

Zoning Commission Case No. 24-16

1401-1405 15th Street, NW

Map Amendment from RA-5 to ARTS-3

May 22, 2025

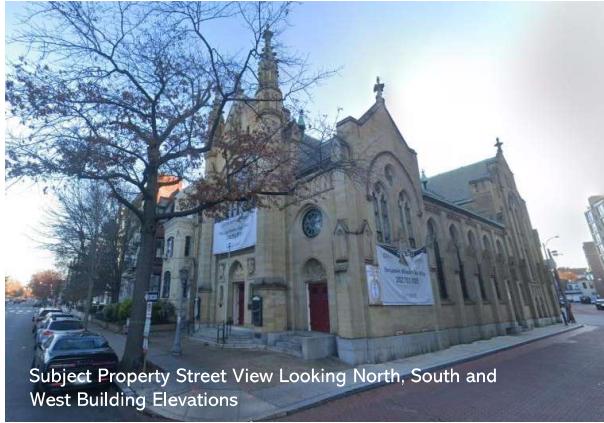
Holland & Knight

SUBJECT PROPERTY (Square 210, Lots 839 and 840)

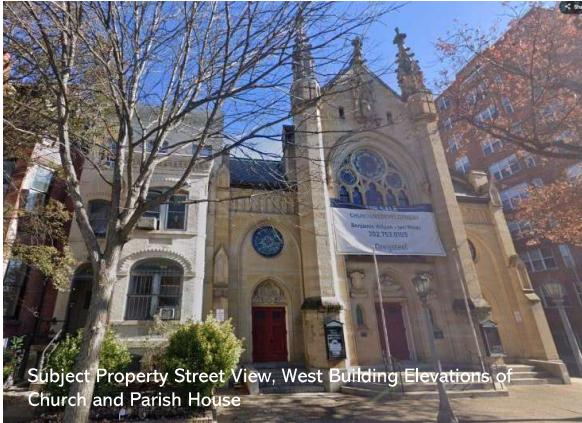
- Current Zone: **RA-5**
 - High-density residential
- Proposed Zone: **ARTS-3**
 - Medium-density mixed-use
- Land Area: 7,200 sq. ft. (0.17 acres)
- Currently developed with Grace Reformed Church and Sunday School and Parish House
 - Historic Landmark
 - Listed in National Register of Historic Places
 - Contributing structures to Greater 14th Street Historic District
- The proposed map amendment will not alter the historic status of the church. It focuses on enabling neighborhood-serving uses while respecting the integrity of the landmarked building.



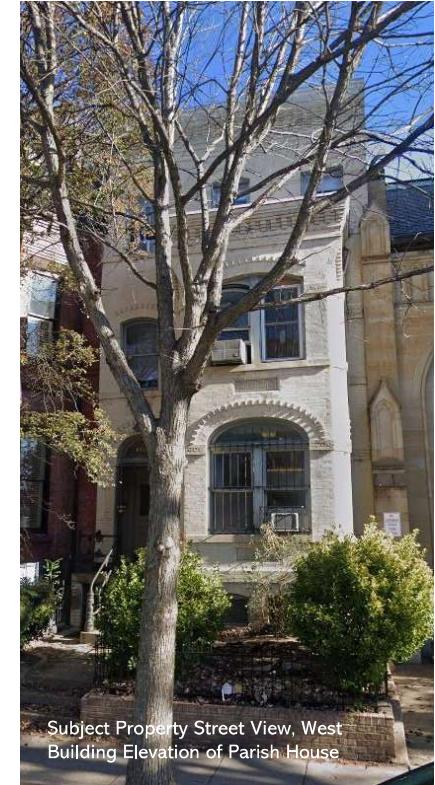
SUBJECT PROPERTY CONTEXT



Subject Property Street View Looking North, South and West Building Elevations



Subject Property Street View, West Building Elevations of Church and Parish House



Subject Property Street View, West Building Elevation of Parish House



Subject Property Aerial View



West Side of 15th Street View and Cycle Track

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Zoning Commission may approve a map amendment if the amendment is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted public policies and action programs related to the subject site.

