



District of Columbia Government
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A
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October 14, 2014

Chairman Anthony Hood
D C Zoning Commission
441 Fourth Street NW, Suite 210S
Washington, DC 2000

Re Map Amendment for Square 1070

Dear Chairman Hood,

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting on April 10, 2014¹, our Commission voted 7-0-0 (with 5 Commissioners required for a quorum) to request a Map Amendment for the western half of Square 1070 to change the zoning designation from C-2-A district to R-4 district. Square 1070 is bounded by East Capitol Street to the south, 15th Street to the west, A Street to the north, and 16th Street to the east. We are requesting that the area of the fourteen (14) contiguous individual lots listed on our application be rezoned from the current C-2-A designation to an R-4 designation. These lots comprise the northwest quadrant of Square 1070.

An alley running north/south from E. Capitol St NE to A St NE bisects square 1070. The eastern half of Square 1070 is currently zoned R-4 while the western half is zoned C-2-A. The square is composed primarily of two-story row houses. There are currently four commercial properties on the western half of the square that front on E Capitol St NE. The remainder of the properties on E Capitol are residential. There are currently two multi-unit residential properties on the southern most portion of 15th St NE. The remainder of the 15th St properties are residential, most of which are two-story row house. The entirety of A St NE, and 16th St NE are comprised of two-story residential row houses. The adjacent squares to the north, south and east of Square 1070 are zoned entirely R-4. The adjacent square to the west is occupied entirely by the Car Barn residential condominiums.

The current zoning designation of C-2-A for the northwest portion of Square 1070 allows the properties along A St and 15th St to be converted to commercial uses. The commercial use of those properties would be out of keeping with the residential nature of the neighborhood.

The C-2-A zoning designation also allows for the matter-of-right construction of buildings on 15th St and A St that are incongruent with the scale and architecture of the

¹ ANC 6A meetings are advertised electronically on the listserves anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com, anc-6a@yahoogroups.com and newhilleast@yahoogroups.com, at www.anc6a.org, and through print advertisements in the Hill Rag.

ZONING COMMISSION

District of Columbia

CASE NO. 14-20

EXHIBIT NO. 1



surrounding homes. Such a threat to the integrity and quality of the historic architecture of the neighborhood has already occurred. A developer has recently proposed to tear down a two-story row house on at 1511 A St NE (lot 94) and replace it with a matter-of-right multiunit residential structure of eighteen (18) units. The height of the proposed building is 50 ft, which would tower over the surrounding two-story row houses. The design and scale of the proposed building would be out of keeping with the surrounding homes and detract from the integrity of the historic row house architecture that is predominant on this square and in the surrounding neighborhood. The density of the proposed use would be incompatible with the remainder of A St NE and the surrounding row house neighborhoods.

We believe that a Map Amendment to change the current zoning of the fourteen (14) lots from C-2-A to R-4 is consistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. In an email to affected residents Mr. Joel Lawson, Associate Director of DC Office of Plan, wrote *“In the case of the lots you wish to have rezoned, the current zoning is C-2-A (a low to moderate density commercial mixed use zone), but the Comp Plan Generalized Land Use Map indicates this square for low to moderate density residential development – the orange area on the map below. Typical zones for this designation are R-4, R-5-A, or R-5-B, although other zones may also be appropriate.”*

A Map Amendment to update the zoning of Square 1070 is needed to preserve the integrity and quality of the residential nature of the neighborhood, and to preserve the historic architecture of the square and the surrounding neighborhood. It is needed to maintain a scale of buildings and density that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Rezoning the northwest quadrant of Square 1070 (14 lots) as R-4 is consistent with the District’s 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the following reasons:

1. Square 1070 is located in the Capitol Hill Planning Area described in Volume II Area Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The square lies in and is surrounded by an area designated as a **Neighborhood Conservation Area** on the Generalized Policy Map and **Moderate Density Residential** area on the Future Land Use Map.
2. The following policy statements in Volume II Capitol Hill Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan support the rezoning of the northwest quadrant of Square 1070 to an R-4 district:

Policy CH-1.1.11 15th Street Commercial District

Discourage the further expansion of commercial uses along 15th Street SE. This corridor should gradually transition to predominantly residential uses, compatible in density with adjacent row house blocks. As this transition occurs, efforts should be made to retain the existing corner stores and small businesses.



which serve the community

The goal of discouraging potential expansion of commercial uses along 15th St NE would be promoted by rezoning the lots of Square 1070 facing 15th St NE to an R-4 district. The change in the zoning designation would facilitate the transition of 15th St. to residential uses. It would prevent commercial use of those properties without first seeking zoning relief for such use.

