

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



RECEIVED
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING
FEB 27 2008

Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director *JS*

DATE: February 25, 2008

SUBJECT: Final Report - ZC #07-26 (1400 7th Street, NW- O Street Market)
PUD and Related Map Amendment

APPLICATION

The applicant, O Street Roadside, LLC, proposes the rehabilitation of the historic O Street Market at 7th and O Streets NW, including the construction of a mixed use development consisting of housing, a hotel, grocery store and other retail uses. The proposal is being reviewed as a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related map amendment to accommodate the redevelopment of the site. The property is within the C-2-A District and a map amendment to the C-3-C District is proposed.

UPDATE

On February 20, 2008, OP met with the applicant to discuss its February 15, 2008 submission. OP expressed concerns regarding the unanticipated revisions in the height and roof structure and requested the applicant to:

1. Provide as an alternative, architectural drawings for a building with a 90' height and explain the desirability of the proposed 95' tall building. The applicant has stated to OP that the increase would provide more generous clear ceiling heights for the residential component, as the ceiling height for Giant is fixed at approximately 17 feet.
2. Revise the penthouse elevation to show a break between the roof structure housing mechanical equipment and the tower element fronting the former 8th Street right of way. (Attached)

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval of the requested PUD and related map amendment to the C-3-C District. The originally submitted design was amended based on the Zoning Commission's request that the height of the building be reduced. The applicant has complied with the request for a height reduction, including removal of the living space within the penthouse structure, which also reduced the penthouses' FAR to 0.18.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 07-24
EXHIBIT NO. 30

The requested flexibility would accommodate the design features of the project, including multiple principal buildings on a single lot of record, the roof structure locations and the ability to phase the project at different times. OP supports the amenities proffered by the applicant, including:

1. Remodeled full service grocery
2. Preservation of the O Street Market
3. Affordable housing units
4. Restoration of the 8th Street right-of-way
5. New retail spaces
6. LSDBE Agreement (to be signed prior to ZC action)
7. A community amenity package of up to \$262,000, as specified in the February 15, 2008 submission.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The development site consists of lots 829 and 830 in Square 398 which is bound by 7th Street on the east, 9th Street on the west, O Street on the south and P Street to the north. The former 8th Street bisects the square but remains undeveloped due to District Council action which prohibits development along the 100 ft-wide right-of-way. 8th Street is part of the historic L'Enfant Street Plan. The property is improved with a Giant grocery store, a surface parking lot and a portion of the demolished O Street Market.

The square is 2 blocks south of the Howard University Metro Station (8th Street Exit) and one block north of the Convention Center, in a neighborhood of rowhomes and commercial businesses along 7th and 9th Streets.

The Historic Preservation staff's report adequately establishes the historic context of the site and its significance in the Shaw/LeDroit neighborhood (report attached).



PROPOSAL

The proposal to redevelop the O Street Market would serve as a neighborhood center and mid-city commercial node between Downtown and U Street. The mixed use development will include a relocated grocery at the original market site and re-use of the 8th Street right-of-way for vehicular, pedestrian and retail activity. The mixed uses would include:

- A 65,000 square foot grocery store
- 10,000 square feet of retail
- 100 residential units as affordable rental for seniors
- 227 residential units as market rate rental
- 300 residential units as condominiums
- 210 hotel rooms
- An 8,000 square foot restaurant

A three-level below-grade, 580-space parking garage and loading dock facilities are also included. The re-opened section of 8th Street would provide access to approximately 91 ground-floor retail parking spaces which would not be visible from the surrounding streets.

A PUD related map amendment is also requested to accommodate the proposed 770,780 sq. ft GFA at a density of 5.15 FAR, and a maximum building height of 95 feet in the residential building shown on Lot 1 of the most recent submission (February 15, 2008). OP supports the C-3-C designation as the preferred map amendment for the site, as discussed in the subsequent comprehensive plan section of this report.

2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The 2006 Future Land Use Map was amended to increase the designation of this site to mixed-use medium density commercial and high density residential.

The 2006 Generalized Policy Map includes the site within the Shaw/Convention Center Policy Area (S/CC). The S/CC area is identified as a Neighborhood Enhancement Area and the 7th Street frontage of the subject square is also identified as part of a Main Street Mixed Use corridor.

