



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Matthew Jesick, Project Manager
JL for Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development, Design, and Preservation

DATE: August 29, 2025

SUBJECT: Public Hearing Report for Zoning Commission #25-07, Design Review in the Northern Howard Road (NHR) Zone

I. RECOMMENDATION

This application filed by BD Parcel 5, LLC is for a new mixed-use building in a zone which establishes a mandatory design review by the Zoning Commission. Evaluation of the subject application is against the criteria contained in Subtitles K Chapter 10 – the Northern Howard Road Zone – and Subtitle X Chapter 6. The application successfully meets the relevant criteria, and the Office of Planning (OP) can therefore recommend **approval** of the application.

OP recommends **approval** of requested flexibility to side yard, open court, ground floor clear height, the solar power requirement, the stormwater management requirement, and special exception relief for penthouse enclosing walls of unequal height.

With regards to the request for special exception setback relief for guardrails on the roof of the building, the zoning regulations state in Subtitle C § 1506.2 that penthouse setback special exception relief is not permitted for buildings built to the maximum height allowed under the Height Act. At least one previous interpretation of the penthouse and rooftop structure provisions, however, determined that special exception setback relief where the Height Act would not require a setback is possible and relief was granted in that case. While OP questions whether that would apply in this case, OP has advised the applicant to obtain a determination from the Zoning Administrator that this special exception relief is permitted. If the Commission determines that the special exception relief under zoning is permitted, OP would not be opposed the granting of the relief for the proposed guardrails.

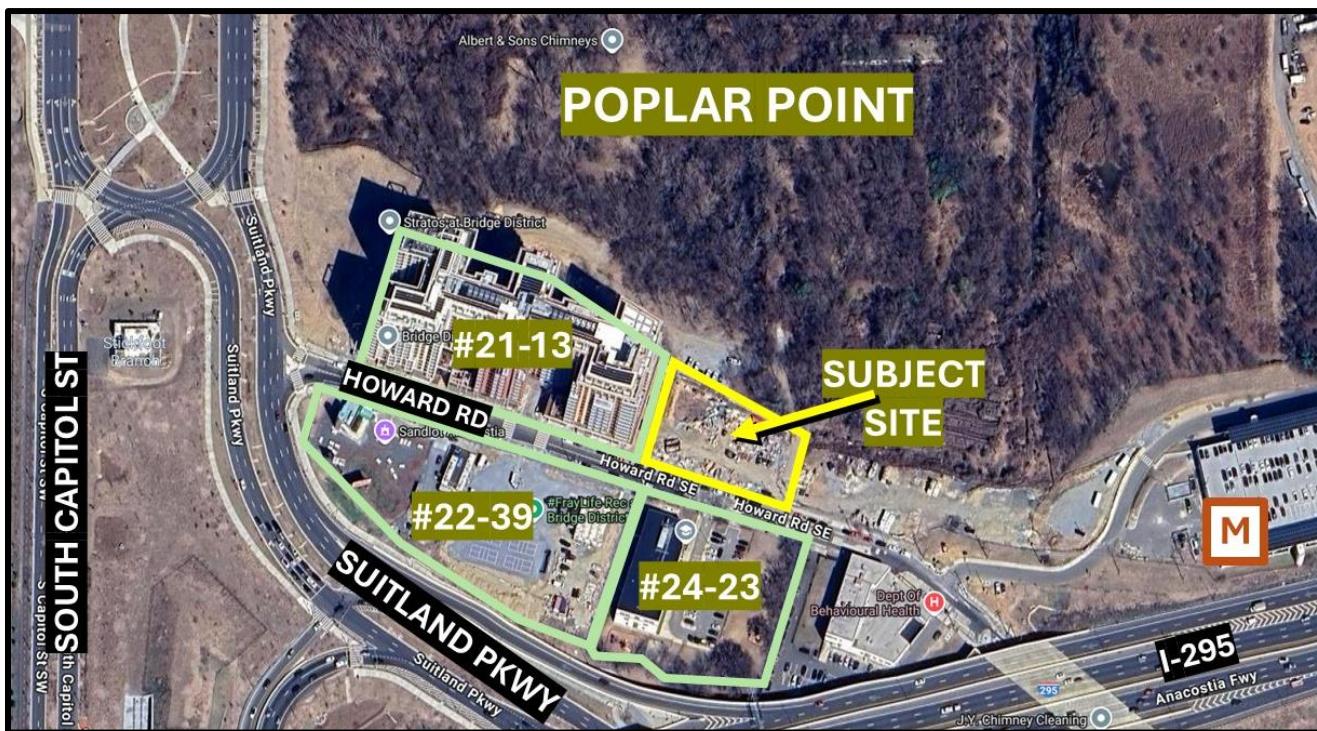
II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Location	Howard Road, SE Square 5861, Lot 1070 Ward 8, ANC 8A
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Applicant	BD Parcel 5, LLC (Redbrick)
Zoning	Northern Howard Road (NHR) (High density mixed use)
Historic District or Resource	None
Site Area	33,326 sq.ft.
Proposed Development	
Height	130 ft.
FAR	7.16
Floor Area	230,679 sq.ft. – residential <u>8,649 sq.ft. – commercial</u> 239,328 sq.ft. – total
Residential Units	272
Inclusionary Zoning	12% of the gross floor area + 8% of the penthouse habitable space = ~27,900 sq.ft. or approx. 29 units
On-site energy generation	Requirement is 178 kWh per 1,000 gross sf of building area; Applicant estimates 100 kWh per 1,000 gross sf of building area will be provided
Zoning Relief	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Penthouse enclosing wall height (C § 1503.4(a)) – Pursuant to C § 1506 and X § 900 – (One single uniform height required; two different heights proposed) <i>Special Exception</i> Penthouse setback (C § 1504) – Pursuant to C § 1506 and X § 900 – (1 to 1 setback required; 1-to-1 setback not provided at central open court) <i>Special Exception requested</i> Open court width (K § 1001.11) – Pursuant to K § 1006 and X § 900 – (East side of building is considered an open court – 44'8" required; 22'11" provided) <i>Flexibility</i> Side yard width (K § 1001.8) – Pursuant to K § 1006 and X § 900 – (North side of building is considered a side yard – 21'8" required; 10'0" provided) <i>Flexibility</i> Ground floor clear height (K § 1004.3(a)) – Pursuant to K § 1006 and X § 900 – (Clear height of 14' for a depth of 36 feet from front façade required; Portion of the retail space does not meet requirement) <i>Flexibility</i> Solar power requirement (K § 1010.1(a)) – Pursuant to X § 1000 – (178 kWh generation per 1,000 sf of building GFA required; less than 178kWh proposed) <i>Flexibility</i> Stormwater management requirement (K § 1010.1(d)) – Pursuant to X § 1000 – (Each building must provide stormwater detention for a 1.7-inch storm event; 1.2-inch storm detention proposed) <i>Flexibility</i>
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	Vacant lot; slopes slightly down from Howard Road, with steeper slopes at the northeast and southeast property lines; Much of the site is within the 500-year floodplain, and the rest is within the 100-year floodplain; No alley access.

Adjacent Properties and Neighborhood Character	<p>Site is on the north side of I-295, within close walking distance of the north entrance of the Anacostia Metro Station. Property is also near the new oval on the south side of the Frederick Douglass Bridge. The applicant owns most of the privately-held land on either side of Howard Road. The property to the west has been developed pursuant to ZC #21-13, a previous design review in the NHR zone. Properties across the street have been approved for mixed use residential development (ZC #22-39) but are not yet constructed. Adjacent to those properties is a charter school which received Commission approval to build a new replacement school building (ZC #24-23).</p> <p>Adjacent to the property, to the north and east, is the Poplar Point parcel, currently owned by the National Park Service (NPS), but which is to eventually be transferred to the District. Planning for that site has begun, and should be completed in 2026. Please see Attachment 4 for the Preferred Alternative Proposed Land Use Plan from the Poplar Point Environmental Assessment.</p>
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Vicinity Map:



III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes a mixed use building of approximately 272 residential units and 8,649 square feet of commercial space, with a height of 130 feet and an FAR of 7.16.¹ The entire property would be raised – from a few inches to a few feet – such that the ground floor would be above the 500-year floodplain level. Retail would comprise almost the entire façade of the building along

¹ See applicant pre-hearing statement at Exhibit 11 which describes changes from the original application filings.

