

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: Stephen Cochran, Development Review Specialist
JLS
Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation
DATE: November 7, 2022
SUBJECT: Report on Zoning Commission Case No. 22-28– Design Review for 1100 South Capitol Street, S.E. – Square 698

I. OP RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the Zoning Commission **approve** the design review application for the proposed development at 1100 South Capitol Street, SE, as amended through October 28, 2022.

The design meets the criteria specified in the following sections of the Zoning Regulations:

- Subtitle I §616 for buildings within the M and South Capitol Streets Sub-Area of the downtown zones
- Subtitle I Chapter 7 design review criteria for the downtown zones
- Subtitle X Chapter 9’s general special exception review criteria

This recommendation is contingent on approval of the following Condition:

Proposed Signage and Ornament: To maintain the primacy of the view of the U.S. Capitol, there should be no signage or any illuminated ornament above the top of the second-floor level on the southern, western or northern building faces.

The applicant has not requested any variances or additional special exceptions.

OP has also asked the applicant:

- To clarify whether the proposed short-term loading zone on L Street, S.E. has been discussed with the District Department of Transportation’s (DDOT), because it is not included in the project’s Comprehensive Transportation Review;
- To consider making the ground level’s proposed 5-foot setback along the alley to the east into a public easement of 5-feet, to a height of at least 18-feet, along the site’s entire boundary with the alley;
- To consider providing additional balconies in the proposed east-facing courtyard.

II. SUMMARY OF APPLICATION AND PROPOSALS

(unless specified, all streets are in the Southeast quadrant)

Applicant:	1100 South Capitol LLC
Address:	1100 South Capitol Street, S.E.
Legal Description:	Square 699 Lots 814 and 817
Boundaries:	(Figure 1, below). The 32,556 square foot site is rectangular and flat and is bounded by: West: South Capitol Street (Sub-Area Tertiary Street) North: L Street (north), South: a private lot with church uses (south), with a restrictive easement over northern 20-feet of that lot East: a 15-foot-wide public alley, portions of which were closed in 1988 subject to a non-exclusive 5-foot-wide easement along most of this eastern boundary, to a height of 16 feet.
Site's Current Use:	Parking Lot.
Adjacent Development:	North: Across L Street, a 130-foot-tall residential building. . South: The St. Vincent de Paul church at the corner of South Capitol and M Streets, S.E, with parking lot use within the northern easement West: Across South Capitol Street, approved for development of a 130-foot-tall residential building (ZC 20-14) East: Across the 15-foot-wide public alley, a 110-foot-high residential condominium and portions of a 110-foot-high office building.
Neighborhood Context:	The site is in a neighborhood known as both the Navy Yard and the Capitol Riverfront. It is developed with relatively recent high-rise apartment and office buildings. The baseball stadium is two blocks to the south, with frontage on South Capitol Street. The Navy Yard metro station is two blocks to the south. Metrobus routes and a DC Circulator route are one block to the south, on M Street. I-695 is two blocks to the north.
Ward, ANC:	Ward 6; ANC 6D
Zone:	D-5 (high-density commercial or residential), within the M and South Capitol Streets Sub-Area of Downtown. South Capitol Street is a Tertiary Street. M Street is a Primary Street
Property Size:	32,556 square feet

