

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
**FROM:** <sup>JLS</sup> Jennifer Steingasser  
 Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation  
**DATE:** September 7, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** ZC Case 18-10 – Setdown Report for a Petition to Rezone 39,934 square feet from R-3 to RA-2

---

**I. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning recommends the Zoning Commission set down this petition to rezone Lot 976 in Square 5799, located at 2352-2360 High Street, S.E., from R-3 to RA-2. The proposal **would not be inconsistent** with the Comprehensive Plan.

**II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF**

<b>Applicant</b>	High Street LLC
<b>Owner</b>	District of Columbia
<b>Proposed Map Amendment</b>	R-3 to RA-2
<b>Address</b>	2352-2360 High Street, S.E.
<b>Ward and ANC</b>	Ward 8, ANC 8A
<b>Legal Description</b>	Square 5799, Lot 976
<b>Property Size</b>	39,934 square feet (0.80 acres)
<b>Future Land Use Map Designation</b>	Moderate Density Residential
<b>Generalized Policy Map Designation</b>	Neighborhood Enhancement Area

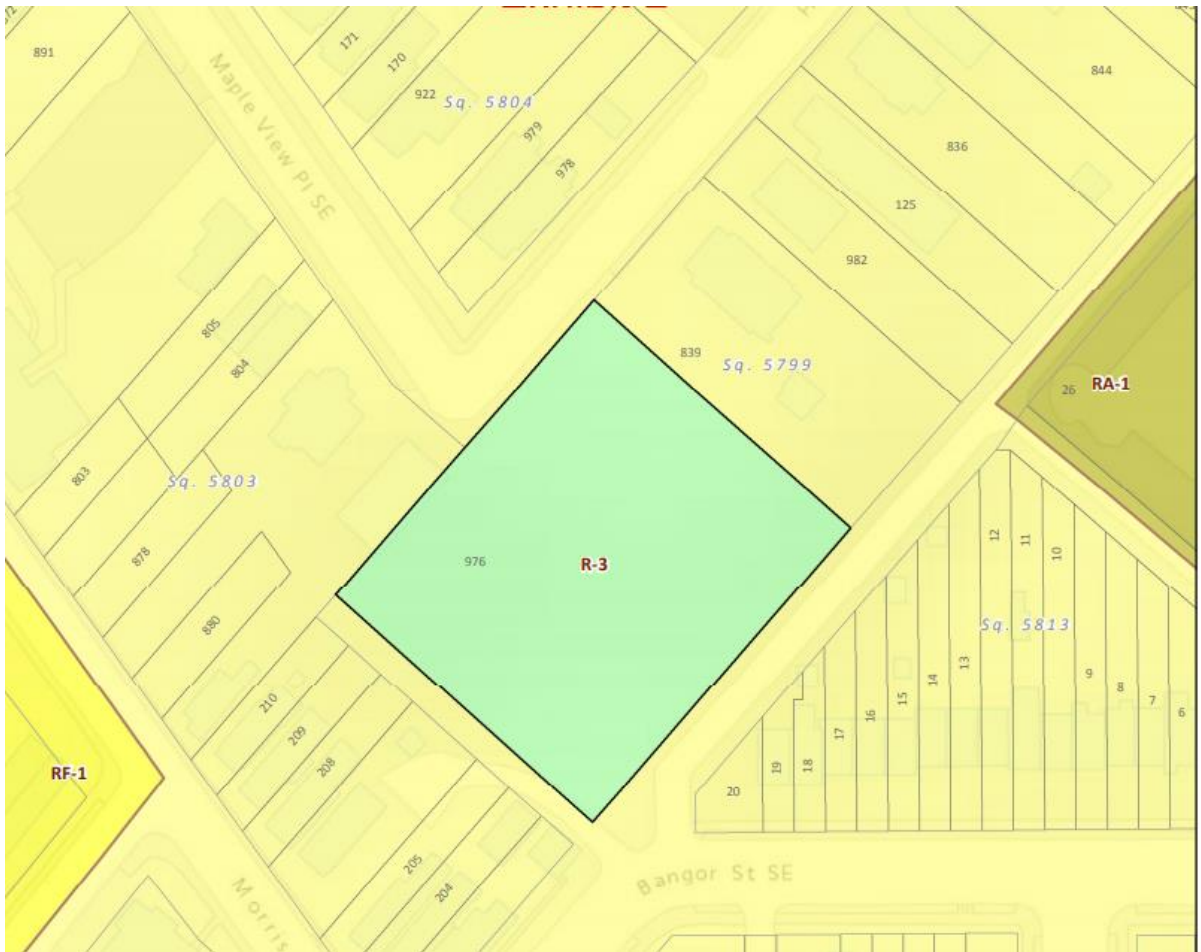
**III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION**