Howard Road. The residential lobby would be at the western end of the building, adjacent to the plaza located between this building and the recently constructed building to the west. All loading access would be from a small roadway to the east of the building. Previous approvals for this area showed this roadway connecting to future streets within Poplar Point, fulfilling a key goal of the NHR zone, although the present plans are not clear on the potential for a connection. Access to the parking garage beneath this building would be from a combined access ramp located in the building to the west; The two buildings would have, in effect, a single garage.

Besides the Howard Road retail, the ground floor would include the residential lobby, amenity spaces, a bike room, and back-of-house areas. The entire rear of the building would be served by a bicycle path that would connect the various projects on the north side of Howard Road. The second floor would begin the typical residential floors, with a central courtyard surrounded by the “C” shaped building. There would be 12 total floors, plus a partially habitable penthouse level, with additional amenity spaces and a pool.

The building would be constructed with a mass timber structure on a concrete podium. As noted by the applicant, “*Using mass timber in place of concrete reduces the building’s embodied carbon footprint by approximately 30%, driven by four key factors: timber’s renewable sourcing from managed forests, significantly lower production energy compared to concrete, reduced transportation emissions due to its lighter weight, and its ability to sequester carbon over the building’s lifespan.*” (Exhibit 11 p. 2). Architecturally, the building would be fairly modern, with significant use of glass at the base for the retail storefront, with a “Wood Look” slab edge cover dividing the ground and second floors. On upper levels the large windows on the left, right and front façades would be surrounded by a light-toned masonry frame. On the rear side facing Poplar Point a window wall system would result in a wall of mostly glass. OP is supportive of the design direction and materials palette.

The applicant also proposes a range of “Design Flexibility”. See Exhibit 11, p. 7. Most of these items are standard, seen in many Zoning Commission applications. A few are specific to this project, including the request to allow flexibility in the design of the rooftop pool access. The present design assumes elevator access at the pool deck level. Should that solution prove technically infeasible, the applicant would revert to the original design, which proposed a ramp from the main roof level up to the pool deck. The applicant also asks to expand the allowable uses under the designated street requirements of K § 1004.2 to include Animal Sales, Care, and Boarding. OP does not object to the areas of flexibility.

IV. ZONING SUMMARY

The subject site is zoned Northern Howard Road (NHR), which is intended to “*Assure development of the area with a mixture of residential and commercial uses, and a suitable height, bulk, and design of buildings, as generally indicated in the Comprehensive Plan*” (K § 1000.2(a)). Pursuant to Subtitle K § 1005, this zone includes a mandatory Zoning Commission review against specific criteria found in Subtitles K and X. The following table compares the proposal to the zoning. Data is from Exhibit 11A, Sheet A1.02, unless otherwise noted.

NHR	Requirement	Proposal ²	Relief
Lot Area K § 1001.2	n/a	33,326 sq.ft.	Conforming
FAR K § 1001.2 K § 1001.3	9.0 Total, max. 2.5 Residential, min.	7.16 Total 6.92 Residential	Conforming
Height K § 1001.4	130 ft. max.	130 ft.	Conforming
Residential Units	n/a	272	Conforming
Lot Occupancy K § 1001.7	100%	67%	Conforming
Side Yard K § 1001.8	None required; If provided, 2 in. / ft. of height = 21 ft. 8 in.	~10 ft. on north*	Requested
Rear Yard K §§ 1001.9 and 1001.10	2.5 in. / ft. of height = 27 ft. 11 in.	28 ft. 8 in.	Conforming
Open Court K § 1001.11	4 in./ft. of height of court; 10 ft. minimum; East side of building considered an open court; 44 ft. 8 in. required	22 ft. 11 in. proposed	Requested
GAR K § 1001.12	0.2 min.	0.24	Conforming
Ground Floor Clear Height K § 1004.3(a)	Clear height of 14 ft. for a depth of 36 feet from front façade required	Portion of the retail space does not meet requirement	Requested
On-Site Solar Energy Generation K § 1010.1(a)	178 kWh per 1,000 gross sq.ft. of building area	Estimated 100 kWh per 1,000 gross sq.ft. of building area**	Requested
On-Site Stormwater Management K § 1010.1(d)	Each building must provide stormwater detention for a 1.7-inch storm event	1.2-inch storm detention proposed**	Requested
Vehicle Parking K § 1007.2	Res: 1 per 3 units over 4 units = 89 spaces min. Retail: 1.33 per 1k sq.ft. over 3k sq.ft. = 8 min.	Total: 160 (Residential vs. Retail not specified)	Conforming
Bicycle Parking K § 1007.3	Long term res – 91 min. Short term res – 14 min. Long term retail – 1 min. Short term retail – 3 min.	Short term total – 17 Long term total – 92	Conforming

² Information provided by the applicant

NHR	Requirement	Proposal ²	Relief
Loading K § 1007.4	<u>Residential min.</u> 1 30 ft. berth 1 20 ft. space <u>Retail min.</u> 1 30 ft. berth	<u>Residential</u> 1 30 ft. berth 1 20 ft. space <u>Retail</u> 1 30 ft. berth	Conforming
Penthouse Enclosing Wall Height C § 1503.4(a)	One single uniform height required	Two different heights proposed	Requested
Penthouse Setback C § 1504	1-to-1 setback required	Less than a 1-to-1 setback provided at central open court for portions of handrail and enclosed space	Requested

* Exhibit 3, p. 32

** From email communication with applicant

V. REVIEW CRITERIA

A. Subtitle K Design Review Criteria

The zoning for this site provides specific criteria in Subtitle K § 1005 for Zoning Commission review of any proposed development. The following is OP analysis of the applicable standards to this application.

1005 ZONING COMMISSION REVIEW OF BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, AND USES (NHR)

1005.1 *For all properties within the NHR zone, all proposed buildings and structures, or any proposed exterior renovation to any existing buildings or structures that would result in a substantial alteration of the exterior design, shall be subject to review and approval by the Zoning Commission in accordance with the following provisions.*

The applicant proposes a new mixed-use building, subject to Zoning Commission design review.

1005.2 *In addition to proving that the proposed use, building, or structure meets the standards set forth in Subtitle X, Chapter 6, and the relevant provisions of this chapter, an applicant requesting approval under this section shall prove that the proposed building or structure, including the architectural design, site plan, landscaping, sidewalk treatment, and operation, will:*

 (a) *Help achieve the objectives of the NHR zone defined in Subtitle K § 1000.1;*

The purposes of the NHR zone include creating a mix of residential and commercial uses, including commercial uses such as retail, service and entertainment. The NHR zone also provides

for increased height and density while requiring affordable housing. It also seeks to encourage superior architecture, including active streets and a pedestrian and bicycle friendly design. The proposed uses and design would help to achieve those goals.

(b) Help achieve the desired use mix, with the identified preferred uses specifically being residential, office, entertainment, retail, or service uses;

The building would have a mix of residential and commercial uses. For ease of reading, the plans label the commercial space as “retail”, but the zoning allows for a number of retail and service uses. In addition to the uses specifically cited in the zoning, the applicant also proposes flexibility for animal sales, care and boarding to count toward the required uses of the NHR zone. OP supports that flexibility, as that potential use would also further the goals of an active streetscape with uses that serve the immediate community.

(c) Provide streetscape connections for future development on adjacent lots and parcels, and be in context with an urban street grid;

The proposed site plan would provide suitable locations for connections to future development on Poplar Point, and would help to create an urban street grid where none currently exists. The plaza on the west side of the building would complement the plaza approved for the adjacent building, and was anticipated at the time of that previous approval. It would allow for pedestrian circulation to Poplar Point, and provide a visual break in the urban fabric between buildings. On the east side of the building, a small roadway would serve the loading docks of the proposed building, and would serve as a vehicular connection to future development at Poplar Point, either as a street or as an alley. See the site circulation diagram on Sheet A0.05 of Exhibit 11A. This location has been shown as a vehicular connection to Poplar Point in the previous design review cases on Howard Road (ZC #21-13 and #22-39), as well as the original PUD that the Commission approved for this site (ZC #16-29).

(d) Minimize conflict between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians;

The proposed design would locate all loading access from the roadway on the eastern side of the building. All vehicle parking would be accessed from the already constructed vehicle ramp in the building to the west. This would leave nearly the entire Howard Road frontage of the subject lot unimpeded by curb cuts for ease of pedestrian movement. The design also proposes a bike path along the rear of the building to provide another car-free connection to adjacent development.