Policy CH-1.1.1 Conserving Residential Uses

Maintain the integrity and quality of Capitol Hill's residential uses, and recognize the importance of its historic architecture and housing stock to the entire District of Columbia. Ensure that Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations for Capitol Hill neighborhoods sustain its moderate density land use pattern.

Nearly all of Square 1070 is comprised of two-story row houses that were built almost a century ago. The A St NE portion of Square 1070 is currently made up entirely of two-story row houses, as is the opposite side of the street. The look and feel of those houses remains much the same as when they were built. Rezoning of the northwest portion of the square would recognize the historic row house architecture and would further the goal of maintaining the integrity and quality of the neighborhood's historic residential use.

- 3 The current C-2-A zone is inconsistent with

Policy CH-1.1.2 Renovation of Housing Stock

Encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of the building stock throughout the Capitol Hill Planning Area, taking steps to preserve and restore important historic features. Where infill development occurs, its scale and character should be compatible with prevailing neighborhood densities and its design should contribute to neighborhood continuity and quality.

The current zoning allows for matter-of-right construction that is incompatible with the scale and character with the prevailing neighborhood densities. It encourages the demolition of existing row houses to make way for construction of much larger matter-of-right construction.



4. The following policies statements in Volume I Chapter 3 Land Use of the Comprehensive Plan directly support rezoning the northwest quadrant of Square 1070 to an R-4 district

Policy LU-2.1.6 Teardowns

Discourage the replacement of quality homes in good physical condition with new homes that are substantially larger, taller, and bulkier than the prevailing building stock

Rezoning the northwest quadrant of Square 1070 to an R-4 district will discourage property owners from tearing down the existing two-story row houses to make way for much large structures that are allowed as a matter-of-right under the current C-2-A zoning designation. As mentioned earlier, a proposed development at 1511 A St NE would do just that.

Policy LU-2.1.7 Conservation of Row House Neighborhoods

Protect the character of row house neighborhoods by requiring the height and scale of structures to be consistent with the existing pattern, considering additional row house neighborhoods for "historic district" designation, and regulating the subdivision of row houses into multiple dwellings. Upward and outward extension of row houses which compromise their design and scale should be discouraged.

The zoning requirements of an R-4 district would further protect the character of this row house neighborhood by preventing alterations to existing structures inconsistent with the height, scale and pattern of the existing row houses on this block and the surrounding neighborhood. It also prevent new construction that is similarly incongruent with its surrounding.

5. The current C-2-A zoning is inconsistent with

Policy LU-2.1.8

Discourage the zoning of areas currently developed with single family homes, duplexes, and rowhouses (e.g., R-1 through R-4) for multi-family apartments (e.g., R-5) where such action would likely result in the demolition of housing in good condition and its replacement with structures that are potentially out of character with the existing neighborhood.

This policy discourages 'the demolition of housing in good condition and its replacement with structures that are potentially out of character with the existing neighborhood'. The current C-2-A zoning designation of the northwest quadrant of Square 1070 does just the opposite. It encourages property owners to replace existing two-story row houses with much larger matter-of-right buildings that are out of



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character with the row house character of the surrounding neighborhood This is evident from the proposed development for 1511 A St NE

The request to rezone the northwestern portion of Square 1070 has broad supported among the homeowners on 15th St NE and A St NE I've included a petition signed by ten of the affected owners I've also included pictures of 15th St NE and A St NE to illustrate the residential row house nature of neighborhood

Please accept this petition for a Map Amendment to change the zoning of fourteen lots on Square 1070. We hope that you will agree with our conclusion that is appropriate to apply an R-4 zoning district to those properties

On Behalf of the Commission,

Nicholas Alberti
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A