The subject property is vacant. Uses immediately surrounding the site include:

- North and South, including across High Street: Detached and semi-detached dwellings
- East: Across a public alley, row houses
- West: Detached dwellings.

The surrounding area includes a varied mix of housing, including detached, semi-detached and attached dwellings. Low and moderate density apartment houses are interspersed and scattered throughout, including a garden apartment complex to the east.

The subject property is not located within those portions of Ward 7 and Ward 8 that were downzoned by the Zoning Commission from R-5-A to either R-2, R-3 or R-4 zones in 2008 (ZR58).



Location Map

#### **IV. DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONES**

The applicant’s petition is to rezone 39,934 square feet from R-3 to RA-2 zone. The existing R-3 zone allows for a variety of one and-two family buildings, while the requested RA-2 permits apartment buildings.

The following table compare the development standards of the proposed RA-2 zone and the existing R-3 zone.

	<b>Existing Zone: R-3</b>	<b>Proposed Zone: RA-2</b>
<b>Permitted Uses</b>	Detached, semi-detached, and attached dwellings	Detached, semi-detached, attached and multi-family dwellings
<b>Height (foot max.)</b>	40 and 3-stories	50 (no limit on stories)
<b>Lot Area (sq. ft. min.)</b>	4,000 (detached) 3,000 (semi-detached) 2,000 (attached) 1,600 (IZ attached) 4,000 (all others)	None prescribed
<b>Lot Width (foot min.)</b>	40 (detached) 30 (semi-detached) 20 (attached) 16 (IZ attached) 40 (all others)	None prescribed
<b>Floor Area Ratio (max.)</b>	None prescribed	1.8 2.16 (IZ)
<b>Penthouse Height (foot max.)</b>	12 and one-story 15 for mechanical	12 and one-story 15 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> story for mechanical
<b>Lot Occupancy (% max.)</b>	60 (attached) 60 (places of worship) 40 (all others)	60
<b>Rear Yard (foot min.)</b>	20	4 inches/foot of height, but not less than 15
<b>Side Yard (foot min.)</b>	8	None, but 4 if provided <sup>1</sup>
<b>Vehicle Parking (min.)</b>	1/principal unit	1/4 units 1/2 flat units 1/6 units for assisted, elderly or handicapped
<b>Bicycle Parking (min.)</b>	None	Long Term: 1/3 units Short Term: 1/20 units
<b>Loading (min.)</b>	None	1 berth and 1 service/delivery space per 50 units
<b>GAR (min.)</b>	None prescribed	0.4

## V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

As described in the Introduction (Chapter 1 Introduction, Section 103), the Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of a “Family of Plans” that guide public policy in the District. The Introduction goes on to note three “Tiers” of Planning (Chapter 1 Introduction, Section 104), including:

- a. Citywide policies

<sup>1</sup> New multiple dwelling buildings not attached to an existing building shall have a side yard on each resulting free-standing side.

- b. Ward-level policies
- c. Small area policies.

**A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS**

As described in the Guidelines for Using the Generalized Policy Map and the Future Land Use Map (Chapter 2 Framework Element, Section 226, Attachment I), the maps are intended to provide generalized guidelines for development decisions. They are to be interpreted broadly and are not parcel-specific like zoning maps; i.e. the maps, in and of themselves, do not establish detailed requirements or permissions for a development’s physical characteristics including building massing or density; uses; or support systems such as parking and loading. They are to be interpreted in conjunction with relevant written goals, policies and action items in the Comprehensive Plan text, and further balanced against policies or objectives contained in relevant Small Area Plans and other citywide or area plans.