(e) Minimize unarticulated blank walls adjacent to public spaces through facade articulation;

The design proposes transparent and articulated walls adjacent to public spaces. As seen on Sheet A6.02 of Exhibit 11A, the ground floor would have large storefront windows that should provide significant visibility into the retail spaces, along with the possibility of many retail entrances, depending on how the space is demised. Those uses would help to activate Howard Road and the plaza on the west side of the building. The applicant has added some balconies, as suggested by

OP. Adding additional balconies to the design, in addition to the benefits to residents, could help activate the façade, and bring visual variety and more residential character to the façade. The project to the west (ZC #21-13), at the time of Commission consideration, had 85% of units with balconies. OP estimates that the present design in this application has 67 balconies or terraces, or 24.6% of the total number of units.

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

The LEED scorecard at Exhibit 3B, Sheet A8.01, indicates that the project would achieve LEED Gold. While the applicant requests relief from the renewable energy standard of Subtitle K § 1010.1(a), the overall design, including the use of mass timber construction, would have a lower energy use over its lifetime, and less embodied carbon, than if the building would be constructed using steel and concrete.

(g) *Promote safe and active streetscapes through building articulation, landscaping, and the provision of active ground level uses.*

As seen on Sheet A2.04 of Exhibit 3B, the ground floor would have retail or service uses along the entire Howard Road frontage. And as seen in the renderings, elevations, and materials sheets, the ground floor would have a highly transparent façade, allowing views into and out of the retail or service uses. The residential lobby, amenity rooms, and the bike storage room would provide further visual activity and usage around most of the rest of the perimeter of the building. The applicant also plans a promenade that would connect the rear façades of all the buildings on the north side of Howard Road. This should bring foot and bike traffic to that side of the building.

1005.3 *Each application for review under this section shall provide a report on the following items as part of the initial submission:*

(a) *Coordination by the applicant with the Department of Employment Services (DOES) regarding apprenticeship and training opportunities during construction and operation at the subject site, and the provision of any internship or training opportunities during construction and operation at the subject site, either with the applicant or with contractors working on the project independent of DOES;*

According to Exhibit 3, p. 9, the applicant has employed high school and college interns, with a goal of learning the real estate business. It is unclear if any are employed currently. The application also states that “The applicant previously partnered with a local CBE subcontractor to train local electrical apprentices who acquired on-job skills and experience at the Bridge District Phase 1 project site.” The applicant “will endeavor to continue this partnership” on this project. They also say that they “aim to partner with the General Contractor to explore ways to create and host a variety of workforce development and training opportunities...”.

(b) *Efforts by the applicant to include local businesses, especially Wards 7 and 8 businesses, in contracts for the construction or operation of the proposed project;*

According to Exhibit 3, p. 10, the applicant has been “working with local Ward 8 businesses within the Bridge District thus far and intends to continue to do so on the Project.” The statement also indicates that the applicant is working with the local BID to pursue contracts with local businesses for site cleanup. OP asked the applicant to describe in more detail what work local businesses have completed so far on other Bridge District projects, and what work would be contracted to local companies in the future. As of this writing that information has not been entered to the record.

(c) *Efforts by the applicant to provide retail or commercial leasing opportunities to small and local businesses, especially Ward 8 businesses, and efforts to otherwise encourage local entrepreneurship and innovation; and*

According to the application, the applicant has encouraged residents and other community stakeholders to refer businesses to the applicant, and that they have had “several meetings with interested local entrepreneurs” (Ex. 3, p. 10). OP has asked the applicant to provide more details about ways that they are encouraging local businesses to locate at this project.

(d) *Coordination by the applicant with the State Archaeologist and any plans to study potential archeological resources at the subject site, and otherwise recognize local Anacostia history.*

The State Archaeologist at the Office of Planning’s Historic Preservation Office has indicated no concerns with the project, and that previous Phase I and Phase II archaeology studies were completed and no significant historic resources were identified on the subject site. OP has asked the applicant to provide more information about how they intend to recognize local Anacostia history within the Bridge District project.

1005.4 *The applicant shall also provide evidence that the information required by Subtitle K § 1005.3 has been served on any ANC on or adjacent to the NHR zone.*

Exhibit 3, applicant’s written statement, indicates that the applicant has coordinated with ANC 8A, the subject ANC, and ANC 8C, which borders the NHR zone to the southwest. ANC 8A has submitted a letter in support of the application, at Exhibit 6.

B. Subtitle X Design Review Criteria – Section 603, DESIGN REVIEW FLEXIBILITY and Special Exception Relief

The zoning regulations also require review against the general design review criteria in Subtitle X Chapter 6. The following is OP analysis of the standards applicable to this application.

603.1 *As part of the design review process, the Zoning Commission may grant relief from the development standards for height, setbacks, lot occupancy, courts, and building transitions; as well as any specific design standards of a specific zone. The design review process shall not be used to vary other building development standards including FAR, Inclusionary Zoning, or green area ratio.*

The application requests special exception relief from:

- Penthouse enclosing wall height (C § 1503.4(a));
- Penthouse setback (C § 1504);
- Side yard (K § 1001.8);
- Open court (K § 1001.11);
- Ground floor clear height (K § 1004.3(a));

and variances from:

- Solar power requirement (K § 1010.1(a)); and
- Stormwater management requirement (K § 1010.1(d)).

Pursuant to this section, requested relief from side yard, open court, ground floor clear height, the solar power requirement, and the stormwater management requirements can be reviewed as flexibility by the Commission, and OP recommends that the Commission approve this flexibility. OP assessed that the penthouse relief, while reviewable under this section, would not meet the criteria of X § 603.2, so instead reviewed the relief as a special exception. Please refer to the analysis below in this section.

603.2 *Except for height, the amount of relief is at the discretion of the Zoning Commission, but provided that the relief is required to enable the applicant to meet all of the standards of Subtitle X § 604. The Zoning Commission may grant no greater height than that permitted if the application were for a PUD.*

Granting the requested flexibility would help the project achieve the standards of X § 604.

Open Court: Flexibility for open court, on the east side of the building, would result in a building form that creates a framed urban corridor along Howard Road, but also creates a break between this building and future development to the east. It would also help facilitate the creation of open space at the west end of the building, to match the plaza created in the Bridge District Phase 1 project. Furthermore, it would help realize the uninterrupted retail façade of the building, which would make a more inviting and safer pedestrian realm. These goals are embodied in X § 604.7(a), (b), (c), and (f), as well as in Comprehensive Plan policies calling for walkable communities and a strong urban form on major corridors. The applicant states that open space would also be provided on the lot to the east, known as Parcel 6, resulting in a total open space “much wider” than the required court dimension (Ex. 3, p. 31). This area would allow for the loading functions proposed for this building, as well as pedestrian and vehicular connections to future development on Poplar Point.

Side Yard and Ground Floor Clear Height: No side yard is required in the NHR zone, but the

applicant has elected to locate one on the north side of the building to accommodate a bicycle trail on that side. The dimension of the side yard, however, would not meet the minimum requirement. Flexibility for side yard would allow the building's ground floor to accommodate necessary functions such as loading, mechanical spaces, and bike parking, as well as the residential lobby and associated amenity spaces, all while accommodating a complete frontage of retail space along Howard Road. Similarly, "utility access needs" at the ground floor result in the inability to meet the required 14 foot clear height requirement for a portion of the ground floor (Ex. 3, p. 33), but preferred uses would still be accommodated for the entire frontage of the building. The ground floor is unusually burdened in that, because of this site's location in a flood-risk area, it must accommodate all mechanical and electrical systems that might otherwise be located below grade. This flexibility would help to implement the goals of X § 604.7(a) and (f), as well as Plan policies that call for retail spaces that activate the sidewalk, policies that seek to provide more multimodal connections, and policies that call for flood resiliency.

Solar Power Requirement and Stormwater Management Requirement: Flexibility from the specific sustainability requirements applicable to this site would not hinder the environmental performance of the building, but would overall further the goals of the NHR zone and the Comprehensive Plan, which seek to generally maximize the use of renewable energy and minimize environmental impacts. It would also help achieve design review criterion X § 604.7(e). The design proposes a mass-timber, all-electric building that, while more sustainable overall, would require more rooftop mechanical equipment occupying space otherwise devoted to green roof and solar power. This additional equipment includes "more rooftop condenser units, heat pumps, and energy recovery ventilation equipment" (Ex. 11, p. 5). So while not meeting the letter of the regulations regarding sustainable power generation and stormwater, the building, according to the applicant, would have a lower energy use over its lifetime, and more long term embodied carbon than if the building were constructed using more traditional steel and concrete and met the specific criteria. The design utilizes every possible location on the ground and on the building for stormwater retention, and would meet DOEE's standard stormwater requirement. It would also provide 100 kWh of renewable energy per 1,000 gross sf of building area, less than the 178 kWh required, but greater than the general NHR requirement of "one percent (1%) of the total energy estimated to be needed to operate the building" (K § 1008.2).