11-X DCMR § 500.3

The proposed map amendment is not inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map designation, the Generalized Policy Map designation, or the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Medium Density Residential

- Defines neighborhoods or areas generally, but not exclusively, suited for mid-rise apartment buildings
- May apply to taller residential buildings surrounded by large areas of permanent open space
- Density typically ranges from 1.8 to 4.0 FAR, although greater density may be possible when complying with Inclusionary Zoning
- The RA-3 zone is consistent with the Medium Density Residential category, and other zones may apply

10-A DCMR § 227.7

Moderate Density Commercial

- Defines shopping and service areas more intense than Low-Density Commercial zones, generally consisting of retail, office, and service uses
- Density typically ranges from 2.5 to 4.0 FAR, with higher density possible when complying with Inclusionary Zoning
- MU-5 and MU-7 are consistent with this designation, and other zones may apply

10-A DCMR § 227.11

Proposed ARTS-3 Zone is not inconsistent with these designations, as it will:

- Allow a density of 4.0 FAR, or 4.8 FAR with Inclusionary Zoning, aligning with both the Medium Density Residential and Moderate Density Commercial designations
- Permit non-residential up to 2.5 FAR, which is also consistent with these designations, and encourage retail, office, and service uses

GENERALIZED POLICY MAP



Neighborhood Conservation Area

- Characterized by **little vacant or underutilized land** and maintenance of existing land uses and community character is anticipated over the next 20 years
- Development is expected to be modest, with a focus on infill housing, public facilities, and institutional uses; **major density changes are not anticipated**
- The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods, but **not preclude development**, particularly to address citywide housing needs

10-A DCMR §§ 225.4 and 225.5

Main Street Mixed Use Corridors

- Traditional, **pedestrian-oriented** commercial business corridors with a concentration of **older storefronts** along the street
- Conservation and **enhancement of these corridors** is desired to foster **economic and housing opportunities** and serve neighborhood needs
- Any redevelopment should support **transit** use and enhance the **pedestrian environment**

10-A DCMR § 225.14

Proposed ARTS-3 Zone is not inconsistent with these designations, as it will:

- Enable the **adaptive reuse** of the existing historic structures to include retail and eating and drinking establishments, allowing for neighborhood-serving uses that align with the goal of **increasing services and amenities** at properties that have access to opportunities, including transportation
- Allow for greater non-residential density, consistent with FLUM designations that **support neighborhood-oriented uses** that will enhance the area
- Support existing **transit** and **pedestrian** infrastructure

COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONING

| | Existing Zone: RA-5 | Proposed Zone: ARTS-3 |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| | Allowed / Required as Matter-of-Right | Allowed / Required as Matter-of-Right |
| Height | 90 ft. | 65 ft. / 75 ft. with IZ or with conditions |
| Penthouse Height | 20 ft. and 1 story plus mezzanine; except second story permitted for penthouse mechanical space | 12 ft. and 1 story; except 18 ft. 6 in. and second story permitted for penthouse mechanical space (as limited by K § 803.3) |
| Density (FAR) | 6.0 FAR residential (7.2 FAR with IZ); 1.8 FAR for a public recreation and community center; 5.0 FAR for all other structures | 4.0 FAR (4.8 FAR with IZ); 2.5 FAR max. non-residential. Bonus density permitted for permitted uses |
| Lot Occupancy | 75% (80% with IZ); 20% for public recreation and community center | 75% for residential use; 80% for residential use with IZ |
| Rear Yard | 3 in. per 1 ft. of building height; 12 ft. min. | 2.5 in. per 1 ft. of building height; 12 ft. min. |
| Side Yard | None required, but if provided, min. 4 ft. | None required, but if provided, 2 in. per 1 ft. of building height but no less than 5 ft. |
| Green Area Ratio | 0.30 | 0.25 |