As described below, the proposed zoning map amendment would be not inconsistent with the map designations.

**Generalized Future Land Use Map (FLUM)**

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) indicates that the site is appropriate for moderate density residential.

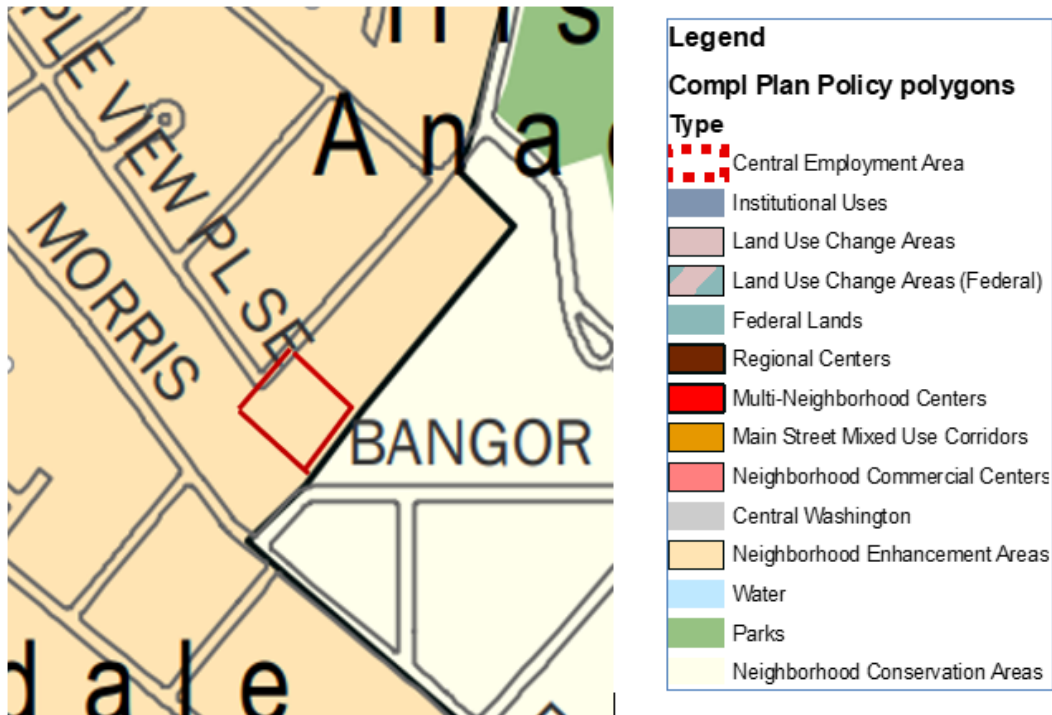


***Moderate Density Residential***

*Defines the District’s row house neighborhoods as well as its low-rise garden apartment complexes. Also applies to areas characterized by a mix of single family homes, 2-4 unit buildings, row houses, and low-rise apartment buildings. In some older inner city neighborhoods with this designation there may also be existing multi-story apartment buildings.*

### **Generalized Policy Map**

The Generalized Policy Map indicates that the subject property is located within the Neighborhood Enhancement Area.



### ***Neighborhood Enhancement Areas***

*Neighborhoods with substantial amounts of vacant residentially zoned land. They are primarily residential in character. Many of these areas are characterized by a patchwork of existing homes and individual vacant lots, some privately owned and others owned by the public sector or non-profit developers. These areas present opportunities for compatible small-scale infill development including new single family homes, town homes, and other density types of housing. Land uses that reflect the historical mixture and diversity of each community should be encouraged.*

*The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Enhancement Areas is to ensure that new development “fits in” and responds to the existing character, natural features, and existing/planned infrastructure capacity. New housing should be encouraged to improve the neighborhood and must be consistent with the land use designation on the Future Land Use Map. The unique and special qualities of each area should be maintained and conserved, and overall neighborhood character should be protected as development takes place. Publicly-owned open space within these areas should be preserved and enhanced to make these communities more attractive and desirable.*