Penthouse Enclosing Wall Height:

The applicant requests special exception relief from the uniform enclosing wall height requirement at the west end of the penthouse. Section C § 1503 requires a single, uniform height around penthouse habitable space. The applicant requests relief from this requirement at the west end of the penthouse to include a taller clearstory window into the amenity space. Please refer to the section drawing at Exhibit 11A, Sheet A4.03.

1506.1 *Relief from the requirements of Subtitle C §§ 1503 and 1504 may be granted as a special exception by the Board of Zoning Adjustment subject to:*

(a) *The special exception requirements of Subtitle X, Chapter 9;*

Granting the requested relief to uniform wall height would not have negative impacts on adjacent properties. The raised portion of the roof would continue to meet the 1-to-1 setback, so its visibility should be minimized. It would also front on a private open space, rather than directly onto the public street, likewise minimizing its impacts. Because the location of the relief would be limited, and the design would continue to harmonize with the rest of the penthouse and the building as a whole, relief would also not impair the intent of the Regulations.

(b) *The applicant's demonstration that reasonable effort has been made for the housing for mechanical equipment, stairway, and elevator penthouses to be in compliance with the required setbacks; and*

All mechanical equipment, stairways, and elevator penthouses would be in compliance with required setbacks. The request for relief from setback provisions for guardrails is addressed below.

(c) *The applicant's demonstration of at least one (1) of the following:*

- (1) *The strict application of the requirements of this chapter would result in construction that is unduly restrictive, prohibitively costly, or unreasonable, or is inconsistent with building codes;*
- (2) *The relief requested would result in a better design of the penthouse or rooftop structure without appearing to be an extension of the building wall;*
- (3) *The relief requested would result in a penthouse or rooftop structure that is visually less intrusive; or*
- (4) *Operating difficulties such as meeting D.C. Construction Code, Title 12 DCMR requirements for roof access and stairwell separation or elevator stack location to achieve reasonable efficiencies in lower floors; size of Subtitle C § 115 building lot; or other conditions relating to the building or surrounding area make full compliance unduly restrictive, prohibitively costly or unreasonable.*

The applicant's written statement (Ex. 3, pp. 29-30) suggests that relief would result in a better design for the rooftop amenity spaces. The clearstory window would allow additional light into the amenity spaces, creating a more welcoming environment. Also, the elevator vestibule would facilitate access to the pool deck for mobility-challenged residents.

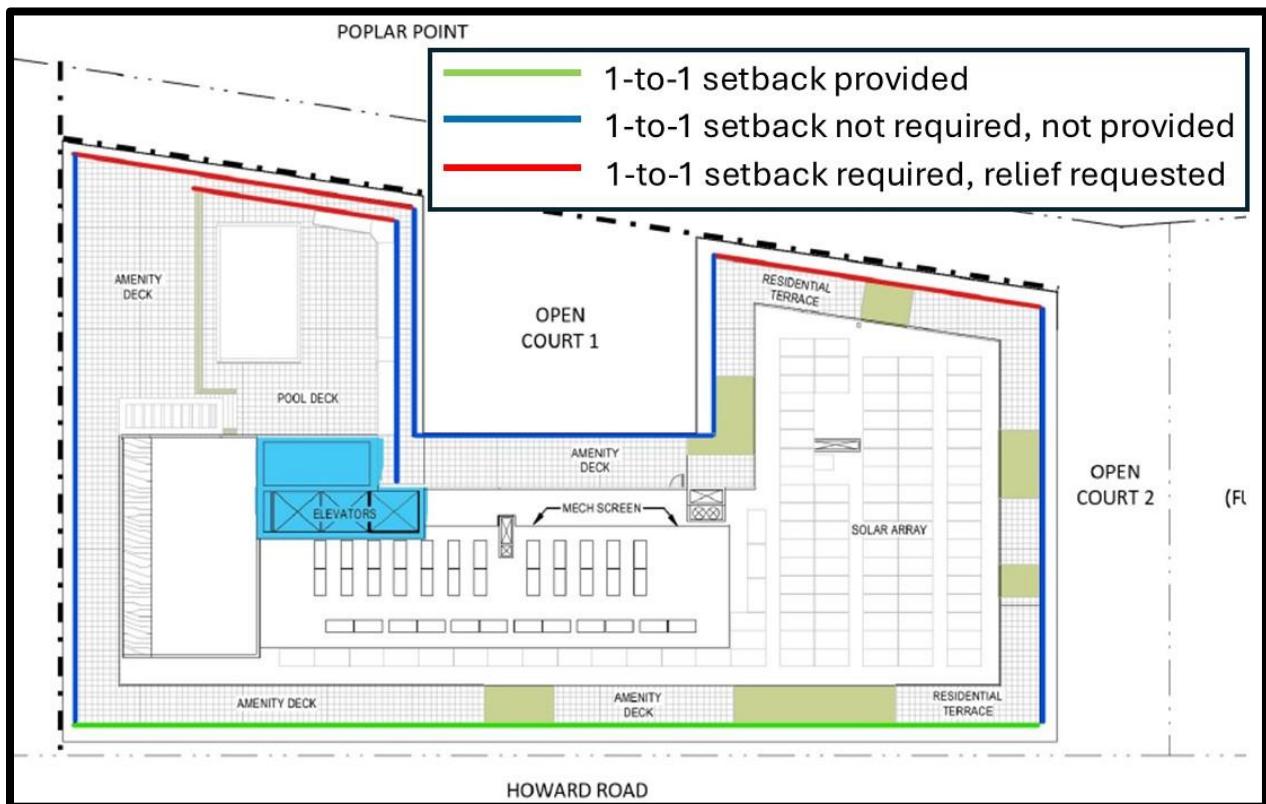
Penthouse Setback:

Subtitle C § 1504 requires a 1-to-1 setback from the edge of the roof for guardrails and habitable penthouse space³. While Subtitle C § 1506.2 does not appear to allow special exception setback relief for buildings built to the maximum height under the Height Act, past interpretations have held that some forms of special exception setback relief are possible, such as for a setback from a

³ Elevator overrides and stair towers do not require the setback from an open court, pursuant to C § 1504.4. This applies to the elevators at the roof level of the subject building where they approach the central northern court.

courtyard. It is not clear to OP that these interpretations would be applicable to the relief required in this case, but should the Zoning Administrator and the Commission determine that the relief is permitted, analysis is provided below.

The applicant provided OP with a roof plan clearly indicating exactly where setback relief is required for the guardrails. See below. The applicant confirmed their evaluation of where relief is required with the Zoning Administrator, and requests relief for the guardrail locations shown in red – the two amenity deck guardrails facing Poplar Point, and the pool deck guardrail facing Poplar Point. Relief is also requested for the proposed elevator vestibule exiting onto the pool deck, not shown on this image, but located at the southwest corner of Open Court 1. Please refer to Ex 11A, Sheet A8.01



1506.1 *Relief from the requirements of Subtitle C §§ 1503 and 1504 may be granted as a special exception by the Board of Zoning Adjustment subject to:*

(a) *The special exception requirements of Subtitle X, Chapter 9;*

Granting the requested setback relief would not have negative impacts on surrounding properties or public space. Viewers from the ground in Poplar Point, or from a future building within Poplar Point, may potentially be able to notice a slight deviation. But relief from setbacks would generate only minimal visual impact given the use of primarily glass as the railing material.

Provided that the Commission determines that the requested setback relief is permitted consistent with the intent of C § 1506, then granting the requested relief would not be contrary to the Regulations.

(b) *The applicant's demonstration that reasonable effort has been made for the housing for mechanical equipment, stairway, and elevator penthouses to be in compliance with the required setbacks; and*

All mechanical equipment, stairways, and elevator penthouses would be in compliance with required setbacks.