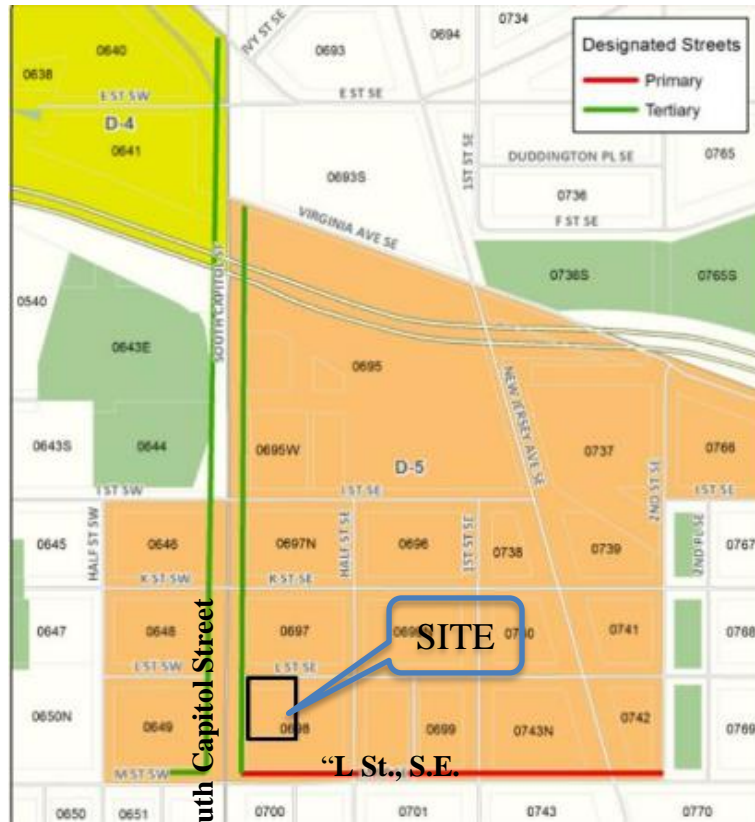


Figure 1. Site and Zoning Location

III. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

Uses and Design: The building would contain apartments in approximately 301,249 Square feet of GFA. Its approximately 9.18 FAR would be consistent with its high-density zoning.

The building would rise 130 feet in 13 floors. On the South Capitol Street façade there would be a 1:1 setback above 110 feet, as mandated by the sub-area requirements. There would be approximately 263 (+/- 10%) residential units. 32% of the units would be 2 or 3-bedroom apartments. While all units would be market rate, they would achieve ~ 3% of the housing goal for the Planning Area¹. The applicant estimates that the two residential units newly proposed for the penthouse would generate an ~ \$102,000 required contribution to the (affordable) Housing Production Trust Fund.

There would be amenity space on the ground floor and in the penthouse. No retail space is planned, although the applicant has requested flexibility to convert some residential amenity space to ground-floor retail space in the future, should the market arise, as long as that would not result in significant changes to the ground floor façade.

The building footprint would be rectangular, with an open courtyard setback at the 2nd level on South Capitol Street and at the 3rd level facing the eastern alley. The west-facing courtyard at the second level would serve as passive recreation space for building residents and would contribute to stormwater management and the enhancement of the Green Area Ratio. The eastern courtyard

¹ As set-forth in the 2019 Housing Equity Report.

would be devoted completely to a green roof, without access. This design would result in an H-shaped building with a west-facing and an east-facing courtyard (Exhibit 13A1, Sheet A05).

Three of the facades would be primarily masonry, employed in multiple patterns, with darker metal framing the windows. The darker metal would also be used to create suggestions of rhythms and grouped voids in the façade and to reduce the apparent mass of two building corners on South Capitol Street at the 100-foot level. (See Exhibit 13A2 Sheets A15, A16, and A17, and Exhibit 13A3, Sheets A25, A26 and A27, and A24).

A masonry band between the second and third floors would establish a two-story base for the building. The principal entrance to the building would be on L Street, just east of its intersection with South Capitol Street. It has been given greater prominence in the most recent design revisions (Exhibit 13A2, Sheet A19). Flexibility is requested to accommodate additional residential entrances on South Capitol Street.

The most recent revisions to the South Capitol Street façade provide for a continuous street wall at the ground level, with amenity spaces that would somewhat activate the South Capitol frontage for pedestrians. The recent revisions have also added texture to the alley-facing wall by employing brick at the first two levels and scoring the stucco to add interest for the views from residential windows to the east (Exhibit 13A2, Sheet A18).

At the 110-foot and 120-foot levels on South Capitol Street, the setbacks required by the sub-area regulations would be used to provide private recreation space for several units. There would be additional private outdoor space at the 12th floor along the west-facing wall of the court opening onto South Capitol Street. OP encourages the applicant to consider providing additional private balconies in the east-facing courtyard.

In addition to the passive recreation space in the 2nd floor garden, the rooftop would provide an enclosed amenity space, terraces, a pool, green roof areas and two residential units that would generate a contribution to the Housing Production Trust Fund (Exhibit 13 A2, Sheet A13). The penthouse itself would be clad in dark metal, with large windows.

Landscaping and Streetscape

The building would be set back 15 feet from its property line along South Capitol Street, as required by Subtitle I §616.7. The landscaping for this area, and for the adjacent public areas on South Capitol Street and L Street would follow the DDOT's guidelines for public space in the South Capitol corridor (Exhibit 13A5, Sheets L01, L400 and L401). The project would also pay for improvements to the perimeter landscaping at the St. Vincent de Paul Church property to screen the church parking lot from South Capitol Street (Exhibit 13A5, Sheet C06), and to improve the appearance along the alley near M Street (Exhibit 13A5, Sheet C08).