## **B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

### **Citywide Elements:**

#### **Land Use Element**

#### ***Policy LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations***

*Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak*

*market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance. Ensure that development above and around such stations emphasizes land uses and building forms which minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas. 306.11*

***Policy LU-1.3.3: Housing Around Metrorail Stations***

*Recognize the opportunity to build senior housing and more affordable “starter” housing for first-time homebuyers adjacent to Metrorail stations, given the reduced necessity of auto ownership (and related reduction in household expenses) in such locations. 306.12*

***Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development***

*Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern. 307.5*

***Policy LU-2.1.3: Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods***

*Recognize the importance of balancing goals to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with parallel goals to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment. The overarching goal to “create successful neighborhoods” in all parts of the city requires an emphasis on conservation in some neighborhoods and revitalization in others. 309.8*

The requested rezoning would encourage the redevelopment of the site with higher density of housing, including affordable housing on a now vacant site located less than one-half mile from the Anacostia Metrorail station. Within a neighborhood developed with a mix of housing ranging from one-family detached homes to multi-family structures, the RA-2 zone would permit as a matter-of-right a mixture of housing types consistent with the surrounding area, expanding the housing supply while protecting neighborhood character. With a maximum building height of fifty feet, any proposed buildings would be consistent much of the surrounding development.

***Housing Element***

***Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support***

*Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives. 503.2*

***Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth***

*Strongly encourage the development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land in all parts of the city. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long-term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for higher-density housing. 503.4*

***Policy H-1.2.3: Mixed Income Housing***

*Focus investment strategies and affordable housing programs to distribute mixed income housing more equitably across the entire city, taking steps to avoid further concentration of poverty within areas of the city that already have substantial affordable housing. 504.8*

***Policy H-1.2.4: Housing Affordability on Publicly Owned Sites***

*Require that a substantial percentage of the housing units built on publicly owned sites, including sites being transferred from federal to District jurisdiction, are reserved for low and moderate income households. 504.11*

The subject application would permit the private sector to develop the subject property, a publicly owned lot, with a type of housing consistent with the provisions of Inclusionary Zoning to serve the needs of a variety of current and future residents of the District.

***Transportation Element***

***Policy T-1.1.4: Transit-Oriented Development***

*Support transit-oriented development by investing in pedestrian-oriented transportation improvements at or around transit stations, major bus corridors, and transfer points. 403.10*

Located approximately 0.4 miles from the Anacostia Metrorail station on the Green Line, the rezoning of the subject property would facilitate its redevelopment with housing within walking distance of a transit station. The site is also located less than one block from the four Metrobus routes serving Morris Road.

***Far Southeast and Southwest Area Element***

***Policy FSS-1.1.4: Infill Housing Development***

*Support infill housing development on vacant sites within the Far Southeast/Southwest, especially in Historic Anacostia, and in the Hillsdale, Fort Stanton, Bellevue, Congress Heights and Washington Highlands neighborhoods. 1808.5*

***Policy FSS-2.3.2: Housing Opportunities***

*Encourage compatible infill development on vacant and underutilized land within the Hillsdale and Fort Stanton neighborhoods, with an emphasis on low to moderate density housing designed for families. Special care should be taken to respect the area's topography, avoid erosion, improve the street and circulation system, and mitigate any traffic increases caused by new development. 1813.4*

The subject property is located within the Barry Farm/Hillsdale/Fort Stanton focus area. The rezoning of this vacant and underutilized lot could result in the opportunity to facilitate the redevelopment of the subject property with moderate density housing.



**C. SUMMARY OF PLANNING CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

Overall, the proposed remapping of the subject property from R-3 to RA-2 is supported by the Comprehensive Plan. As a long vacant and underutilized property, its use for moderate density mixed-income housing is permitted by both the R-3 and the RA-2 zones. Although both zones permit moderate density housing as a matter-of-right and both are subject to the provisions of inclusionary zoning, requiring the inclusion of affordable housing, the RA-2 would expand the range of moderate density housing types permitted to be constructed as infill housing as a matter-of-right within a neighborhood characterized by a wide variety of housing types and vacant properties, from one-family detached to mid-rise apartment buildings, while at the same time increasing the number of affordable units available to existing and future District residents, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map.