(c) *The applicant's demonstration of at least one (1) of the following:*

- (1) *The strict application of the requirements of this chapter would result in construction that is unduly restrictive, prohibitively costly, or unreasonable, or is inconsistent with building codes;*
- (2) *The relief requested would result in a better design of the penthouse or rooftop structure without appearing to be an extension of the building wall;*
- (3) *The relief requested would result in a penthouse or rooftop structure that is visually less intrusive; or*
- (4) *Operating difficulties such as meeting D.C. Construction Code, Title 12 DCMR requirements for roof access and stairwell separation or elevator stack location to achieve reasonable efficiencies in lower floors; size of Subtitle C § 115 building lot; or other conditions relating to the building or surrounding area make full compliance unduly restrictive, prohibitively costly or unreasonable.*

For the proposed guardrails the application contends that the design would meet criterion (2), and would result in a better design without appearing to be an extension of the building wall (Ex. 3, p. 30). OP agrees that the design would not appear to be an extension of a building wall. If relief were granted, there should be minimal if any impact to nearby properties or the public space.

1506.2 *Relief shall not be granted to the setback requirements of Subtitle C § 1504 for a penthouse or rooftop structure located on a building constructed to the maximum height allowed by the Height Act.*

The subject building would be 130 feet tall, the maximum permitted under the Height Act.

C. Subtitle X Design Review Criteria – Section 604, DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

604.1 *The Zoning Commission will evaluate and approve or disapprove a design review application subject to this chapter according to the standards of this section and for Non-Voluntary Design Reviews subject to this chapter according to the standards stated in the provisions that require Zoning Commission review.*

604.2 *For Non-Voluntary Design Review, the application must also meet the requirements of the provisions that mandated Zoning Commission approval.*

The requirements of Subtitle K are reviewed above.

604.3 *The applicant shall have the burden of proof to justify the granting of the application according to these standards.*

604.4 *The applicant shall not be relieved of the responsibility of proving the case by a preponderance of the evidence, even if no evidence or arguments are presented in opposition to the case.*

604.5 *The Zoning Commission shall find that the proposed design review development is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with other adopted public policies and active programs related to the subject site.*

For analysis against the Comprehensive Plan, please refer the applicant filing at Exhibit 3 and the OP Analysis in Section 5.D. below.

604.6 *The Zoning Commission shall find that the proposed design review development will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property and meets the general special exception criteria of Subtitle X, Chapter 9.*

The proposed development should not affect neighboring properties adversely. The scale of the proposed building is consistent with the allowances of the NHR zone, and the buildings have been designed to have detailed architecture on all sides so would not present a blank face to any nearby properties. Buildings of this scale will generate some new shadow, but there are very few buildings nearby the subject site. Furthermore, with the given FLUM designation and the existing NHR zoning, it is anticipated that any new development in the area would be of a similar scale and intensity. One nearby lower-scale building, the existing charter school, is to the south of the subject site, so should not be unduly impacted in terms of access to light.

At this time, planning analysis is underway for Poplar Point, which will help to determine how it will be developed. The Comprehensive Plan envisions some development, as well as considerable open park space, on that site. Given that the high density FLUM designations along Howard Road continue onto the Poplar Point site, it is likely that high-density, mixed-use development would be present in that area.

604.7 *The Zoning Commission shall review the urban design of the site and the building for the following criteria:*

- (a) *Street frontages are designed to be safe, comfortable, and encourage pedestrian activity, including:*
 - (1) *Multiple pedestrian entrances for large developments;*

- (2) *Direct driveway or garage access to the street is discouraged;*
- (3) *Commercial ground floors contain active uses with clear, inviting windows;*
- (4) *Blank facades are prevented or minimized; and*
- (5) *Wide sidewalks are provided;*

As seen on Sheet A2.04 of Exhibit 3B, the ground floor would have retail or service uses along the entire Howard Road frontage. And as seen in the renderings, elevations, and materials sheets, the ground floor would have a highly transparent façade, allowing views into and out of the retail or service uses. The residential lobby, amenity rooms, and the bike storage room would provide further visual activity and usage around most of the rest of the perimeter of the building. The applicant also plans a promenade that would connect the rear façades of all the buildings on the north side of Howard Road. This should bring foot and bike traffic to that side of the building.

- (b) *Public gathering spaces and open spaces are encouraged, especially in the following situations:*
 - (1) *Where neighborhood open space is lacking;*
 - (2) *Near transit stations or hubs; and*
 - (3) *When they can enhance existing parks and the waterfront;*

The proposed development would include a plaza at the western end of the building, shared between this building and the existing building on that side. From the renderings and plans, it appears that the plaza would be divided into different areas for commercial seating dedicated to adjacent businesses, free space open to the public, apartment amenity space, and areas for green infrastructure such as stormwater retention. See a plan view of the space at Sheet A2.01 of Exhibit 11A. This area would provide for pedestrian and bicycle connections from Howard Road to the applicant's bike path at the rear and to Poplar Point.

- (c) *New development respects the historic character of Washington's neighborhoods, including:*
 - (1) *Developments near the District's major boulevards and public spaces should reinforce the existing urban form;*
 - (2) *Infill development should respect, though need not imitate, the continuity of neighborhood architectural character; and*
 - (3) *Development should respect and protect key landscape vistas and axial views of landmarks and important places;*

The proposed development would complement the streetscape on Howard Road, helping to create an urban form both typical of DC and appropriate for a high density area near metro. The building should not create any undue impacts on views of landmarks and important places. The NHR zone requires that development attempt to create an urban street grid, and this project would make possible that street grid with a roadway on the eastern side of the building. This roadway would serve the loading docks of the proposed building, but would serve as a vehicular connection to future development at Poplar Point, either as a street or as an alley. See the site circulation diagram

on Sheet A0.05 of Exhibit 11A. This location has been shown as a vehicular connection to Poplar Point in the previous design review cases on Howard Road (ZC #21-13 and #22-39), as well as the original PUD that the Commission approved for this site (ZC #16-29).

OP supports the architectural design as appropriately modern, but would support the inclusion of more balconies to benefit residents with private outdoor open space, improve the streetscape and the building's interaction with public areas, and improve the residential character of the building. The project to the west (ZC #21-13), at the time of Commission consideration, had 85% of units with balconies. OP estimates that the present design in this application has 67 balconies or terraces, or 24.6% of the total number of units.

- (d) Buildings strive for attractive and inspired façade design, including:*
 - (1) Reinforce the pedestrian realm with elevated detailing and design of first (1st) and second (2nd) stories; and*
 - (2) Incorporate contextual and quality building materials and fenestration;*

The design proposes an attractive façade and the use of quality materials and detailing. At the ground level, the design proposes that retail facades incorporate a large percentage of glass, in conformance with the requirement of the NHR zone at K § 1004.3(b), to allow for views into and out of retail spaces to activate the streetscape. Also in conformance with the NHR zone (1004.3(c)), the design provides for retail entrances along Howard Road. Beginning at the second floor, the pedestrian realm would also be enhanced through the use of a few balconies. OP also supports the material palette, as shown on Sheets A6.01 through A6.04 of Exhibit 11A.

- (e) Sites are designed with sustainable landscaping; and*

The application proposes landscaping at the ground level, primarily on the western end of the building. This area would be part of the building's stormwater retention regime. Along Howard Road, a continuous tree box would help to detain runoff from the street. Landscaping would also be present at the second floor terrace and at the roof level. Exhibit 3, p. 12 states that "Native species will be incorporated in the planting designs to the maximum extent feasible." The applicant should commit to only using native species, in conformance with Comprehensive Plan policy.

- (f) Sites are developed to promote connectivity both internally and with surrounding neighborhoods, including:*
 - (1) Pedestrian pathways through developments increase mobility and link neighborhoods to transit;*
 - (2) The development incorporates transit and bicycle facilities and amenities;*
 - (3) Streets, easements, and open spaces are designed to be safe and pedestrian friendly;*
 - (4) Large sites are integrated into the surrounding community through street and pedestrian connections; and*

(5) *Waterfront development contains high quality trail and shoreline design as well as ensuring access and view corridors to the waterfront.*

The proposed site plan would provide suitable breaks in the building street wall to allow vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle connections to any future uses on Poplar Point, and would help to create an urban street grid where none currently exists. This project would have 8-foot sidewalks along Howard Road, which would provide connections to the metro, especially after future buildings are constructed east of this site. The path at the rear of the buildings would also encourage bike travel toward the metro and the Anacostia neighborhood to the east and south, and to the Frederick Douglass Bridge to the north.