The guiding philosophy of the Neighborhood Enhancement Area is one of compatibility and “[N]ew housing should be encouraged to improve the neighborhood, and must be consistent with the land use designation on the Future Land use map.” The Main Street designation calls for “pedestrian-oriented environment with traditional storefronts. Many have upper story residential or office uses. Conservation and redevelopment that happens should support transit use and enhance the pedestrian environment.”

The site is part of the Near Northeast Area of the Comprehensive Plan. There are several applicable policy and action items that specifically address the O Street Market and this area generally, including support of continuous retail along 7th and 9th streets that is attractive to residents, convention-goers, and visitors (policy NNW-2.1.5); provision of affordable housing

(NNW2.1.1); and improvement to streets and open spaces that create a sense of community (NNW2.1.7)

Action Item NNW-2.1-F specifically focuses on the development of O Street Market as a mixed use project as the focal point for the 7th and 9th Street retail corridors:

- Support the development of the O Street market site as a mixed use project that becomes the focal point for the 7th and 9th Street retail corridors.

In order to realize the affordable residential component, the improved retail center and respect the historic elements on the site, OP supports the related map amendment with the proposed 5.15 FAR as being within the range of high density residential. High density residential is typically around the 6.0 FAR for matter-of-right projects, with up to 8.0 FAR under PUDs. Therefore, the 5.15 FAR proposed for the site is not excessive or inconsistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

The square was targeted for increased intensity of development under the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. But as subsequently discussed, the 100-foot wide 8th Street right of way, as well as the required setback above the market occupies a significant area of the site that cannot be developed. Therefore, the requested density can only be achieved through increased height on some portions of the site.

The Convention Center Area Strategic Development Small Area Action Plan, adopted by the D.C. Council pursuant to Public Resolution Number 16-759 on June 20, 2006, and the Uptown Arts Destination District establish a vision whereby this site would serve as a neighborhood center and mid-city commercial node between Downtown and U Street.

Specific recommendations for this site include the encouragement of medium to high density residential, ground level retail uses, with a concentration along O Street. This is intended to provide an east-west link between retail uses along 9th Street to the south and along 7th Street to the north, restoration of the O Street Market, and the re-establishment of 8th Street through the site. As proposed, this redevelopment meets these recommendations to further economic development initiatives already occurring both south and north of the square along 7th and 9th streets.

ZONING

The site is currently zoned C-2-A, which is . . . designed for the matter-of-right low density development, including office, retail and all kinds of residential uses to:

- a maximum lot occupancy of 60% for residential uses,
- a maximum FAR of 3.5 for residential use,
- 1.5 FAR for other permitted uses, and
- a maximum height of 65 feet.

The following table is a comparison of the C-2-A standards, the C-3-C/PUD standards and the development proposal for the project:

Table 1

	C-2-A Standards	C-3-C PUD	Proposal
Area	N/A	15,000 sq. ft.	149,600 sq. ft.
Height	50 ft	130 ft.	95 ft.
FAR	2.5 (total) (1.5 for non residential use)	8.0	5.15
Lot Occupancy	60%	100%	100%
Rear Yard	15 feet	6 ft. minimum or 2 ins./ft. of height or 22ft	45 feet
Open Court	4 inches per foot of height	27 ft.	17 ft. 2 ins. (Open Court 5)
Parking	Residential: 1 per 2 du Retail: In xs of 3,000 sq.ft, 1 per 300 sq.ft of gfa and cellar area. Hotel: 1 per 2 rms, plus 1 per 150 sq. ft of fl. Area in the largest function room	1 per 4 du (170) In xs of 3,000 sq. ft, 1 per 300 ft of GFA and cellar floor area (91) 1per 4 rms and 1 per 300 ft of floor area in the exhibit space or function room (50)	280 (170 required) 250 (91 required) 50 (50 required) 580 with vault parking, 500 without vault parking
Loading	Residential: 2 loading berth @ 55 ft. deep 2 loading platform @ 200 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. Retail: 1 loading berth @ 30 ft. deep 1 loading platform @ 100 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	Residential: None Required Retail: (with grocery 5,000-20,000 GFA) 1 loading berth @ 30 ft. deep 1 loading platform @ 100 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	For Residential and Retail Uses: 4 loading berths @ 55 ft deep 3 loading berths @ 30 ft. deep 2 service delivery spaces @ 20 ft.