ZONING COMMISSION RACIAL EQUITY TOOL



Part I: Guidance Regarding the Comprehensive Plan



Part II: Community Outreach and Engagement



Part III: Disaggregated Data



Part IV: Evaluate the Zoning Action through a Racial Equity Lens

PART 1: GUIDANCE REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Near Northwest Area Element

- NNW-1.1.2: Enhancing Established Commercial Areas
- NNW-1.1.4: Nonprofits and Private Service Organizations
- NNW-1.1.10: Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety
- NNW-1.1.11: Pedestrian Connections
- NNW-1.2.9: Design Review

Land Use Element

- LU-1.4.1: Station Areas as Neighborhood Centers
- LU-1.4.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations
- LU-1.4.5: Design to Encourage Transit Use
- LU-1.4.6: Development Along Corridor
- LU-2.1.1: Variety of Neighborhood Types
- LU-2.1.3: Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods
- LU-2.1.4: Rehabilitation Before Demolition
- LU-2.1.10: Multi-Family Neighborhoods
- LU-2.2.2: Appearance of Vacant Lots and Structures
- LU-2.2.3: Restoration or Removal of Vacant and Abandoned Buildings
- LU-2.2.4: Neighborhood Beautification
- LU-2.3.7: Nonconforming Institutional Uses
- LU-2.4.5: Encouraging Nodal Development
- LU-2.4.6: Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses
- LU-3.3.2: Corporate Citizenship

Transportation Element

- T-1.1.4: Transit-Oriented Development
- T-1.1.7: Equitable Transportation Access
- T-1.2.1: Major Thoroughfare Improvements
- T-1.2.3: Discouraging Auto-Oriented Uses
- T-1.3.1: Transit-Accessible Employment
- T-2.2.1: Multimodal Connections
- T-2.2.2: Connecting District Neighborhoods
- T-2.3.1: Better Integration of Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning
- T-2.3.2: Bicycle Network
- T-2.3.3: Bicycle Safety
- T-2.4.1: Pedestrian Network
- T-2.4.2: Pedestrian Safety
- T-2.5.1: Creating Multimodal Corridors

Housing Element

- H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support
- H-1.1.4: Mixed-Use Development
- H-1.1.8: Production of Housing in High-Cost Areas
- H-1.1.9: Housing for Families
- H-1.4.6: Whole Neighborhood Approach

Environmental Protection Element

- E-1.1.2: Urban Heat Island Mitigation
- E-2.1.2: Tree Requirements in New Development
- E-2.1.3: Sustainable Landscaping Practices
- E-4.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff

Economic Development Element

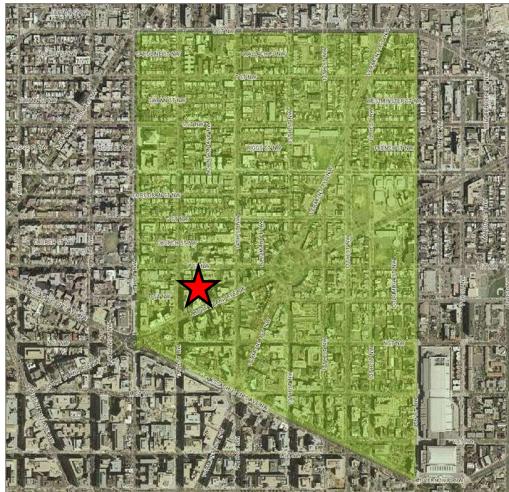
- ED-1.1.4: Promote Local Entrepreneurship
- ED-2.2.1: Expanding the Retail Sector
- ED-2.2.3: Neighborhood Shopping
- ED-2.2.4: Support Local Entrepreneurs
- ED-2.2.5: Business Mix
- ED-2.2.9: Clustered Retail at Transit
- ED-3.1.1: Neighborhood Commercial Vitality
- ED-4.2.6: Entry-Level Opportunities

