

12/18/08 Testimony of Barbara Kahlow
on ZC Case No. 08-19 – Zoning Map Amendment
Square 101, Lot 874, The HSC Foundation (2013 H Street, N.W.)

I, Barbara Kahlow, live at 800-25th Street, N.W. I am testifying on behalf of the West End Citizens Association (WECA), the oldest citizens organization in the Foggy Bottom-West End area. The WECA is primarily interested in maintaining and improving the quality of life for the existing residential community in Foggy Bottom-West End.

On 11/4/08, the WECA requested “Party” status for Zoning Commission Case No. 08-19, Zoning Map Amendment, Square 101, Lot 874, The HSC Foundation at 2013 H Street, N.W. Tonight, Sara Maddux will be co-presenting the WECA’s views. She will discuss the historic changes in the fabric of the immediate neighborhood. The Applicant’s related Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) case (for reduced parking) has not yet been scheduled but the WECA intends to state its objections in this case as well.

The Applicant’s proposal calls not only for a Zoning Map Amendment – upzoning in a huge R-5-D area from 100% residential use (R-5-D with 3.5 FAR & 75% lot occupancy) to 100% commercial use (C-3-C with 6.5 FAR & 100% lot occupancy, i.e., an 86% increase in density) – but also for a 7-story addition to a 3-story historic townhouse. Such upzoning would set an unwelcome and most unfortunate precedent for non-Planned Unit Development (PUD) high density commercial use off the Avenues throughout our community, i.e., both in Foggy Bottom South of Pennsylvania and the West End North of Pennsylvania. We know of no other such non-PUD upzoning.

I would like to cover two areas in today’s testimony: (a) process problems, and (b) substantive objections.

With respect to the process, on 9/17/08, the Applicant appeared before the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC-2A). The Commission requested that the Applicant hold a substantive discussion meeting -- to explore other options, such as mixed use zoning with at least some residential component -- with the immediately affected neighbors (including the residential use in the historic 2021 H row house across a narrow pedestrian alley) and the two major Foggy Bottom-West End community organizations (the WECA & Foggy Bottom Association). I regret to inform you that the Applicant never initiated the requested community meeting.

With respect to substance, the WECA agrees with Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) Chairman Tersh Boasberg’s summary comments at the 9/25/08 initial HPRB hearing on 2013 H. He stated: it “looks like on steroids” (with a 379% increase in gross square feet (s.f.) – from 6,225 s.f. to 29,801 s.f.), and is “totally overwhelming and inappropriate.” The HPRB Staff stated that 2013 H is “[o]ne of the few surviving [1888] row houses” in a “once elegant residential neighborhood” and that both the row house and carriage house are “remarkably intact” and with an open feel.

The WECA requests that the Commission not undermine retention of one of the last remaining historic, intact, and low-scale buildings in this part of our community. The WECA believes that the 7-story addition proposal overwhelms the historic elements, are most unattractive, and would block air and light from the sister row house’s residential use at 2021 H.

ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 08-19
EXHIBIT No. 27

If the Applicant were to upzone the site to all commercial (versus to more community-friendly mixed use) zoning, it would be the 1st non-PUD all commercial upzoning anywhere in our community. Attachment A is the relevant part of DC Zoning Map 10 for Foggy Bottom-West End. It reveals no non-PUD upzonings in any R-5 zone (R-5-B, R-5-D, & R-5-E) to all commercial zoning. Also, unlike in PUD cases, the proposed upzoning would provide no benefits (e.g., amenities) whatsoever to our community. Instead, the proposal would seriously undermine one of our historic gems.