FLEXIBILITY

The following is requested to accommodate the proposed site plan:

- Relief from the one to one setback requirement for four roof structures, as shown on D2 of the Zoning Plan submitted by the applicant;
- Relief to permit multiple buildings on the same lot of record;
- Relief from the open court requirement
- Flexibility to permit phasing of the development;
- Variation in the number of residential units and senior housing units, hotel rooms and ability to convert hotel rooms to apartment units; and
- Variation in the number of parking assignments and exterior materials.

Roof Structure

The mechanical penthouse on the east above the east residential rental building, the elevator serving the senior residential building and the mechanical penthouse for the elevator of the residential condominium building are non-compliant for roof structure setbacks. Due to the width of the buildings, and the provision of underground parking and loading facilities, the structural requirements dictate the most favorable location of these elements in the building. OP supports the revised new design and subsequent relief from the setback requirement for the roof structures as submitted to OP on Monday February 25, 2008 and attached to this report.

Multiple Buildings

Two theoretical lots would be created as shown in the submitted zoning plan (D2). Lot #1 would consist of the relocated Giant grocery at the historic market site and the residential rental and senior buildings. Similarly, Lot #2 would be developed with mixed use buildings including residential, retail and hotel uses. The design attempts to maximize development on the site while creating gaps in the massing and focuses the longest facades towards the interior along 8th Street. OP supports the spatial development as proposed, since it breaks up the massing on both lots, and provides open and closed court areas for light and air to the buildings. Therefore, multiple buildings on the subject lots are preferred to massive, denser structures which are not ideal to accommodate the varied uses intended for the site.

Open Court

Open court area 5, shown on D2 of the plan indicates that a 27 foot-wide open court is required where 17 feet 2 inches would be provided. OP believes that the difference of 10 feet is minimal in this instance. Provision of the required 27 feet width would remove living area from either the hotel or residential structure or both. Light and air circulation to the hotel and residential structure would not be adversely affected by the loss of 10 feet in width between the buildings.

Phasing of the development

The application indicates the project will be phased but it does not include the phasing priorities of various elements of the proposal. OP expects the applicant to provide additional information to the Commission, which may include approximate scheduling and development priorities. While OP does not object to phasing, due to the significance of this development to the community, OP believes this information is important in managing the immediate neighborhood and the District's expectations regarding the site's redevelopment. Therefore, the applicant should provide additional information prior to final action by the Commission.

Variation in the number of residential units

The application proposes a range of units from 300 to 350 for Building 1 and 280 to 330 for building 2 (D1). OP has no objection to potential changes in the number of units or in the unit assignments of the development, on condition that affordable units would continue to be provided according to the inclusionary zone standards anticipated by Chapter 26, 11 DCMR.

Variation in the number of parking assignments

OP is supportive of reduced parking on the site if the applicant, the community and DDOT determines that no adverse impacts would accrue to the immediate neighborhood. As proposed, on-site parking is in excess of that required by the zone district regulations. OP would support variation in the number of units no less than the number of spaces required by the regulations at this time.

Exterior materials

OP believes that the quality of materials is important in the site's redevelopment due to its central location identified in the Convention Center Area Strategic Development Plan –“The restored O Street market is the focal point of the retail corridor and the neighborhood.” The applicant has agreed to submit a range of material samples and color schemes under

consideration at the hearing or prior to final action by the Commission. Alternatively, minor modifications may be reviewed by the Commission upon the applicant's request.

OP supports the flexibility requested above on condition that the requested changes, including façade changes do not adversely affect the quality of the site design and continue to meet the expectations of the community and the various area plans for the convention center neighborhood.

PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. Section 2400.1 states that a PUD is “designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.” In order to maximize the use of the site consistent with the zoning regulations and to utilize opportunities for additional FAR the applicant is requesting that the proposal be reviewed as a consolidated PUD. This will allow the utilization of the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2.

The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development ands other incentives, such as increased building height and density; provided, that the project offers a commendable number of quality public benefits and that it protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience.”

Section 2403 further outlines the standards under which the application is evaluated.

2403.3 The impact of the project on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to be unacceptable, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project.

PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

The objectives of a PUD are to permit flexibility of development in return for the provision of superior public benefits, provided the PUD process is not used to circumvent the intent and purposes of the Zoning Regulations, or results in an action inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Public amenities are defined in Section 2407.3 as including “one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors”.

