be viewed as an integral part of the building.

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the variance to the height of the roof structure as requested by the applicant.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2E, at its regularly scheduled meeting of October 3, 2007, voted to recommend approval of the application.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The **District Department of Transportation**, in a letter dated October 10, 2007, had no objections to the proposal.

The **U.S. Commission on Fine Arts**, in a memorandum dated May 17, 2007, had no objection to the concept design for the Science Center building. On October 5, 2007, the CFA reviewed the Multi-Sports Facility and had no objection, but requested additional design review of the Athletic Training Facility.

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends **APPROVAL** of the application as submitted by the applicant, subject to the following condition:

All athletic events at the Multi-Sports Facility expected to draw over 100 visitors shall begin before 4:00 p.m. or after 7:00 p.m.