Sustainability:

The project would be designed to achieve LEED NC (New Construction) Gold v.4 (Exhibit 13, page 5). A courtyard at the South Capitol-facing 2nd level, and green roof areas on the 3rd floor, roof, and setbacks would help to meeting GAR. These, and improvements in public areas on South Capitol Street and on L Street would meet stormwater management requirements (Exhibit 13A5, Sheet L01).

The applicant has also committed to providing access to EV-charging stations for 30% of the parking spaces, and eight outlets for electric bicycles and scooters. While the applicant is not yet

committed to guaranteeing full electrification for the building’s systems, it is planning to use an electric heat pump system and would have a higher solid to void ratio in building facades than has been typical for recent buildings in the District. The applicant states that building materials would require lower carbon emissions in their production than is typical (Exhibit 13, page 9 and 10).

Parking, Loading, and Alley Setbacks: The required long-term bicycle spaces would be located on the ground floor, with access from the alley. Required short-term parking would be along the project’s perimeter.

All existing curb cuts on L Street and South Capitol Street would be closed. Approximately 162 underground vehicle parking spaces (=/- 10%) would be entered and exited from the public alley, as would an on-grade loading berth, a service/deliver space and a loading platform. To provide easier turning movements the applicant would setback the building 5 feet from the eastern property line. This would extend the 5-foot public easement on the west side of the alley for the length of the building, effectively expanding the alley-width to 20 feet along the eastern side of the property. The setback would extend vertically to the top of the building’s second floor.

As part of the Transportation Demand Management plan, and as a tenant incentive, the applicant would offer a year of Bikeshare membership and a \$25 SmartTrip card for each residential unit at the unit’s initial occupancy.

The applicant is also proposing a 60-foot long pick-up/drop-off (PUDO) and a 30-foot curbside short-term loading zone on L Street (Exhibit 13A1, Sheet A05), in response to ANC concerns. This would require DDOT approval.

IV. EVALUATION

A design review application in a downtown zone sub-area is not required to undergo as extensive a review as is required for a PUD or for a project in a zone such as the Capital Gateway. The review is specifically exempted from the design review process in Subtitle X, Chapter 6 by X §601.1, and does not require a review of the project’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.

A. Conformance with Subtitle I §616 for Buildings in the M and South Capitol Street Sub-Area of the Downtown Zones

§ 616 M AND SOUTH CAPITOL STREETS SUB-AREA

§ 616.1 The objectives of the M and South Capitol Streets Sub-Area are to ensure the preservation of the historically important axial view of the Capitol Dome and further the development of a high-density mixed-use corridor north of the Capitol Gateway neighborhood.

The proposed building is within the sub-area. It would not intrude on the South Capitol Street axis and the adherence to the required 15-foot setback on South Capitol Street should serve to frame and enhance the view of the Capitol. The materials facing public areas would be of a high quality and the relatively low ratio of glass to masonry or metal materials would help to establish a dignified, somewhat monumental presence consistent with the importance of South Capitol Street and the Capitol that terminates its vista. .

While the building would have only one use, at least initially, the residential development would likely contribute to the viability of other types of development on South Capitol Street and in the general Capitol Riverfront and Navy Yard areas. The applicant has also requested flexibility to insert retail entrances on South Capitol Street in the future, should a retail market develop along the corridor.

§ 616.2 The general location of the M and South Capitol Streets Sub-Area is the D-5 zoned property with frontage on either side of the designated tertiary street segments of South Capitol Street corridor north of M Street, as indicated with the green lines in Figure I § 616 ... including all or parts of Squares 640, 641, 643E, 644, 646, 648 649, ...

The property is within the sub-area, in Square 699.