The proposed redevelopment targets an under-utilized site in an important emerging mixed-use corridor. The proposal enhances the housing revitalization in this targeted area of the District by providing affordable senior housing and rental housing with new neighborhood serving retail opportunities. In addition the reopening of 8th Street provides additional public area for creating an active and complete street to improve the neighborhood's safety and livability.

The amenity package evaluation is partially based on an assessment of the additional development gained through the application process. The site is zoned C-2-A which permits a maximum density of 2.5 FAR and PUD density of 3.0 FAR. The proposal requests a PUD related change in the zone designation to C-3-C to permit a 5.15 FAR and to utilize the height benefit permitted by the C-3-C zone. The proposed FAR is 2.65 more than the matter-of-right density and thirty feet taller.

The applicant has listed a number of areas which they feel contribute towards their amenity package:

Superior Urban Design, Architecture and Site Planning

The **site's design** with multiple buildings varies in its architectural expressions and scale. As stated in the plans (A2), the design's approach seeks to "reinforce the finer grain of buildings on the site and allow the buildings to relate both to the similarly scaled structures in the surrounding context..." There is no immediately abutting R-4 zone to this site as the site is surrounded by C-2-A and C-2-B zoned properties. The nearest residentially zoned structures in the R-4 District is approximately 200 feet to the west and separated from this project site by the C-2-A commercial district along both 7th and 9th streets.

The involvement of Historic Preservation staff, as well as community input has ensured that the design option presented respects the neighborhood's character as the applicant's sightline study demonstrates. Special consideration was given to the dilapidated historic market building at the eastern edge of the site where setbacks and interior court spaces were intended to frame the market as an important element on the site. The project was approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board and was referred to the Mayor's Agent for Historic Preservation, who also concluded the project was one of special merit.

The **massing of the buildings** are expressed through its tapered heights to the east and west of the site, with increased height concentrated towards the 100 foot-wide 8th Street. The penthouse proposed on the residential buildings were reduced to house mechanical units, which reduced the FAR from 5.35 to 5.15. OP has worked with the applicant to ensure that roof structures above the 90 foot roof line maintain the general context of a roof structure. The proposal keeps the top two floors to an FAR of 0.18 where 0.37 FAR is allowed and embeds the bulk of the mechanical equipment within the penthouse floor. Thus, as proposed only 43 % of the allowable roof structure FAR would be used for the mechanical penthouse.

The **rededication of the closed 8th Street** to pedestrian and vehicular activity is offered as a primary amenity of this project. Preliminary talks with DDOT have highlighted the importance of an additional north-south connection to further redevelopment in this area. This amenity would add to the attractiveness and convenience of the development and the neighborhood as a whole. The site is designed to have minimum negative impacts while providing ease of pedestrian and vehicular access particularly as the loading and the majority of parking will be placed below grade. OP requested revised plans on treatment of the former 8th street right-of-way including the raised street which would read as a plaza and materials for 8th Street. OP has also requested the applicant to describe the retail experience and openings.

The applicant will meet with DDOT at its required preliminary design review meeting (PDRM) prior to the permitting stage to discuss the public realm elements of the proposed development.

The predominant **exterior material** proposed for the buildings is brick. However a variety of panels, including metal concrete and terra cotta may be considered as accent materials throughout the site as shown on A4 of the submission. As previously stated, the applicant has requested flexibility to vary the materials at final design. Based on the February 21st meeting the applicant has agreed to submit a materials sample board that includes a range of colors within a material.

Special Value to the Neighborhood

The applicant is proposing **affordable housing** in the project with about 100 units dedicated to senior rental housing for residents earning up to 60% of AMI. The density being granted is within the medium density designated for the site but additional building height is necessary to accommodate the FAR needed to include affordable elements.

The provision of new retail space in the neighborhood would increase the pedestrian activity to create a lively residential experience with an improved urban streetscape.

Local Business Opportunities and First Source Agreements

By entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the District of Columbia Local Business Opportunity Commission, the applicant agrees to include participation by small, local and disadvantaged businesses in the contracted development costs in connection with the design development, construction, maintenance and security of the project.

