

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Zoning Commission**



**ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**ZONING COMMISSION ORDER NO. 20-31C**

**Z.C. Case No. 20-31C**  
**American University**

**(Modification Without Hearing of an Approved Further Processing Application of an  
Approved Campus Plan @ Square 1600, Lots 801 and 816)  
November 20, 2025**

Pursuant to notice, at its November 20, 2025 public meeting, with the Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia (the “Commission”) considered the application (the “Application”) of American University (the “Applicant,” “AU,” or the “University”) for a Modification Without Hearing of the Further Processing Application approved in Z.C. Order No. 20-31B to allow for the addition of 2,955 sq. ft. of gross floor area internal to the Sports Center Building, which is located on AU’s main campus at 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

The Commission considered the Application pursuant to the Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedures, which are codified in Subtitle Z of Title 11 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (Zoning Regulations of 2016, the “Zoning Regulations,” to which all subsequent citations refer unless otherwise specified). For the reasons stated below, the Commission **APPROVES** the Application.

**I. FINDINGS OF FACT**

**Prior Approval, Parties, and Notice**

1. Pursuant to Z.C. Order No. 20-31B (the “Order”), the Commission approved the Applicant’s Further Processing Application for the construction of the Alan and Amy Meltzer Center for Athletic Performance (“Meltzer Center”) and the Sports Center Annex (“SCAN”). The Order approved approximately 35,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area (“GFA”) for the SCAN building (Exhibit [“Ex.”] 2C).
2. The Meltzer Center is a multi-purpose facility that has been specifically designed to address the University’s need to provide competition, practice, and training space for existing University athletics programs that are not adequately accommodated in the Bender Arena and Sports Center Building. The SCAN building includes space for the University’s wellbeing program, including a mind/body center, a musical performance area, and various social and fitness areas. Construction of the Meltzer Center and the SCAN building started in March 2024, and both are expected to be open for use by December 31, 2025 (Ex. 2).
3. The “affected Advisory Neighborhood Commissions” (“ANCs”) that were parties to the original proceeding, per Subtitle Z § 101.8, are ANCs 3D and 3E, in which the Property is located, and ANC 3A, to which the Property is adjacent.

4. The Applicant served the Application on the Office of Planning (“OP”), the District Department of Transportation (“DDOT”), ANCs 3D, 3E, and 3A, and Neighbors for a Livable Community (“NLC”), a party in opposition to Z.C. Case No. 20-31B, on October 15, 2025 in satisfaction on Subtitle Z § 703.10, as indicated by the Certificate of Service submitted with the Application (Ex. 2 at 5).

## **II. The Application**

5. On October 15, 2025, the Applicant filed the Application and noted that the proposed internal renovation includes space on the first and second floors of the existing Sports Center Building, which currently houses the Jacobs Recreation Center. In its current state, this space includes an existing second floor mezzanine area with open space to the first floor below. The Applicant states that its analysis of this space identified underutilized double-height areas that could be captured to better satisfy programmatic needs. The Applicant proposes to demolish the mezzanine and infill the open area with a new slab to create additional space for student well-being and clinical office space. That infill would result in the addition of approximately 2,955 sq. ft. GFA entirely internal to the building, would not create any additional building footprint, and would not involve a change in use of the Sports Center Building (Ex. 2).
6. The Applicant noted that the additional square footage, when coupled with the 35,000 sq. ft. of GFA for the SCAN building approved in 2023, is well below the 55,000 sq. ft. of GFA approved by the Commission for the project site as part of AU’s 2021 Campus Plan. The Applicant stated that the Application does not propose any increase in the student and faculty/staff caps that were established in the 2021 Campus Plan approval. The Applicant stated that the Application will create no adverse traffic impacts on adjacent properties because the number or location of parking spaces provided on campus will not change. Finally, the Applicant noted that given the Sports Center Building’s internal location on the campus, and the fact that the proposed additional GFA is located entirely within the existing footprint of the Sports Center Building, the Application will not create objectionable conditions with respect to any neighboring residential property and is consistent with the standards for approval of a university use in a residential zone (Ex. 2).

## **III. Responses to the Application**

7. On November 10, 2025, OP submitted a report (the “OP Report”) stating that it did not object to approval of the Application (Ex. 4).
8. ANC 3D submitted a resolution stating that at a regularly scheduled and duly noticed meeting on October 8, 2025, with a quorum present, ANC 3D voted 7-0-0 to support the Application (Ex. 2E).
9. On November 18, 2025, ANC 3E submitted a resolution stating that at a regularly scheduled and duly noticed meeting on November 13, 2025, with a quorum present, the ANC voted 5-0-0 to support the Application (Ex. 5).

10. The American University Neighborhood Partnership (AUNP) provided an email that noted its support for the Application (Ex. 2E).
11. ANC 3A and NLC did not file responses to the Application.

## CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

### Authority

1. Subtitle Z § 703.1 authorizes the Commission, in the interest of efficiency, to make modifications without hearings to final orders and plans without a public hearing.
2. Subtitle Z § 703.6 defines a Modification Without Hearing as “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, ... or a redesign or relocation of architectural elements and open spaces from the final design approved by the Commission.”
3. The Commission concludes that the Application qualifies as a Modification Without Hearing within the meaning of Subtitle Z § 703.6 because the modification can be understood without witness testimony, as a redesign or relocation of architectural elements from the final design approved by the Commission in the Approved Further Processing application, and therefore the modifications can be granted without a public hearing pursuant to Subtitle Z § 703.1.
4. The Commission concludes that the Applicant satisfied the requirement of Subtitle Z § 703.10 to serve the Application on all parties to the original proceeding, in this case—ANC 3D, ANC 3E, ANC 3A, and NLC—and OP at the same time the Application was filed with the Office of Zoning.
5. The Commission notes the responses in support from ANC 3D, ANC 3E, and AUNP. The Commission concludes that although ANC 3A and NLC did not submit responses to the Application prior to the Commission’s consideration of the Application at its November 20, 2025 public meeting, they were allowed 30 days after the Application was filed and served on October 15, 2025, to respond in accordance with Subtitle Z § 703.12.
6. The Commission concludes that, in accordance with Subtitle Z § 703.13, the Application was filed with the Office of Zoning at least 35 days prior to the November 20, 2025 public meeting.
7. The Commission finds that the Application is consistent with the approved Further Processing Application because the requested modifications are entirely internal to the Sports Center Building, do not create any additional building footprint, and do not involve a change in use of the Sports Center Building. The Commission finds that this Application will not create objectionable conditions with respect to any neighboring residential property and is consistent with the standards for approval of a university use in a residential zone.

**“Great Weight” to the Recommendations of OP**

8. The Commission must give “great weight” to the recommendations of OP pursuant to § 5(d) of the Office of Zoning Independence Act of 1990, effective September 20, 1990 (D.C. Law 8-163; D.C. Official Code § 6-623.04 (2001)) and Subtitle Z § 405.9 (*Metropole Condo. Ass’n v. D.C. Bd. of Zoning Adjustment*, 141 A.3d 1079, 1087 (D.C. 2016)).
9. The Commission finds OP’s recommendation of no objection to the Application persuasive and concurs in that judgment.

**“Great Weight” to the Recommendations of the ANC**

10. The Commission must give “great weight” to the issues and concerns raised in the written report of the affected ANC pursuant to § 13(d) of the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions Act of 1975, effective March 26, 1976 (D.C. Law 1-21; D.C. Official Code § 1-309.10(d) (2012 Repl.)) and Subtitle Z § 406.2.
11. ANC 3D and ANC 3E submitted resolutions in support of the Application. ANC 3A did not submit a report into the record for the Commission to consider.

**DECISION**

In consideration of the case record and the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained in this order, the Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia concludes that the Applicant has satisfied its burden of proof and therefore **APPROVES** the Applicant’s request for a Modification Without Hearing to permit modifications to the Further Processing Application approved in Z.C. Order No. 20-31B. The conditions in the Order remain unchanged, except that Condition No. 1 of Z.C. Order No. 20-31B is revised to read as follows (additions in **bold** and **underlined** text):

1. The Alan and Amy Meltzer Center for Athletic Performance (“Meltzer Center”) and the Sports Center Annex building (collectively, the “Project”) shall be constructed in accordance with the plans prepared by Perkins Eastman, dated April 4, 2023, and included in the record as Exhibit 2K1 and 2K2 as supplemented by Exhibit 14B-14E, **as modified by the plans submitted on October 15, 2025 (Ex. 2D in the record for Z.C. Case No. 20-31C) (collectively, the “Plans”).**

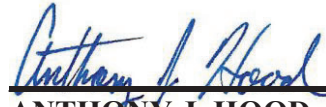
**Final Action**

**VOTE (November 20, 2025): 4-0-1** (Anthony J. Hood, Robert E. Miller, Tammy Stidham, and Gwen Wright to **APPROVE**; Joseph Imamura, not present, not voting.)

In accordance with the provisions of Subtitle Z § 604.9, this Order No. 20-31C shall become final and effective upon publication in the *District of Columbia Register*; that is, on May 15, 2026.

**BY THE ORDER OF THE D.C. ZONING COMMISSION**

A majority of the Commission members approved the issuance of this Order.



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**ANTHONY J. HOOD  
CHAIRMAN  
ZONING COMMISSION**



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**SARA A. BARDIN  
DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF ZONING**

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE D.C. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT OF 1977, AS AMENDED, D.C. OFFICIAL CODE § 2-1401.01 ET SEQ. (ACT), THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED: RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, PERSONAL APPEARANCE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY OR EXPRESSION, FAMILIAL STATUS, FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES, MATRICULATION, POLITICAL AFFILIATION, GENETIC INFORMATION, DISABILITY, SOURCE OF INCOME, OR PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS. SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS A FORM OF SEX DISCRIMINATION WHICH IS PROHIBITED BY THE ACT. IN ADDITION, HARASSMENT BASED ON ANY OF THE ABOVE PROTECTED CATEGORIES IS PROHIBITED BY THE ACT. DISCRIMINATION IN VIOLATION OF THE ACT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. VIOLATORS WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.