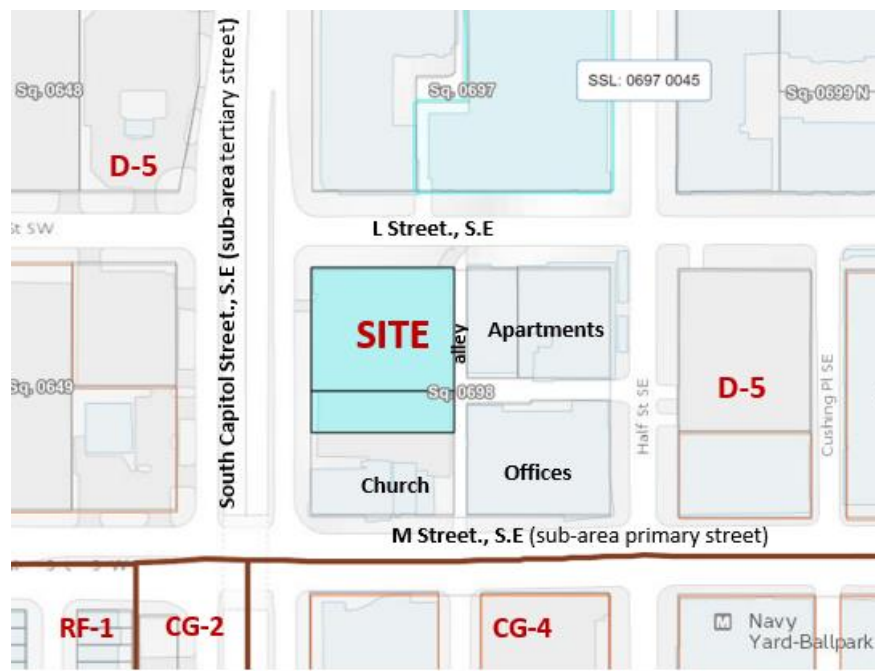


Figure 2. Site Context

§ 616.4 The uses for a building with frontage on a designated primary street segment is governed by Subtitle I § 601.

The proposal complies. The site is not on a primary or secondary street segment.

§ 616.5 The uses for a building with frontage on a designated tertiary street segment are governed by the zone district.

The proposal complies. The western side of the property faces a tertiary street segment, where there are no special use regulations and where there are no modifications to dimensional regulations that are not otherwise governed by the sub-area regulations.

§ 616.6 A building with frontage on the designated primary street segments of M Street, S.E. shall:

The criteria in (a), (b) and (c) are not applicable as the site is not on M Street, S.E., nor on a designated primary street.

§ 616.7 The streetwall on the eastern and western sides of South Capitol Street shall be set back for its entire height and frontage not less than fifteen feet (15 ft.), from the property line adjacent to South Capitol Street.

The building would comply with the criterion.

(d) Any portion of a building that exceeds one hundred ten feet (110 ft.) in height shall provide an additional one-to-one (1:1) setback from the building line along South Capitol Street;

The design complies (Exhibit 13A2, Sheet A16).

(e) There shall be no openings in building frontages adjacent to South Capitol Street that provide entrances or exits for vehicular parking or loading;

The building design would have no openings for parking or loading on South Capitol Street. It would use an existing alley to enable access to parking and loading.

(f) A minimum of sixty percent (75%) of the street-wall on the east side of South Capitol Street shall be constructed on the setback line.

Along South Capitol Street the design would be 100% flush with the property line at the first through third floors and at least 75% would be constructed to the property line for the remainder of the façade (Exhibit 13A4, Sheet A28)

§ 616.8 All proposed buildings and structures, or any proposed exterior renovation to any existing buildings or structures that would result in an alteration of the exterior designs facing the street segments in the sub-area shall be subject to review and approval by the Zoning Commission in accordance with the provisions in Subtitle I, Chapter 7.

See the section immediately below.

B. Conformance with Subtitle I § Chapter 7 Design Review Requirements for Certain Locations in the Downtown Zones

Sections 701.1 and 701.2 require the “uses, site plans [and] buildings” to be reviewed by the Zoning Commission in accordance with the following provision in Chapter 7.

§ 701.2 (a) In addition to proving that the proposed use, building or structure meets the special exception standards set forth in Subtitle X, Chapter 9, an applicant requesting approval under this section shall prove that the proposed building or structure, including the siting, architectural design, site plan, landscaping, sidewalk treatment, and operation, will:

(1) *Help achieve the objectives of the sub-area, as set forth in Subtitle I, Chapter 6, in which it is located:*

The design of the building, its uses and the public space improvements help achieve the objectives of preserving the axial view of the Capitol dome and furthering the development of a high-density mixed-use corridor.

(2) *Be in context with the surrounding neighborhood and street patterns;*

The design would not change surrounding street patterns. The massing and materials are congruent with other recent buildings constructed along South Capitol Street and in the Capitol Riverfront.

(3) *Minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians;*

The applicant would close any existing curb cuts, have parking and loading entered and exited only from the public alley at the rear and is working with DDOT to provide a PUDO and short-term loading area on L Street. Together these would minimize vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. The applicant's Comprehensive Transportation Report (Exhibit 11A) has been reviewed by DDOT, which will be submitting a separate report.

(4) *Minimize unarticulated blank walls adjacent to public spaces through facade articulation; and*

There would be no blank walls adjacent to public spaces, including along the alley.