By working with the Department of Employment Services, the applicant will agree to use DOES as its first source for recruitment, referral and placement of new hires for employees whose jobs are created by the PUD and will hire fifty-one (51) percent of District's residents for all new jobs in connection with the project construction. The **hotel** proposed for the site would be a valuable amenity in fulfilling permanent employment opportunities of the DOES.

Additional Considerations: Green Elements and Transportation Demand Management

OP would support consideration in the plans to capture and reuse rainwater for the landscaping on site or green roof elements as a way to reduce run-off into the stormwater system. OP met with the applicant to discuss its submitted revisions dated February 15, 2008. Based on the discussion, the applicant agreed to submit a revised Leeds checklist and Green Buildings or other scoring systems for sustainable features of the project. Computations on before and after storm water runoff calculations would also be provided to show positive effects of "green" areas at grade level court areas of buildings.

Bike parking spaces would also be included. However, potential for a car-share parking space on-site should also be considered. If provided, these amenities would be supported by DDOT as transportation demand management strategies (TDM) to reduce the reliance on car ownership and automobile use in the neighborhood.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The application was referred to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS) and DC WASA for comments. The DC Fire and EMS Department in its February 5, 2008 letter indicated no objection to the application as long as construction is in compliance with the International Fire Code (2000 Edition) (attached). DC WASA's report of February 24, 2008, is also attached for the record. DDOT's report will be filed under separate cover.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

This project has been long awaited in the community and has received unanimous approval by ANC-2C, as evidenced in its letter of support received by the Commission on December 14, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

OP concludes that the redevelopment proposal for the site respects the various site constraints and includes community support to further both economic and residential development in the re-emerging Shaw/Le Droit neighborhood. The project includes elements that exceed what could be achieved as a matter-of-right including the relocation of all loading and parking below ground, the reuse of the market as a market, affordable housing and the reconnection of 8th Street. The relocation of the loading below grade allows for the site to have multiple active street frontages achieving the Main Street retail corridor anticipated by various plans.

OP supports the development proposal's consistency with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, as well as Council adopted Small Area Plan and recommends the Commission's approval of the submitted plan and recommends approval of the submitted plans to redevelop the site including, the 95 foot height and density, as well as:

- The requested flexibility to accommodate the design features of the project, including multiple principal buildings on a single lot of record, the roof structure locations and the ability to phase the project at different times; and
- The amenities proffered by the applicant:
 1. A remodeled grocery
 2. Preservation of the O Street Market
 6. Affordable housing units
 4. Restoration of the 8th Street right-of-way
 2. New retail spaces
 6. LSDBE Agreement (to be signed prior to ZC action)
 7. A community amenity package of up to \$262,000 as specified in the February 15, 2008 submission.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Revised Penthouse Elevation - February 25, 2008
2. Historic Preservation Staff Report, March 07, 2007.
3. DC FEMS Report, February 5, 2008.
4. DC WASA Report, February 20, 2008.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	1400 7th Street, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	O Street Market		Consent Calendar
		X	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	March 22, 2007	X	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	07-103	X	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott	X	Demolition
			Subdivision

The applicants, Shalom Baranes Architects for Roadside Development, seek conceptual design review for a rehabilitation and new construction project that would incorporate the O Street Market into a new grocery store. While resulting in reconstruction of the collapsed truss roof and partial reconstruction of the missing north wall, the proposal would entail substantial demolition in the removal of the now intact west wall for which the applicants will be seeking approval from the Mayor's Agent as a project of special merit. The incorporation of the market into the supermarket is only part of a larger planned unit development for the two block site (bounded between 7th, 9th, O and P streets, NW) which will include a hotel, ground-level retail, several apartment buildings, a seniors' housing complex, low-rise townhouses, and the reopening of 8th Street.

The O Street Market is a DC landmark listed on the National Register. The Shaw Historic District is located to the north, south and west but does not include this site. However, as the two-block parcel consists of a single lot of record on which the landmark is located, construction on the entire site would be subject to review for compatibility with the landmark. At the recommendation of the HPO, the current submission focuses primarily on the treatment of the O Street Market and the general site plan. The massing and design of the surrounding new construction is still being developed and will be presented at a later date.