Historic Preservation Element

- HP-1.6.1: Washington, DC's Historic Image
- HP-1.6.2: Preserving the District's Historic Character
- HP-1.6.3: Enhancing the District's Historic Character
- HP-1.6.4: Downtown and Neighborhood Character
- HP-2.4.1: Preservations Standards for Zoning Review
- HP-2.5.1: Rehabilitation of Historic Structures
- HP-2.5.2: Adaptation of Historic Properties for Current Use
- HP-2.5.3: Compatible Development
- HP-2.5.4: Suitability to the Historic Context
- HP-2.5.5: Protecting Historic Building Integrity
- HP-2.5.6: Review Process for Local Projects
- HP-4.1.1: Preservation and Community Development
- HP-4.1.2: Preservation and Neighborhood Identity
- HP-4.1.3: Neighborhood Revitalization

LOGAN CIRCLE INVESTMENT PLAN

- Prepared by the D.C. Office of Planning in 2008 as a strategic guide to support revitalization in emerging and distressed neighborhoods
- While the Plan did not include site-specific recommendations for the subject Property, its broader goals are applicable
- The Plan has been marked as complete by OP but continues to inform planning decisions and zoning consistency



Alignment with the Proposed Map Amendment

Supports Neighborhood-Oriented Retail

- Enables retail and eating/drinking uses that serve local residents
- Promotes walkability and strengthens the local commercial base
- Adaptive reuse will support façade enhancements consistent with the Plan

Advances Cultural Revitalization

- New dining establishments can serve as informal cultural hubs
- Supports arts-related programming and community engagement

Enhances the Public Realm

- Encourages pedestrian activity, improving safety and vibrancy
- Can lead to additional investment in streetscape and outdoor amenities

PART II: COMMUNITY GUIDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY

Logan Circle Neighborhood Profile

Historic Significance

- Logan Circle is one of D.C.'s oldest continuously inhabited neighborhoods
- It played a key role in the city's post-Civil War expansion and remains central to the city's heritage
- Included in the Greater Fourteenth Street Historic District
- Known for grand, historic row houses in styles such as Italianate, Romanesque, and Queen Anne

Cultural and Community Engagement

- A hub for arts, galleries, theaters, and community events
- Strong cultural identity supported by festivals and local arts initiatives

Economic Development

- Significant revitalization, especially along 14th Street NW
- Growth of retail, restaurants, and creative businesses has increased economic vitality

Public Realm Enhancements

- Streetscape improvements like wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and parks have enhanced walkability and aesthetics

Affordable Housing Preservation

- Preservation programs ensure long-time residents can remain in the community (rent control, rent stabilization, IZ)

Potential Burdens

- Short term impacts from **construction, traffic, and noise**
- Long term impacts may include possible property tax increases, though **tax relief programs** are available (e.g. Homestead Deduction, Senior Credits, Individual Income Property Tax Credits, Lower Income Home Ownership Tax Abatement, Lower Income, etc.)

Potential Benefits

- **Revitalizes** a vacant site and deters rodents and illegal activity
- Introduces **neighborhood-serving** retail or dining uses
- Enhances **pedestrian safety** and **streetscape** per DDOT standards
- Boosts **access to amenities** via nearby transit options
- **Supports** job creation, local businesses, and historic preservation