(5) *Minimize impact on the environment, as demonstrated through the provision of an evaluation of the proposal against LEED certification standards;*

The applicant intends to design the building to be able to achieve a LEED NC Gold v4 level and is considering additional suggestions the Department of Energy and the Environment made during its discussions with the applicant. Other sustainability provisions were noted on pages 4 and 5 of this report.

§ 701.3 The Zoning Commission may hear and decide any additional requests for special exception or variance relief needed for the subject property. Such requests shall be advertised, heard, and decided together with the application for Zoning Commission review and approval.

See Section IV.C, below.

C. Conformance with Special Exception Review Standards of Subtitle X § 901.2

The standards are that, in the judgment of the Zoning Commission, the application:

§ 901.2 (a): Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;

As described above, the design and uses would be in harmony with the zoning regulations and maps for the D-5 zone and the M and South Capitol Street Sub-Area.

§ 901.2 (a): Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and

The proposed project should not tend to have an adverse impact on properties to the north or south or west and should not have an untoward impact on the property to the east.

Buildings to the north and west are separated from the applicant's property by, respectively, L Street and South Capitol Street. The applicant is separated from St. Vincent de Paul Church property by both a 20-foot landscaped easement and a small parking lot. The project is to the north of the church and should not have a significant impact on the light or air available to it. The applicant would also provide additional landscaping in portions of the property that would most enhance its appearance to those using the church property and to the general public.

There would likely be some impact on the properties to the east, but it should not affect the use of those properties in accordance with the zoning regulations or map.

Two buildings have been constructed within the last decade across the public alley to the east of the applicant's property. The building fronting on L Street is residential and the building fronting on M Street is commercial. At the time each building was constructed, given the underutilization of the applicant's property, the 1988 closing of a portion of the alley, and the plans for and zoning along South Capitol Street, the probability of a large building being developed on the applicant's site would likely have been apparent. Unfortunately, the recently constructed apartment building to the east was built with numerous windows and balconies along its alley property line. The somewhat older office building has extensive windows along its portion of the alley.

The applicant's development would likely impact the direct light available to the residential units along the alley, but the relatively light-colored masonry and stucco should reflect a considerable amount of indirect light into the units. While the proposed building may also have an impact on the direct light available to the office building, it would likely be minor, as most of the office building's west side faces onto either open space or low-density development on the church property. While these possible impacts may not enhance the use of the neighboring properties, the impacts are not likely to be significant enough to adversely affect the use of the properties in accordance with the Zoning Regulations.

§ 901.2 (c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.

This has been evaluated above.

D. Requested Flexibility

The applicant has requested the typical design flexibility to account for contingencies in the supply of building materials and structural requirements. It has also requested flexibility to substitute specific types of retail uses for ground floor amenity spaces should a market for these uses develop in the future. OP does not object to these requests.

E. Additional Evaluation Comments

The D-5 zone is mapped over areas just outside the boundaries of the pre-ZR16 Downtown zone boundaries. In these areas the zoning regulations enabled the construction of taller and denser

buildings through the purchase of development rights that had been generated by residential construction in specific areas of the central portion of Downtown. As a result, the D-5 zone does not have an Inclusionary Zoning requirement.

Without increases in the overall housing supply the imbalance between supply and demand will drive up housing prices in a way that creates challenges for many residents, particularly low-income residents based on the conclusions of a recent research report on the effect of market-rate development on neighborhood rents².

The applicant's proposed development, which would expand the supply of housing by approximately 263 units, would deliver 3.3% of the 7960-unit overall housing goal established for the Lower Anacostia Waterfront and Near Southwest Planning Area in the 2019 Housing Equity Report. The inclusion of two residential units in the penthouse would also require the contribution of approximately \$102,000 to the (affordable) Housing Production Trust Fund. It is not always possible to predict the indirect effect that additional market rate development may have on housing prices in rapidly growing, increasingly popular neighborhoods like Navy Yard/Capitol Riverfront. However, together, the additional units and the HPTF funding may contribute to moderating the upward pressures on the price of renting or owning nearby housing.

The location of the project – near Metro and other transit – may also help provide access to jobs and reduce total household cost by reducing the need for private vehicle ownership for some future residents.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCY COMMENTS

The District Department of Transportation will submit a report under separate cover.

VI. ANC COMMENTS

ANC 6D had not submitted comments to the file at the time OP completed this report.

VII. OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS

The south-adjacent property owner, St. Vincent De Paul Church, has filed a letter in support (Exhibit 9). At the time OP completed this report, the file contained no letters or information filed by other nearby property owners or members of the public.

² Research Roundup: The Effect of Market-Rate Development on Neighborhood Rents. (UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Studies).