History and Description

Constructed in 1881, the O Street Market is one of three remaining 19th century public market buildings that were built as part of a massive public works effort in the post-Civil War era to modernize the city's infrastructure. Architecturally, the building is noteworthy for its picturesque corner tower and decorative brick corbelling while also reflecting the specialized building type that public markets had become in the Victorian period. While not designed by Adolph Cluss (the architect of Eastern Market and the demolished Center Market), the plan and design of the O Street Market were clearly influenced by his prototypes. Important components of the building type include a lofty, one-story space with an open column-free plan to allow maximum flexibility for the arrangement of vendor stalls; ample natural light and multiple means of access provided by large windows and doors on all sides of the building; smooth interior surfaces to facilitate cleaning; and natural ventilation created by large windows, a monitor skylight, and vertical air shafts within the brick piers.

The O Street Market remained an important commercial center of the neighborhood through the mid-20th century but closed following the 1968 riots when much of this portion of 7th Street was devastated by fire. With substantial public funding, the building was purchased and reopened by a private operator in 1980 at about the same time as the Giant grocery store opened. Never able to compete financially immediately adjacent to a modern supermarket, the market closed again in 2002. The structure's metal truss roof collapsed during a snowstorm in 2003, and with approval from the HPRB the north party wall was removed to allow access for debris clearance. Working with the Board of Condemnation and HPO, Roadside has recently completed remedial stabilization of the exterior walls.

O Street Market occupies the southwest corner of a site that was formerly composed of two city blocks which were combined into a single mega-block as part of the Shaw Urban Renewal Plan to facilitate their redevelopment. As a result, 8th Street (since determined a contributing element to the L'Enfant Plan) was legally closed. An easement imposed by the DC Council prohibits construction within its 100' wide street right-of-way.

Project Background

Roadside Development purchased the O Street Market and the parcel that includes these two squares in August 2001. In 2002, they presented and obtained HPRB approval for relatively modest renovation and alteration work which would have had the unfortunate result of subdividing the open market hall into multiple retail spaces with dropped ceilings. The project also included alterations to the large mid-block parking lot for Giant, wherein much of the discussion with the HPO and HPRB centered on retaining the 8th Street right-of-way.

While it would have provided a reuse for the historic building, all parties came to realize that the 2002 project didn't sufficiently capitalize on the value of the market building or address the larger design and urban planning failures of the existing Giant and the overall site. With encouragement from the Office of Planning for developing a more comprehensive planned unit development project, the owners embarked on several years of negotiations with Giant Food (which has since been subsumed into the Dutch supermarket conglomerate Ahold) to redevelop the entire site. With 45 years remaining on their existing lease, and no particular interest beyond selling groceries, approval by Giant for alteration or reconstruction of their building was critical to any project moving forward.

Concurrent with Roadside's negotiations with Giant, the Office of Planning developed two small area plans in consultation with the community, property owners, various District agencies and other stakeholders that included consideration of this site. Adopted by the DC Council, the "Convention Center Area Development Plan" and the "Uptown Arts Destination District" establish a vision whereby this site would serve as a neighborhood center and mid-city commercial node between Downtown and U Street. Specific recommendations for this site include the encouragement of medium to high density residential construction, ground level retail uses (particularly with a concentration along O Street to provide an east-west link between retail uses concentrated along 9th Street to the south and along 7th Street to the north), restoration of the O Street Market, and the reestablishment of 8th Street.

Proposal

The new conceptual plan, which has been agreed to by Giant, calls for construction of a new supermarket which would incorporate the O Street Market as a part of the building [see applicants submission, page A12]. The store's entrance would open to 8th Street with a covered parking lot on the west side of 8th Street; on top of the parking would be a mid-block garden serving several new high-rise residential buildings. Additional parking and all loading for the grocery, a hotel and several apartment buildings would be located underground, with access off 9th Street [A13]. Along O Street between 8th and 9th would be the hotel lobby and retail spaces, P Street would have several lobbies for residential towers above, while 9th Street would be lined with low-rise townhouses. 8th Street would be reopened with a 30' roadbed with the buildings aligned along the original 100' right-of-way to recreate its historic condition.