PART II: COMMUNITY GUIDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

LEGACY OF DISCRIMINATION IN LOGAN CIRCLE

Historic Discrimination

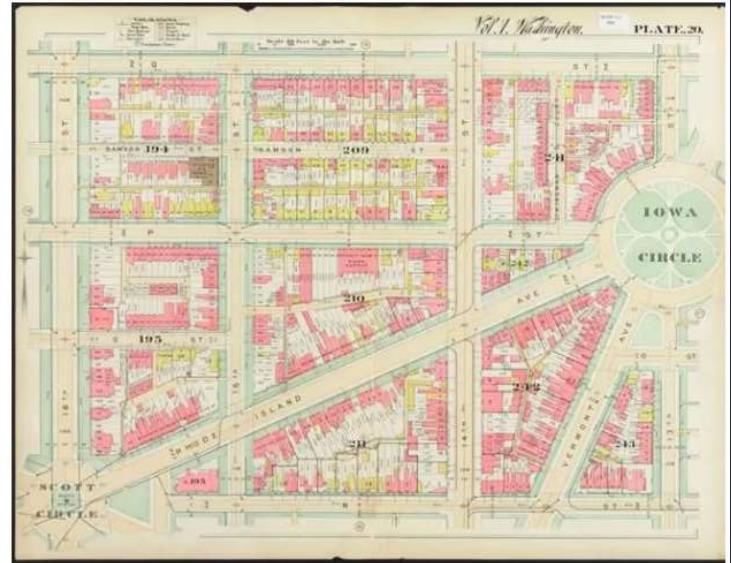
- Segregation and redlining confined Black residents to underresourced areas
- Discriminatory federal policies denied loans and aid, leading to decline and urban decay
- Urban renewal projects destroyed historic Black communities
- Black residents were blocked access to better housing and schools
- Rising costs displaced long-term residents
- Limited access to quality jobs, schools, and loans resulted in economic and educational inequities
- Infrastructure neglect led to poorer health outcomes and disparities

Districtwide Racial Equity Efforts

- Black Homeownership Strike Force aims for 20,000 new Black homeowners by 2030
- Upward Mobility Action Plan (UMAP) recommends a systemic approach to align housing, financial, and workforce programs to boost upward mobility
- Extensive tax relief and homebuyer assistance programs across the District

Equity Initiatives in Logan Circle

- Prioritization of affordable housing through IZ program and affordable housing trust funds ensure that new developments include affordable units for low- and moderate-income residents
- Cultural preservation honors Black heritage through protected landmarks
- Public realm enhancements, including streetscape and event investments, foster inclusivity and connection

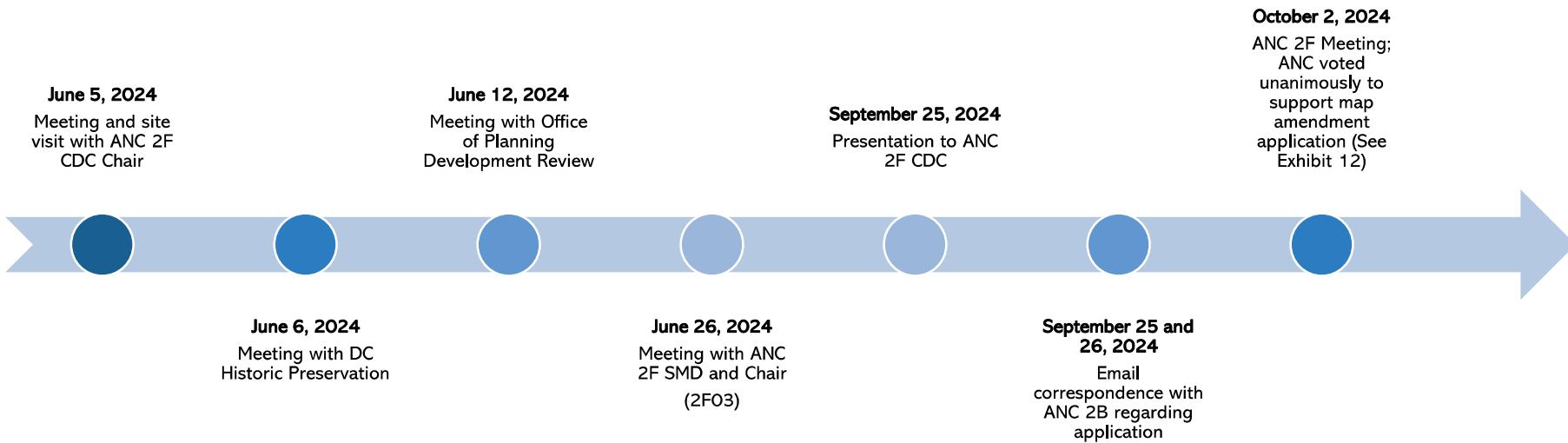


Prior to the 1860s, Logan Circle was known as Iowa Circle and was comprised mainly of farmland. During the Civil War, the area was a refuge for freedom seekers and freedmen who developed a squatter community. A racially mixed group of professionals and middle-class businessmen began building homes in the area during the period following the Civil War.