JS/sjm



## **Attachment I**

### **Comprehensive Plan Chapter 2 – Framework Element**

#### **Guidelines for Using the Generalized Policy Map and the Future Land Use Map 226**

*The Generalized Policy Map and Future Land Use Map are intended to provide generalized guides for development and conservation decisions. Several important parameters, defined below, apply to their use and interpretation.*

- a. *The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. Whereas zoning maps are parcel-specific, and establish detailed requirements for setbacks, height, use, parking, and other attributes, the Future Land Use Map does not follow parcel boundaries and its categories do not specify allowable uses or dimensional standards. By definition, the Map is to be interpreted broadly.*
- b. *The Future Land Use Map is a generalized depiction of intended uses in the horizon year of the Comprehensive Plan, roughly 20 years in the future. It is not an “existing land use map,” although in many cases future uses in an area may be the same as those that exist today.*
- c. *The densities within any given area on the Future Land Use Map reflect all contiguous properties on a block—there may be individual buildings that are higher or lower than these ranges within each area. Similarly, the land use category definitions describe the general character of development in each area, citing typical building heights (in stories) as appropriate. It should be noted that the granting of density bonuses (for example, through Planned Unit Developments) may result in heights that exceed the typical ranges cited here.*
- d. *The zoning of any given area should be guided by the Future Land Use Map, interpreted in conjunction with the text of the Comprehensive Plan, including the citywide elements and the area elements, as well as approved Small Area Plans.*
- e. *The designation of an area with a particular land use category does not necessarily mean that the most intense zoning district described in the land use definitions is automatically permitted. A range of densities and intensities applies within each category, and the use of different zone districts within each category should reinforce this range. There are more than twice as many zone districts (about 30, plus more than a dozen overlay zones) as there are Comprehensive Plan land use categories. For example, there are at least three zone districts corresponding to “Low Density Residential” and three zone districts corresponding to “Moderate Density Residential.” Multiple zones should continue to be used to distinguish the different types of low- or moderate-density residential development which may occur within each area.*
- f. *Some zone districts may be compatible with more than one Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designation. As an example, the existing C-2-A zone is consistent with both the Low Density Commercial and the Moderate Density Commercial designation, depending on the prevailing character of the area and the adjacent uses. A correspondence table indicating which zones are “clearly consistent”, “potentially consistent” and “inconsistent” with the Comprehensive Plan categories should be prepared to assist in Comprehensive Plan implementation and future zoning actions (see Action LU-4.3.B).*
- g. *The intent of the Future Land Use Map is to show use rather than ownership. However, in a number of cases, ownership is displayed to note the District’s limited jurisdiction. Specifically, non-park federal facilities are shown as “Federal” even though the actual uses*

*include housing and industry (e.g., Bolling Air Force Base), offices (e.g., the Federal Triangle), hospitals (e.g., Walter Reed), and other activities. Similarly, the “Local Public” designation includes high-impact uses such as solid waste transfer stations and stadiums, as well as low-impact uses such as schools. Other maps in the Comprehensive Plan are used to show the specific types of public uses present in each area.*

- h. The Map does not show density or intensity on institutional and local public sites. If a change in use occurs on these sites in the future (for example, a school becomes surplus or is redeveloped), the new designations should be comparable in density or intensity to those in the vicinity, unless otherwise stated in the Comprehensive Plan Area Elements or an approved Campus Plan.*
- i. Streets and public rights-of-way are not an explicit land use category on the Future Land Use Map. Within any given area, the streets that pass through are assigned the same designation as the adjacent uses.*
- j. Urban renewal plans remain in effect for parts of the District of Columbia, including Shaw, Downtown, and Fort Lincoln. These plans remain in effect and their controlling provisions must be considered as land use and zoning decisions are made.*
- k. Finally, the Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map can be amended. They are not intended to freeze future development patterns for the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that is periodically updated in response to the changing needs of the city. Requests to amend the maps can be made by residents, property owners, developers, and the District itself. In all cases, such changes require formal public hearings before the DC Council, and ample opportunities for formal public input. The process for Comprehensive Plan amendments is described in the Implementation Element. 226.1*