Excavation and construction of below-grade parking and loading would result in the demolition of the west wall of the market. Two (of the original five) brick piers of the wall would be recreated to define the original market building; otherwise, the wall would be open to provide a continuous floor plan within the new supermarket [A18]. A comparable conceptual treatment to provide some definition at the location of the missing north wall, a lesser-designed party wall without piers, would be provided but is not detailed in the submission. The collapsed truss roof with its monitor skylight would be recreated (presumably reengineered to increase its load capacity). A continuous skylight around the north and west perimeter of the market would be provided to create a separation between the modern store and the historic market and to allow views within the store of the recreated roof [A17]. As the original doors of the market along O and 7th streets would no longer provide access to the building, two alternatives are provided in an effort to enliven 7th Street – Option A is a modern interpretation of the old market shed awning that once wrapped the façade; Option B includes individual awnings over the openings similar to what was approved by the HPRB in the 2002 proposal [A16].

The massing and architecture of the project continues to be developed and will be presented at a future meeting. However, an important component of the massing includes one-story construction immediately adjacent to the market so that it is not overwhelmed by tall buildings immediately abutting it [A10].

Evaluation

The proposal represents a compromise solution that seeks to resolve the tension between keeping the landmark as a discrete, identifiable entity that retains a sense of its unique character while simultaneously incorporating it into a larger structure whose layout and design are largely driven by a standardized corporate formula for a modern supermarket. With significant demolition and the threat of losing the building's historic identity by appending it to the back of a large modern grocery store, it is not an ideal preservation solution. However, after exploring several alternative development scenarios, the HPO and the Office of Planning are convinced that the present proposal is the best option for the historic market and for the site. Recent discussions with the applicants have focused on trying to improve on the negative preservation consequences of the project – the substantial demolition resulting from the removal of the west wall, the threat that the market will lose a sense of being a discrete entity when incorporated into the larger building, the inability to enter the landmark

through any of its original doors, and the building turning its back to 7th Street with no access or retail presence.

Two revisions to the concept would substantially improve it and mitigate these adverse effects. First, accepting the necessity for demolition of the west wall in order to achieve the larger site planning benefits of locating the loading and much of the parking underground, the HPO believes any plan for the reconstruction of the west wall should include rebuilding all five of the original piers (rather than two) in order to recreate the wall's original structure, rhythm and scale, to mirror the retained east wall of the building, and to create a greater sense of enclosure for the market hall. Second, providing a public entrance into the market through one or more of its original entrances at the corner of 7th and O Street is critical in retaining its character. Operable doors in this location would allow visitors to continue to enter the landmark as it was intended, maintain the building's orientation to 7th and O streets, and allow it to be experienced as having some sense of separate identity rather than being seen as simply the back side of the supermarket. An active use, such a coffee shop or bakery, would enliven the corner and help animate 7th Street. Some type of recreated market shed along 7th Street, as suggested in the applicant's Option A might help extend such a use further up the street or could be programmed for compatible supporting uses.

Several smaller issues should continue to be explored as well. The treatment of the north wall, both inside the store and outside where the large end wall window and corbelling could be recreated, should be further developed. The store build-out – how it will be programmed and laid out with aisles – remains subject to change based on the shifting corporate standards for optimizing the homogenized grocery shopping experience. However, as the project continues to be developed, some basic standards – such as ensuring that bulkheads and ductwork won't be dropped across the market window openings – should be developed and codified in some way into the plans.

As conceptually outlined, the HPO believes the project could result in significant preservation and land use planning benefits -- resurrecting an extremely deteriorated but important public landmark, allowing for the accurate reconstruction of its collapsed truss roof, restoration of its two primary public elevations, and returning it to something very close to its original use. Beyond the market, the reopening of 8th Street, the potential for compatible new construction around the perimeter of these blocks abutting the Shaw Historic District, and returning the site to a commercial center of the neighborhood would satisfy important city planning and preservation goals. Together with other potential social and community benefits that may accrue from the project, but which have not been detailed, the project should continue to be developed by the applicants in consultation with the HPO for submission to the Mayor's Agent as a project of special merit.

Recommendations

1. The HPO recommends that the HPRB determine that the proposed removal of the west wall of the O Street Market constitutes substantial demolition of the landmark, as it will result in the removal of an important public elevation of the building, a substantial portion of the building's structural components, and a character-defining feature of the structure, as defined in DCMR 10A, 305.1(a), 305.1(b), and 305.1(e), and refer the case to the Mayor's Agent for review.

2. The HPO recommends that the HPRB approve the conceptual site plan for the location of the supermarket and the reopening of 8th Street; review and approval for the remainder of the site can be deferred until the massing and design are further developed.