604.8 *The Zoning Commission shall find that the criteria of Subtitle X § 604.7 are met in a way that is superior to any matter-of-right development possible on the site.*

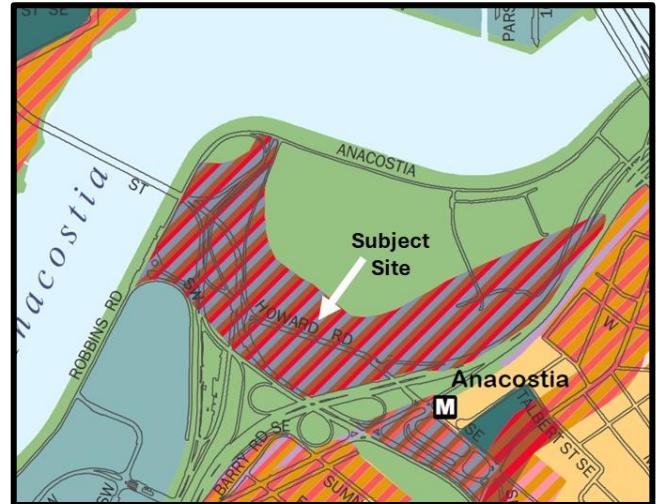
The proposed building and site design meet the criteria in a way that would be superior to a building not subject to design review.

D. Comprehensive Plan

The project would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including the Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Urban Design, Environmental Protection, and Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest Elements. The subject site is within the Central Employment Area, where it is anticipated that properties would be developed with higher density mixed use. Permitting high density development would allow efficient use of the Anacostia Metro station, and the project would add to a new neighborhood center near a metro station, in conformance with Plan policies. The project would also help to create a walkable and bikeable environment, which are also goals of the Plan. The Environmental Protection Element seeks to expand the use of clean, local energy and minimize a building's energy consumption. The proposed design would further those goals. The Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest Area Element specifically seeks to create new waterfront neighborhoods and multimodal streets, and also sets forth the goal of improving connections to Poplar Point.

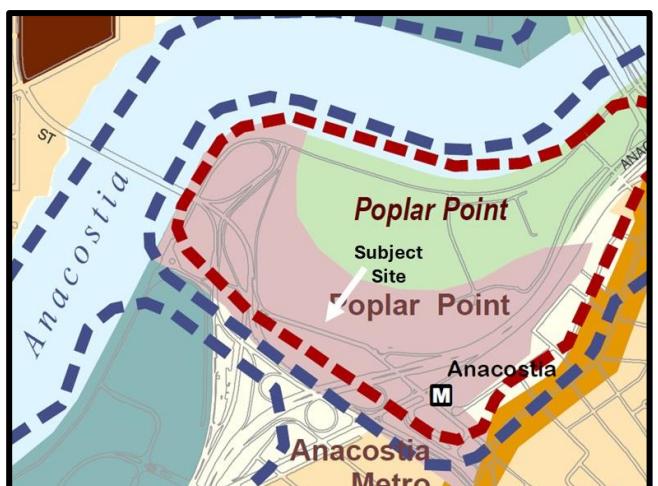
Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps

The **Future Land Use Map** (to right) designates the site as appropriate for High Density Residential, High Density Commercial, and Institutional mixed use. The existing zoning, and the proposed project would not be inconsistent with this designation.



The **Generalized Policy Map** (below) shows the subject site as part of a Land Use Change Area, and places the site on the edge of both a Future Planning Analysis Area, and a Resilience Focus Area.

Future Planning Analysis Area areas are “large tracts or corridors where future analysis is anticipated to ensure adequate planning for equitable development...” (§ 2503.2). It is intended that the planning analysis “shall precede any zoning changes in the area.” For this development, the applicant is not requesting a rezoning for the site, and this project would be in conformance with already-adopted Comprehensive Plan policies and maps.



The Land Use Element defines Resilience Focus Areas as land within the 100- and 500-year floodplain, where “future planning efforts are intended to guide resilience to flooding for new and existing development and infrastructure projects, including public capital projects. (§ 304.8). The applicant provided Resilience Focus Area analysis at Exhibit 3, p. 15. The applicant is intending to raise the site above the floodplain levels and has incorporated DOEE design strategies into the site and building design.

Comprehensive Plan Analysis through a Racial Equity Lens and the Zoning Commission’s Racial Equity Tool

The Commission created a Racial Equity Tool to assist in its evaluation of zoning actions through a racial equity lens. Parts 1, 3 and 4 of the tool ask OP to provide analysis of the relevant policies from the Comprehensive Plan and other planning documents, provide data that describe the racial and economic characteristics of the subject planning area, and provide analysis of factors related to equity. The requested information is provided below. The applicant also provided a Racial Equity Analysis at Exhibit 3.

Racial Equity Tool Part 1 – Comprehensive Plan Guidance

The Comprehensive Plan requires the Zoning Commission and staff to examine city policies through a racial equity lens. Racial equity is a broad and encompassing goal of the entire District government. As explained in the Framework Element of the Plan,

[t]he District seeks to create and support an equitable and inclusive city. Like resilience, equity is both an outcome and a process. Equity exists where all people share equal rights, access, choice, opportunities, and outcomes, regardless of characteristics such as race, class, or gender. Equity is achieved by targeted actions and investments to meet residents where they are, to create equitable opportunities. Equity is not the same as equality. Framework Element, § 213.6

The direction to consider equity “as part of [the Zoning Commission’s] Comprehensive Plan consistency analysis” indicates that the equity analysis is intended to be based on the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and whether a proposed zoning action is “not inconsistent” with the Comp Plan. Whenever the Commission considers Comprehensive Plan consistency, the scope of the review and Comprehensive Plan policies that apply will depend on the nature of the proposed zoning action.

Equity is discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan. In the context of zoning, certain priorities stand out. These include affordable housing, displacement, and access to opportunity. The Comprehensive Plan provides a number of policies related to the development of this project which, when viewed through a racial equity lens, give the Commission a framework for evaluating the project. Please see a compilation of relevant policies in Attachment 1.

The **Land Use Element** of the Plan seeks to guide growth in such a way that “expands access to affordable housing, education, transportation, employment, and services for communities of color, low-income households, and vulnerable populations” (Comprehensive Plan, § 304.4). The proposed project would enhance access to affordable housing, and provide access to transportation, and therefore enhanced access to employment, for residents of the buildings.

Housing: One of the key ways the Comprehensive Plan seeks to address equity is by supporting additional housing development, particularly on underutilized sites near transit. The Plan describes that without increased housing, the imbalance between supply and demand will drive up housing prices in a way that creates challenges for many residents, particularly low-income residents. Housing at this location, currently vacant land, would not result in the displacement of any existing residents.

The Comprehensive Plan further recognizes the importance of inclusionary zoning requirements in providing affordable housing opportunities for households of varying income levels, and the NHR zone establishes IZ provisions that go beyond typical IZ. This project, in addition to providing a large number of market rate units, as well as 12% of the residential gross floor area plus 8% of the penthouse floor area as affordable units, in conformance with the NHR zone. This would total approximately 27,900 square feet, or 29 units, distributed between 50% and 60% MFI

households. 11 of the 29 IZ units would be dedicated to three-bedroom units, so the project would also further Housing Element policies that promote housing for larger household sizes. The Housing Element particularly seeks private sector support to provide needed affordable housing, and states that that housing should be of a high quality and design standard. The high-quality architecture provided in this development would achieve those policy goals.

Connectivity: In conformance with the Transportation Element, the project would improve access to all transportation modes, and assist in creating a key link to the Frederick Douglass Bridge, which provides bike and pedestrian access to employment centers across the river, for both new residents of this site, and existing residents in the neighborhood. By providing new housing, including affordable housing, near transit, the application would provide a housing option for individuals who rely on transit to get to work. Residents could also bike to major job centers, or walk to areas such as the Navy Yard and Anacostia.

Healthy Environment: The project would help to create a more equitable environment, with significant commitments to renewable energy, and through the pioneering use of mass timber construction, which should reduce the overall carbon emissions for this development. Because of its high LEED score and its onsite renewable energy generation, the building would have a smaller environmental impact, contributing to a healthier city. By improving a key link in the pedestrian network, helping to connect the Anacostia metro station, the Frederick Douglass Bridge, and the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, neighborhood walkability could encourage more residents to utilize parks, trails and other outdoor amenities, and potentially help to reduce auto usage and add to resident well-being.

Urban Design: The project would further a number of Urban Design policies related to equity, including providing active, engaging, and safe streetscapes, transparent façades for more public safety, and provision of a plaza that can be a public gathering place.

Employment: The proposal would provide new small business and employment opportunities for area residents. The applicant has also been working with local companies in Wards 7 and 8 to provide services on previous projects, and state that they could use local contractors going forward on the project. The applicant has also provided internship opportunities for young adults in the neighborhood, and will also provide discounted rent to local business (Ex. 3, p. 2).

Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest Planning Area Element: The project would help fulfill the Area Element policies that call for the creation of new mixed-use neighborhoods, including housing for a mix of incomes and for families of various sizes. The development also proposes a height and density that would further policies calling for maximizing the use of vacant land near the Anacostia metro station, while improving access to waterfront amenities such as Anacostia Park and the Douglass Bridge.

On balance, when evaluated through a racial equity lens, the proposed project would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and would further a number of policies of the above-referenced Plan elements.

Racial Equity Tool Part 2 – Applicant/Petitioner Outreach and Engagement

In Exhibit 3 Section X, the Applicant has detailed their outreach and community engagement efforts, including ANC 8A, ANC 8C, Anacostia BID, Anacostia Coordinating Council, Poplar Point Citizens Listening Group, and Ward 8 CED.

Racial Equity Tool Part 3 – Planning Area Data

Part 3 of the Racial Equity Tool asks for disaggregated data to assist the Commission in its evaluation of zoning actions through a racial equity lens. The following tables provide economic data and a population profile of the planning area. The data source is the 2012-2016 and 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, available via the OP State Data Center (<https://opdatahub.dc.gov/search?tags=racial%20equity>). Part 3 also asks if the planning area is on track to meet affordable housing goals, and whether the data shows any “intersectionality of factors such as race, ethnicity, age, income, gender, or sexual orientation within the area of the zoning action and how might the zoning action impact the intersection of those factors?”

Population by Race/Ethnicity

The Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest planning area has grown significantly in population over the time periods, from 17,113 residents to 28,244. The area has a population that is fairly evenly divided between White and minority groups, with Whites comprising 55.1% of the population in the latest ACS, slightly higher than the 51.5% of earlier time period. Most racial groups gained in population in the study period, but the Black residents in the planning area, though increasing in absolute terms, decreased as a percentage of the total, from 39.3% to 31.2%. This was reflective of the District-wide trend. Other groups that increased in absolute terms were Asian Alone, Hispanic or Latino, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races.

The IZ units created by the development would provide increased opportunity for lower-income families to remain in the District and the planning area. Given the income data by race, it can be inferred that the families benefiting the most from the IZ housing on the site would be Black or other minority groups, which could impact the present trends of declining Black population in the planning area.

Race or Ethnicity	District 2012-2016	District% 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	District% 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS% 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023	LAW/NS% 2019-2023
Total Population	659,009	100%	673,079	100.0%	17,113	100.0%	28,244	100.0%
Asian Alone	24,036	4%	27,465	4.1%	800	4.7%	1,201	4.3%
Black or African American	318,598	48%	290,772	43.3%	6,733	39.3%	8,817	31.2%
Hispanic or Latino*	69,106	10%	77,760	11.6%	945	5.5	2,238	7.9%

Indian and Alaska Native	2,174	0%	2,044	0.3%	119	0.7%	114	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	271	0%	378	0.1%	22	0.1%	0	0.0%
Some Other Race	29,650	4%	32,338	4.8%	90	0.5%	412	1.5%
Two or More Race	18,245	3%	56,533	8.4%	533	3.1%	2,147	7.6%
White Alone	266,035	40%	262,549	39.1%	8,817	51.5%	15,553	55.1%

Age & Vulnerable Population

The LAW/NS planning area's median age was almost identical to the Districtwide median during both 5-year periods. Both the District and the planning area median age increased between study periods. When race is considered, the data shows that the Black residents in LAW/NS had a slightly higher median age than most of the other groups during the study period.

The planning area, in the most recent ACS, had a lower percentage of vulnerable residents than the District as a whole. Over the 11-year period, the percentage of residents 65 and older, the percentage of residents who identified as disabled, and the percentage of residents under 18 all decreased in the Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest area.

Vulnerable Population	District 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Persons 65 and Older	11.4%	12.7%	13.5%	9.3%
Persons Under 18	17.4%	18.7%	9.7%	9.4%
Percent Disable	11.3%	11.0%	11.8%	8.9%

Median Age	District 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Total	32.3	34.9	32.6	34.9
Asian Alone	33.3	35.2	32.6	37.0
Black or African American	40.3	37.3	37.0	38.4
Hispanic or Latino	31.3	32.5	31.3	33.2
Indian and Alaska Native	31.4	34.9	29.4	-
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	-	20.9	-	-
Some Other Race	29.6	28.7	32.7	27.8
Two or More Race	28.3	31.0	31.7	33.1
White Alone	33.1	35.3	32.6	34.9

Median Household Income and Employment

The LAW/NS planning area has a significantly higher median income than the District as a whole, as evidenced by data from both the 2012-2016 and 2019-2023 survey periods. The planning area

median income, however, tracked with the citywide trend and increased significantly over the 11-year period, and those gains were realized across racial groups. The unemployment rate for Blacks, while decreasing citywide and in the planning area, remained higher than other racial groups.

Median Household Income	District 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Total Median	\$72,935	\$106,287	\$82,118	\$122,548
Asian Alone	\$91,453	\$121,619	\$87,540	\$120,717
Black or African American	\$40,560	\$60,446	\$41,562	\$73,153
Hispanic or Latino	\$60,848	\$106,435	\$87,873	\$138,062
Indian and Alaska Native	\$51,306	\$63,617	-	-
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-
Some Other Race	\$41,927	\$74,754	-	\$126,830
Two or More Race	\$83,243	\$116,869	\$80,922	\$154,160
White Alone	\$119,564	\$166,774	\$99,187	\$122,548

Unemployment Rate	DISTRICT 2012-2016	DISTRICT 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Total	8.7	6.5	6.3	4.2
Asian Alone	2.3	2.4	0.0	4.5
Black or African American	16.8	12.8	14.0	9.5
Hispanic or Latino	6.2	4.5	1.2	2.0
Indian and Alaska Native	9.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	4.8	5.1	0.0	-
Some Other Race	6.8	6.2	0.0	0.0
Two or More Race	6.7	4.4	9.7	0.9
White Alone	3.1	2.6	3.4	2.7

Homeownership

Fewer residents in the UNE planning area own their home than in the District as a whole – 23.3% compared to 41.1%. The homeownership rate in the planning area dropped noticeably over the two survey periods, while the overall rate in the District went up slightly. The homeownership rate among Black households in the planning area went down from 25.7% to 19.0%, and similar or even greater decreases were seen across all racial groups. These trends seem to be particular to the planning area and could be due to the large influx of apartment buildings in the area, especially around the ballpark, soccer stadium, and the Navy Yard. District-wide, Black homeownership went down, but by only one percentage point, and White homeownership went up marginally.

The planning area's percentage of households that are housing-cost-burdened is lower than the citywide rate, and that percentage decreased between the study periods.

Owners/ Renters		District 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Total	Owner Households	40.7%	41.1%	35.0%	23.3%