Specifically, to the **North** of the site at 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue is the George Washington University's (GWU) Red Lion Row (Square 101, Lot 58; **PUD 148** in Zoning Map 10, ZC Case No. 80-11C). To the **West** in Square 101 at the corner of 21st and H Streets, i.e., after the sister low-scale row house at 2021 H, is GWU's Media and Public Affairs Building (805-21st; Square 101, Lot 62; **PUD 030** in Zoning Map 10). Immediately to the **East** is a GWU parking lot (2003 H; Square 101, Lot 60), which is 1 of the 16 development sites in the recently-approved GWU omnibus **PUD** and was proposed for residential use (244 new beds). Attachment B is an Exhibit from GWU's omnibus PUD submission about this intended use. In fact, the recently-approved GWU plan calls for residential development along H Street, as mentioned in the Office of Planning's (OP's) 12/8/08 report on this case (p. 4). To the **South** across H Street in Square 102 is a GWU's University Yard, part of which is included as another of the 16 development sites in the recently-approved GWU omnibus **PUD**.

Upzoning a single small record lot (Lot 874 in Square 101) could lead to multiple upzoning requests elsewhere in Foggy Bottom-West End. This would result in the destruction of our residential and mixed use community. Please do not approve this disturbing and unjustified Map Amendment request.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Attachments

EXHIBIT J
Development Program Summary

July 2006

Square	Site	Site Coverage Assumption	Maximum Height (FT)	Gross GFA (includes new and retained GFA)	Net New GFA Academic/Administrative/Medical ⁴	Net New GFA Residential/Campus Life/Athletic ⁴	Net New GFA Commercial/Investment	Potential Net New Beds (370SF/bed)	Potential Net New Parking (350SF/space)
39	A ¹	90%	90	115,549	93,465	0	0	0	(24)
41	A	100%	90	130,466	94,466	0	0	0	0
	B	100%	90	109,563	96,563	0	0	0	0
55	A1	90%	110	65,336	53,009	0	0	0	102
	A2	90%	110	334,908	1,304	0	0	0	(1,004)
56	A	90%	110	275,390	232,507	0	0	0	401
75	A ²	100%	130	122,990	(8,560)	0	109,710	0	0
	B	90%	110	134,914	52,583	0	0	0	193
77	A	75%	110	316,500	0	174,712	0	374	136
	B1	90%	110	98,546	96,284	0	0	0	127
	B2	90%	110	156,017	76,175	0	0	0	0
	B3	90%	110	166,154	68,569	0	0	0	76
	C	100%	90	65,036	0	48,777	0	0	0
	D	100%	90	9,504	0	9,504	0	26	0
79	A1	90%	110	148,666	131,166	0	0	0	227
	A2	100%	110	9,080	9,080	0	0	0	0
	A3	100%	110	259,251	59,856	0	0	0	0
101	A ³	75%	90	127,245	0	127,245	0	344	42
102	A	90%	65	79,186	67,681	0	0	0	0
	B	90%	65	26,271	26,271	0	0	0	0
103	A	90%	80	185,983	181,628	(13,750)	0	(47)	307

CAMPUS PLAN TOTAL

1,332,047 ⁵	346,488	109,710	697	583
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Sites To Be Addressed Under Separate Zoning Process

54	100%	130	867,169	0	0	867,169	0	362
80 A	75%	90	183,119	0	183,119	0	474	178

OVERALL CAMPUS TOTALS (NET NEW BEDS & PARKING)

1,171	1,123
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NOTES:

- 1- 39A included as academic use (designated as academic or commercial/investment)
- 2- 75A included as commercial/investment use (designated as commercial/investment or academic)
- 3- 101A included as residential use (designated as residential or academic)
- 4- GFA includes contemplated first floor retail space on sites 41A, 55A2, 75B, 77A, 77B1, 77B3 (the I Street Retail Corridor concept)
- 5- *The academic program space yielded by this development program is 1,665,651 GFA.* This differs from net new GFA in the Academic/Administrative/Medical category, as the net new GFA reflects the demolition of the existing above-grade University Parking Garage (333,604 GFA), which does not provide academic program space (though its above-grade square footage counts as existing GFA in the Academic/Administrative/Medical category).



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