3. The HPO recommends that the HPRB direct the applicants to revise the concept to include recreation of the five brick piers in the reconstruction of the west wall, and to include operable doors in the southeast corner of the building, as outlined and for the reasons above. The applicants should continue working with the HPO on these and other refinements of the concept for presentation to the HPRB at the appropriate time.

4. The HPO recommends that the HPRB find the proposed project will result in substantial preservation and land use planning benefits, including the restoration of a severely deteriorated landmark, reconstruction of its important missing elements, such as its distinctive truss roof; reconstruction and reopening of 8th Street, a contributing element of the L'Enfant Plan; below-grade parking and loading; and significantly improved conditions along 7th, 9th, O and P streets that will be more compatible with the abutting Shaw Historic District than the existing open parking lot and street-fronting loading zones. The HPO will continue to work with the applicants in developing their special merit submission to the Mayor's Agent.

HPRB was “encouraged by the direction of the project” and adopted the findings and recommendations of the report by vote of 6-0. The Board agreed with verbal modification made by HPO to the report that reconstruction of all five piers on west wall, while preferable, may not be necessary to convey original design and character; HPRB directed HPO to work with applicants on revised west wall design that achieves greatest amount of reconstruction possible.


HPRB also directed applicants to carefully study the connection between new grocery store and market building to achieve sufficient visual separation, and ways that 7th Street exterior could be enlivened and animated.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001



MEMORANDUM

TO: Karen Thomas
Development Review Specialist
D.C. Office of Planning

FROM: Gary L. Palmer, Jr. 
Fire Marshal
D.C. Fire and EMS Department

DATE: February 5, 2008

SUBJECT: ZC #07-26 – PUD Application for O Street Market

The D.C. Fire and EMS Department has reviewed the above request.

Based on the site plans submitted, the D.C Fire and EMS Department has no objection to this request as long as construction is in compliance with the International Fire Code (2000 Edition) and all applicable D.C. Laws.

If you have questions concerning this review, please contact Captain Lawrence DiPietro at 727-1614.

February 20, 2008

TRANSMITTAL

TO: Thomas Karen
Development Review Specialist
District of Columbia Office of Planning

FROM: Rizwan Elahi, Civil Engineer III
Planning & Design Branch
DC Water and Sewer Authority

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case# 07-26
Corner of 7th and O Street, NW

DCWASA reviewed the zoning application for this project as transmitted by the DC Office of Planning dated January 13, 2007. DC WASA comments are as follows:

Water Requirements: This site abuts old water mains. If a connection is desired from a water main which was built prior to 1942, this main would need to be replaced. For service from water mains built after 1942, the applicant is required to submit the information listed below in order for DCWASA to determine the ability of the water distribution system to provide adequate fire flows for the proposed development.

1. Results from the fire flow tests in the water mains where water connections are proposed;
2. Completed DCWASA pump form; and
3. Completed water meter design form.

If the engineering evaluation indicates that the water mains in the street are hydraulically inadequate to serve this site, DCWASA will advise the applicant regarding the improvements needed in the water system to relieve the deficiency.

Sewer Requirements: This site is part of combined sewer system. The capacity of existing combined sewers in this area is adequate to handle the expected sanitary flows from the proposed development.

Storm Sewer Requirements: This site is part of the combined sewer system. There is adequate capacity in the existing 30-inch combined sewer in 7th Street, NW. However, the existing 12/18-inch combined sewer in P Street, NW will need to be up sized or additional sewers would need to be installed to convey the proposed development flows to the existing 30-inch combined sewer in 7th Street, NW. It should be noted that this project will have to adhere to the DC Department of Environment requirements for storm water management and for sediment and erosion control.

Combined Sewer Precautions: This property will discharge to the city's combined sewer system. As such, this property is subject to sewer surcharge, and backflow prevention should be provided on the sewer lateral connecting this property to the public sewer system. The backflow prevention device must be installed on private property.

Assessment: DCWASA will review the project plans that the applicant submits for a public space permit to verify that the storm water discharge to DCWASA combined sewers has been appropriately computed and that there is adequate capacity in the combined sewers. DCWASA will review the project plans that the applicant submits for a public space permit. DCWASA will issue a water and sewer availability certificate and recommend the issuance of a building permit if the final project plans meet DCWASA requirements.

