




MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM:  Joel Lawson, Associate Director, Development Review
DATE: April 25, 2025
SUBJECT: 2121 1st Street SW – ZC #17-05E, Modification Without Hearing

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) supports this application being considered a Modification Without Hearing. The proposed modification is not inconsistent with the intent of the CG-5 zone and the Comprehensive Plan, so OP recommends **approval** of the modification as requested.

II. BACKGROUND

The original Design Review approval was for a mixed-use building with approximately 480 dwelling units and 71,120 square feet of retail (ZC Case 17-05). There have been four subsequent modifications to the approved Design Review:

- ZC Case 17-05A (2018) was a Modification of Consequence (without hearing) for the redesign and relocation of building architectural elements;
- ZC Case 17-05B (2020) was a Modification of Significance (with hearing) for the proposed use of certain upper-level floors for a temporary lodging use;
- ZC Case 17-05C (2020) was a Modification of Consequence that allowed DC Central Kitchen to operate in approved retail space and add a 15,000 square foot partial second floor; and
- ZC Case 17-05D (2022) was a Modification of Consequence to enclose 1,095 square feet on the first floor of the outdoor terrace for a restaurant.

The current application is a request for a Modification Without Hearing, pursuant to Z § 703, to add 6,533 square feet of gross floor area of non-residential space through the enclosure of a small portion of the ground floor and expansion of the partial second floor “mezzanine” space, both for use by DC Central Kitchen. This would raise the total FAR of the building from 4.6 to 4.66, which is within the amount anticipated for this zone, with Zoning Commission approval. To achieve this, the applicant is proposing to further amend the approved Order to as follows:

1. Project Development. The Project shall be built in accordance with:

...

- As amended by the plans submitted on September 20, 2022, marked as Exhibit 5A of the record and the additional detail regarding the canopy system marked as Exhibit 5B of Z.C. Case No. 17-05D; ~~and~~
- As amended by the plans submitted on _____, marked as Exhibit of the record of Z.C. Case No. 17-05E; and
- As modified by the guidelines, conditions, and standards herein.

III. SITE LOCATION



IV. ANALYSIS

The Applicant is requesting the Modification Without Hearing to expand the non-residential component of the building, by enclosing a small area at the ground level (383 sq.ft.) and expanding an existing second floor / mezzanine space (6,150 sq.ft.) for a total of 6,533 sq.ft. additional non-residential space in the building, to be used by DC Central Kitchen.

Approved	Proposed Modification:
Zone permitted FAR: 4.0 Permitted with ZC approval FAR: 5.0 Zone permitted non-residential FAR: 2.0 Approved Total FAR: 4.6 Residential FAR: 3.83 Non-residential FAR: 0.77 Total Sq.ft.: 531,722 sq.ft. Non residential: 88,832 sq.ft.	Total FAR: 4.66 Residential FAR: 3.83 Non-residential FAR: 0.83 Total: 538,255 sq. ft. Non-residential: 95,365 sq. ft. non res.

Subtitle Z of the Regulations defines a modification without hearing as follows:

703.6 For the purposes of this section, a “modification without hearing” is a modification in which impact may be understood without witness testimony, including, but not limited to a proposed change to a condition in the final order, a change in position on an issue discussed by the Commission that affected its decision, or a redesign or relocation of architectural elements and open spaces from the final design approved by the

Commission. Determination that a modification can be approved without witness testimony is within the Commission's discretion. A request to add or change a zoning map designation to an approved planned unit development shall not be considered without a hearing.

The modification is requested for internal additions and the enclosure of one structural bay on the north side of the building, to expand the DC Central Kitchen operation within the building. The proposed modification would increase the building FAR by 0.06 for a total FAR of 4.66, which is within the 5.0 FAR maximum permitted in the CG-5 zone, pursuant to the Zoning Commission's discretionary authority outlined in Subtitle K § 505.3(c).

The proposed modifications would adequately fall within the definition outlined above, to be considered as a modification without hearing.

Comprehensive Plan

When the original Order was issued, the Generalized Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan designated the property for mixed medium-density residential / commercial use, and this remains the current designation. The Comprehensive Plan Generalized Policy Map designation has changed – in the 2012 Comp Plan, the Policy Map placed with site within a Land Use Change area whereas the current Comp Plan Policy Map places this site within a Neighborhood Enhancement Area, and places the site within a Resilience Focus Area, due to its proximity to the waterfront. The original approval included the conversion of an existing office building to residential / mixed use, and included extensive discussions regarding addressing stormwater and floodplain issues. All residential units would be well above the floodplain level. The proposal should not impact this, although any new building permits would be further reviewed under current DOEE standards and requirements.

The proposed modifications would also be not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan Citywide and Area Elements, including when evaluated through a racial equity lens. The expanded area is to serve DC Central Kitchen, which currently occupies a portion of the non-residential floors of this building. The application, as part of [Exhibit 2C2](#), notes that DC Central Kitchen would use this additional space to expand and augment its existing community driven program to:

- Improve cold storage, produce aggregation, and processing capacity, allowing DC Central Kitchen to enhance its on-site meal preparation services for seniors, early childhood programs, and health sector partners while creating dozens of new jobs for previously unemployed DC residents.
- Open and operate a Healthy Corners retail location, allowing it to test new products, provide hands-on job training for retail positions, and create a new neighborhood access to fresh, affordable produce and nutrition education.
- Provide additional training space for students enrolled in its tuition-free Culinary Job Training program.

The application further notes that no additional zoning relief would be required for these modifications to the building – the uses are permitted by the zoning, and the added space would be generally within the existing building footprint and would not trigger any form of parking or loading relief. No existing residences or retail tenants would be displaced by this proposal.

As such, the proposal would be not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including when viewed through a racial equity lens.

V. DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT informed OP that they have objection to the approval of the application. As of the date of this report, comments from other agencies have not been filed to the record.

VI. ANC COMMENTS

As of this writing, the record does not contain comments from the ANC.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of this writing, the record does not contain comments from the community.