Source: NPS.gov; Image: 1892 Map of Iowa Circle

PART II: COMMUNITY GUIDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



PART III: DISAGGREGATED DATA REGARDING RACE AND ETHNICITY

Population Trends (Near Northwest Planning Area)

- White population **declined** from 69.5% (2012–16) to 66.1% (2018–22)
- Black population also **declined**; increases seen in Asian, Hispanic, and multiracial groups
- Largest **increase**: "Two or More Races" (from 4% to 8.2%)

Median Income and Poverty

- **Median income rose** by ~\$25K (slightly less than District's \$29K increase)
- Black residents had **lowest incomes** and second-lowest income growth
- Planning Area's **poverty rate** (12.1%) remains below citywide average (15.1%)

Housing Tenure

- Owner-occupancy **increased** slightly from 35.4% to 38.3%
- White households had **highest** homeownership (41.9%; Black households lowest (23.3%)

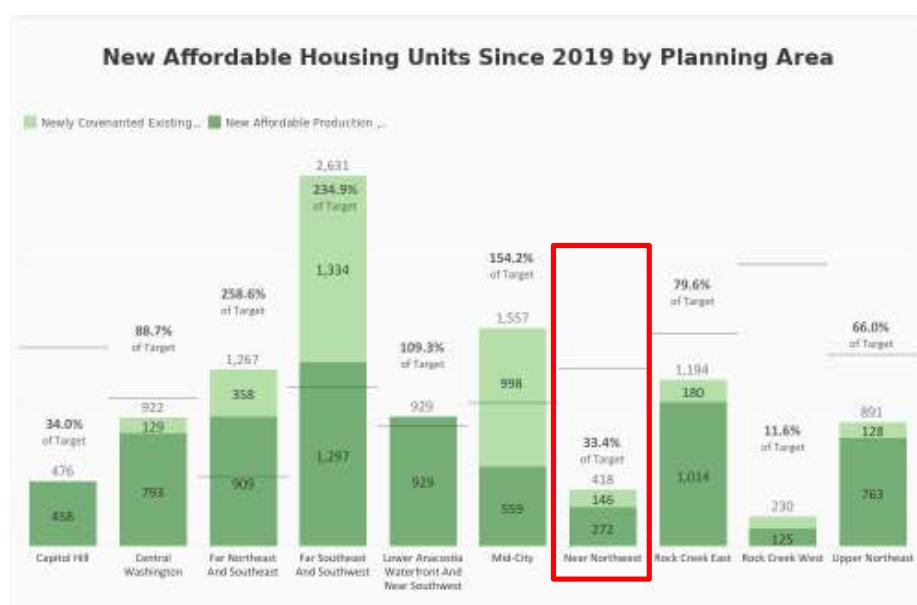
Employment and Cost Burden

- **Unemployment dropped** from 3.8% to 3.1% (vs. citywide 7.1%)
- Lower cost burden and poverty suggest relatively **higher economic stability**

PART III: DISAGGREGATED DATA REGARDING RACE AND ETHNICITY HOUSING EQUITY GOALS

Housing Equity Report (2019)

- The Report presents goals for the future distribution of affordable housing units to be produced across the District's ten planning areas, ensuring each contributes an equitable share of affordable housing to the District's overall number of affordable units
- Planning area has an affordable housing production goal of **1,250 units** and a total housing production goal of **1,850 units**
- Has produced **418 affordable units**, or **33.4% of the target amount**
- OP does not recommend that the map amendment be subject to IZ Plus



