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Executive Director
Marcel Acosta

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC FILE No. ZC 15-09

MAY 12 2016

Zoning Commission of the
District of Columbia
441 4th Street NW
2nd Floor, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Members of the Commission:

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on August 6, 1999, I found that the proposed map amendment for lots within Squares 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2587, 2589, and 2586, within the Lanier Heights neighborhood of Washington, DC, would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. A copy of the Delegated Action of the Executive Director is enclosed.

Sincerely,



Marcel C. Acosta
Executive Director

Enclosure

cc: Eric Shaw, Director, DC Office of Planning
Anthony Hood, Chairman, Zoning Commission



Delegated Action of the Executive Director

PROJECT Map Amendment at Squares 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2587, 2589, and 2586, Various Lots - Residents of Lanier Heights and ANC 1C Bound by Lanier Place, NW, Ontario Road, NW, 18th Street, NW, Ontario Place, NW, Argonne Place, NW and Adams Road, NW Washington, DC	NCPC FILE NUMBER ZC 15-09
	NCPC MAP FILE NUMBER 33.00(06.00)44321
SUBMITTED BY Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia	ACTION TAKEN Approval of report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia
	REVIEW AUTHORITY Advisory per 40 U.S.C. § 8724(a) and DC Code § 2-1006(a)

On April 11, 2016, the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia (ZC) took a proposed action to approve a zoning map amendment for various lots and squares within the Lanier Heights neighborhood of Washington. Lanier Heights is located in Washington's Northwest quadrant, roughly situated between the Adams Morgan neighborhood to the south and the Columbia Heights neighborhood to the northeast, with Rock Creek Park along its western boundary.

The application for the map amendment was submitted to the ZC by the Residents of Lanier Heights and ANC 1C. The proposal is to modify the zoning map by changing various lots within the Lanier Heights neighborhood to R-4 from R-5-B. These lots are a subset of the entire neighborhood and are predominantly developed with single-family and flat¹ rowhouses, although some lots are improved with rowhouse-like apartment buildings and detached single-family homes. The remainder of the neighborhood consists primarily of other rowhouse-like apartment buildings and large apartment structures.

The application was submitted to the ZC due to neighborhood concerns over the impacts of conversions of rowhouses to apartment buildings, which the applicants claim have been occurring at a rapid pace in the Lanier Heights neighborhood. The impacts in question include: an increase parking demand, additional garbage and noise, reduced structural integrity of adjacent rowhouses, and a decrease in adjacent property light and air. The applicants also cite the loss of family-sized housing in the neighborhood and negative impacts to privacy as other areas of concern.

The applicants proposed the map amendment as the conversion of rowhouses to apartment buildings is currently allowed as a matter-of-right to the property owner in the R-5-B zoning district, and with Lanier Heights located in a popular area to live in Washington, developers have found the neighborhood to be a prime location to do such conversions. Within the District's zoning

¹ A flat is a structure with two living units; within older rowhouse neighborhoods the second unit is often in the basement.

regulations, the R-5-B district is a general residence district where moderate height and density are permitted and all residential use types are permitted, including both rowhouses and apartments. As such, developers have purchased a number of single-family or flat rowhouses within Lanier Heights and have converted them to apartment buildings, often adding additional floors and extensions at the rear of the structures as allowed within a R-5-B zone. The R-4 zoning district was primarily implemented to maintain neighborhoods that predominantly consist of single-family and flat rowhouses. The main differences between the two zones are: the R-5-B district allows multi-family buildings as a matter-of-right whereas within the R-4 district, apartment buildings are only allowed by special exception from the Board of Zoning Adjustment if sufficient lot area is available; and, the R-5-B district allows more height than the R-4 district. As such, granting the map amendment will limit the ability of a subject property owner to convert a single-family or flat rowhouse to an apartment building.


While the proposed map amendment may both positively and negatively impact property owners within Lanier Heights, as well as the neighborhood as a whole, there are no federal interests that would be impacted by the proposal. While the neighborhood borders Rock Creek Park, a National Park, to the west, most of the lots subject to the proposed map amendment are internal to the neighborhood, and are not adjacent to the federal park (the exception is four lots with detached single-family homes that back onto the park). In addition, there is no other federal property in the area that could be affected by the proposed map amendment. As such, the proposed map amendment is not inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan or other federal interests.

* * *

Pursuant to delegations of authority adopted by the Commission on August 6, 1999 and per 40 U.S.C. § 8724(a) and DC Code § 2-1006(a), I find that the proposed map amendment for various lots within Squares 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2587, 2589, and 2586, within the Lanier Heights neighborhood of Washington, DC, will not be inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan or other federal interests.



Marcel Acosta
Executive Director



Date