IZ PLUS SHOULD NOT APPLY

- IZ Plus is intended “to apply when a property owner requests a map amendment to rezone a lot to a higher density than what is currently permitted by the current zoning classification.” (See OP setdown report in ZC Case No. 20-02, which adopted IZ Plus.)
- The rationale is to provide an increased IZ requirement based on the percent increase of the density used for the development following a map amendment
- Existing RA-5 zone permits 6.0 FAR and 7.2 FAR for an IZ development
- Proposed ARTS-3 zone permits 4.0 FAR and 4.8 FAR for an IZ development
- Therefore, even if the full residential density was developed, the percent increase would be a negative number.
- IZ Plus would subject the property to a higher IZ requirement without the benefit of additional density
- The landmark designation restricts the site’s development potential to the current building envelope

PART IV: ZONING COMMISSION EVALUATION

| Indicator | Outcome |
|------------------------------|--|
| Direct Displacement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displacement will not occur on the Property because the building is currently vacant There are no residential residents currently residing on the Property |
| Indirect Displacement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail and eating/drinking establishment uses enabled by the map amendment may improve the economic prospects of a neighborhood and increase the land value, which may result in higher property taxes for adjacent properties |
| Housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed map amendment will allow for the establishment of new neighborhood services that will benefit residents and enhance the area's vitality, making it a more desirable place to live New retail and eating and drinking establishment uses may encourage future investment in housing in the surrounding neighborhood, which would help to increase supply to meet demand and drive down housing costs Retail services can reduce the cost of living for nearby residents by providing easier access to necessities, lowering transportation costs and encouraging local spending, which can make housing more affordable indirectly |
| Physical | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located 0.6 miles from the Dupont Circle Metrorail station and 0.5 miles from the McPherson Square Metrorail station Bus routes on 14th Street and P Street Potential improvements of pedestrian connectivity with streetscape enhancements Reduction of underutilized lots, ultimately improving connectivity, walkability, and safety Adaptive reuse of the Church reduces environmental impact Potential for improvements to stormwater infrastructure, incorporation of resiliency features to be incorporated into redevelopment, where possible. Compliance with applicable Building Code requirements and energy-efficient building systems and technologies |
| Access to Opportunity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased non-residential density can result in jobs related to retail or eating and drinking establishments Creation of construction jobs Property is in close proximity to public transit, including Metro station, multiple bus lines, and cycle track on 15th Street, providing access to and from neighborhoods to potential employment at the Property Increase in neighborhood services fills a gap in the street and facilitates walkability and strengthens connection between residential areas and local businesses Proximity to public schools, West End Neighborhood Library, MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, Stead Recreation Center, and Rock Creek Park Will allow for commercial uses along the 15th Street corridor in a mixed-use and diverse neighborhood, therefore granting residents more access to day-to-day needs |
| Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ANC 2F issued letter unanimously supporting the map amendment (Exhibit 12) |

POTENTIAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INCONSISTENCIES

| Potential Inconsistency | Outweighing Policy |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H-1.1.8: Production of Housing in High-Cost Areas (Church only)• E-3.2.2: Net-Zero Buildings• E-3.2.3: Renewable Energy• E-4.1.1: Maximizing Permeable Surfaces• E-4.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FLUM• GPM• Policies in the Near Northwest Area Element, Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environmental Protection, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation Citywide Elements |

CONCLUSION

- The map amendment is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan as viewed through a racial equity lens.
- Any potential inconsistencies with individual Comprehensive Plan policies are far outweighed by:
 - Consistency with the FLUM and GPM
 - Consistency with other competing Comprehensive Plan priorities relating to the Near Northwest Area Element, and Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environmental Protection, Economic Development, and Historic Preservation Citywide Elements

SUPPORT FOR THE APPLICATION

- Office of Planning recommends that the Zoning Commission **approve** the proposed map amendment and does not recommend the map amendment be subject to IZ Plus ([Exhibit 28](#))
- District Department of Transportation has **no objection** to the approval of the requested map amendment ([Exhibit 27](#))
- ANC 2F voted unanimously (4-0-0) to **support** the map amendment ([Exhibit 16E](#))

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