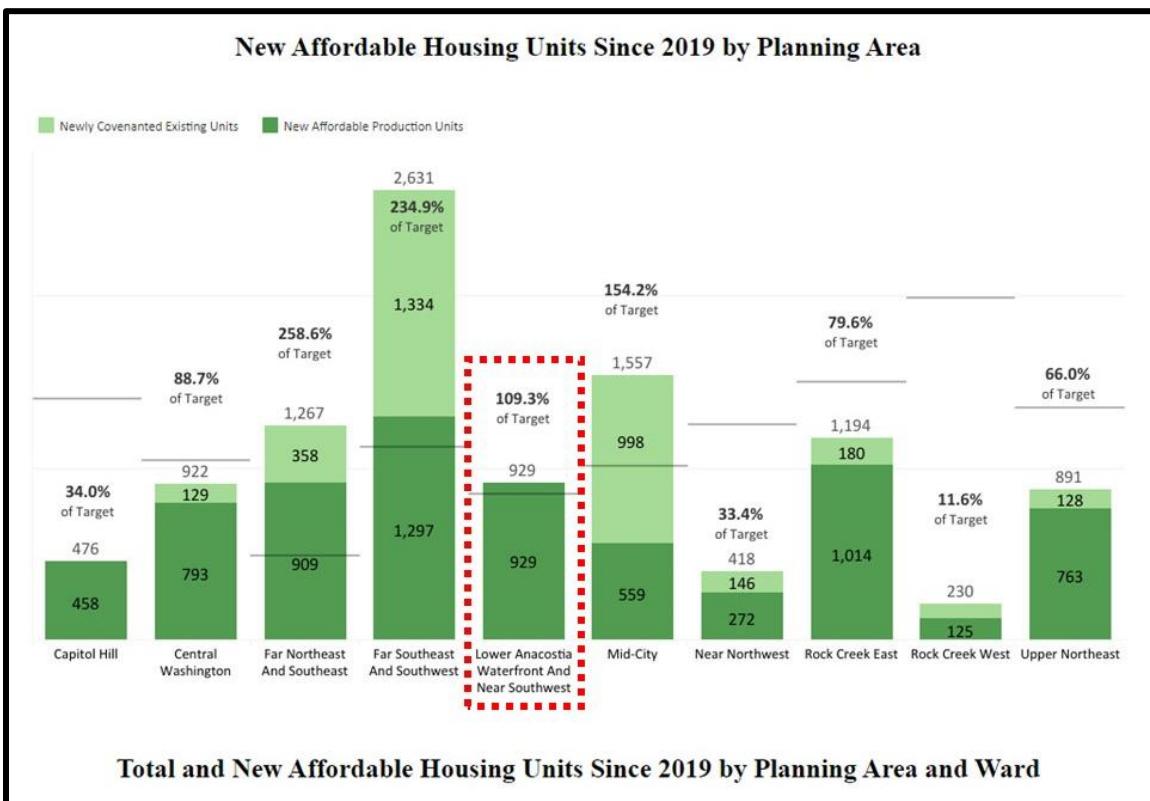
Owners/ Renters		District 2012-2016	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016	LAW/NS 2019-2023
	Renter Households	59.3%	58.9%	65.0%	76.7%
Asian Alone	Owner Households	39.4%	41.4%	48.6%	34.6%
	Renter Households	60.6%	58.6%	51.4%	65.3%
Black or African American	Owner Households	35.9%	34.9%	25.7%	19.0%
	Renter Households	64.1%	65.1%	74.3%	81.0%
Hispanic or Latino	Owner Households	30.9%	36.4%	25.5%	18.4%
	Renter Households	69.1%	63.6%	74.5%	81.6%
Indian and Alaska Native	Owner Households	32.9%	19.6%	28.8%	0.0%
	Renter Households	67.2%	80.3%	71.2%	100.0%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	Owner Households	9.1%	31.8%	0.0%	-
	Renter Households	90.9%	68.2%	100.0%	-
Some Other Race	Owner Households	17.5%	28.7%	33.0%	21.8%
	Renter Households	82.5%	71.3%	67.0%	78.2%
Two or More Races	Owner Households	32.7%	41.3%	27.8%	20.3%
	Renter Households	67.3%	58.7%	72.3%	79.7%
White Alone	Owner Households	47.8%	48.0%	40.7%	25.4%
	Renter Households	52.2%	52.0%	59.3%	74.6%

Cost Burdened Households (Percent of Households spending 30% of their income on housing)	District 2012-2016*	District 2019-2023	LAW/NS 2012-2016*	LAW/NS 2019-2023
Total Median	38.6%	34.0%	35.6%	32.6%
Asian Alone	-	33.6%	-	45.4%
Black or African American	-	44.3%	-	44.3%
Hispanic or Latino	-	35.1%	-	23.9%
Indian and Alaska Native	-	42.6%	-	100%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	-	76.2%	-	-
Some Other Race	-	42.8%	-	8.5%
Two or More Race	-	33.3%	-	36.9%
White Alone	-	24.1%	-	25.0%

* Prior to the 2019-2023 ACS, Housing Cost Burden was not disaggregated by race.

- *Is the area on track to meet the Mayor's 2025 affordable housing goal?*

The chart below, from the [DMPED 36,000 by 2025 Dashboard](#), shows that the LAW/NS Planning Area achieved the Mayor's 2025 affordable housing goal. As of January 2025, according to the Dashboard, the planning area had achieved 109% (929 units) of its 2025 affordable housing production goal of 850⁴ units. The proposed project would contribute to increasing the city's supply of IZ units, especially family-sized units. In addition to meeting affordable housing goals, the market rate housing included in the project would fulfill general guidance to create more housing, which should help reduce upward pressure on prices.



- *What do available data sources show about the intersectionality of factors such as race, ethnicity, age, income, gender, or sexual orientation within the area of the zoning action and how might the zoning action impact the intersection of those factors?*

The available data shows that a number of factors can be distinguished by race. For example, the home ownership rate is higher for the White than the Black population in the planning area, at 25.4% and 19.0%, respectively. The median income provides a more stark contrast, with the median Black income trailing other racial groups by a wide margin. Unemployment is also higher for Blacks, at 9.5%, compared to 2.7% for Whites.

⁴ 2019 Housing Equity Report, p. 12 -
<https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/housingdc/publication/attachments/Housing%20Equity%20Report.pdf>

The project can help to make progress toward alleviating these discrepancies. One way is by providing a significant number of affordable units, including family-sized units. Another benefit of the project will be the provision of residential units in close proximity to several transportation modes, which can help populations of any skill or educational level reach employment opportunities. The applicant has also committed to provide lower rent for local businesses, which could be an avenue toward long-term wealth generation and higher employment levels. Providing a healthier environment could also lead to better health outcomes for nearby populations.

Racial Equity Tool Part 4 – Zoning Commission Evaluation Factors

According to the Racial Equity Tool, the Commission will use the following criteria, themes and questions, along with the above data, in its evaluation of a zoning action's consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, as viewed through a racial equity lens.

- *What Comprehensive Plan policies related to racial equity will potentially be advanced by approval of the zoning action?*

Please refer to OP's analysis above, under Part 1 of the Racial Equity Tool discussion.

- *What Comprehensive Plan policies related to racial equity will potentially not be advanced by approval of the zoning action?*

Approval of the zoning action should not impede the advancement of racial equity or Comprehensive Plan policies related to racial equity.

- *When considering the following themes/questions based on Comprehensive Plan policies related to racial equity, what are the anticipated positive and negative impacts and/or outcomes of the zoning action? Note: Additional themes may also apply.*

Factor	Question	OP Response
Direct Displacement	Will the zoning action result in displacement of tenants or residents?	The site is vacant so development will not result in the displacement of any residents or commercial space tenants.
Indirect Displacement	What examples of indirect displacement might result from the zoning action?	OP does not anticipate indirect displacement as a result of this zoning action. The provision of a large quantity of market rate and affordable housing should help to ease upward pressure on housing costs in the vicinity.
Housing	Will the action result in changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Market Rate Housing▪ Affordable Housing▪ Replacement Housing	The project would provide about 272 total residential units, about 29 of which would be affordable at 60% and 50% of the MFI. A significant percentage of the affordable units would be 3-bedroom units.
Physical	Will the action result in changes to the physical environment such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Public Space Improvements▪ Infrastructure Improvements	The action would result in improvements to the infrastructure, streetscape and public space along Howard Road. This project would improve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular movement to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Arts and Culture▪ Environmental Changes▪ Streetscape Improvements	and through the area, and would provide connections to the improvements associated with the new Frederick Douglass Bridge, such as its accompanying ovals, roadways, sidewalks and trails. The project would also achieve a high degree of sustainability, including on-site energy generation.
Access to Opportunity	<p>Is there a change in access to opportunity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Job Training/Creation▪ Healthcare▪ Addition of Retail/Access to New Services	<p>The zoning action could lead to an increase in job creation and job training. The applicant intends to find local businesses for cleaning, landscaping and trash removal. (Ex. 3, p. 10) The applicant has in the past employed high school and college students from Wards 7 and 8 to learn more about the real estate industry. It is unclear if that program would continue. According to Ex. 3, p. 9, seven local contractors were used in construction projects at Phase 1 of the Bridge District, to the west, and the applicant “will endeavor to continue this partnership” for the present project.</p> <p>The development would also provide construction jobs, and permanent jobs in the uses in the buildings. The project would provide new retail and / or service uses. The application states that local businesses that locate in the project receive discounted rent (Ex. 3, p.2). This could further the Mayor’s goal of increasing minority business ownership, contained in the January 2023 DC’s Comeback Plan (p. 17 (link)).</p> <p>The development would also result in a new residents to the neighborhood, who would support local shops, arts, and services.</p>
Community	<p>How did community outreach and engagement inform/change the zoning action?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ (e.g., did the architectural plans change, or were other substantive changes made to the zoning action in response to community input/priorities etc.?)	According to Exhibit 3, p. 25, in response to community feedback, the applicant revised the design to consolidate vehicular access for this lot and the building to the west to improve the pedestrian realm and reduce potential traffic near Cedar Tree Academy.

VI. AGENCY COMMENTS

OP held an interagency meeting on this case on August 1, 2025 to provide government agencies the opportunity to learn more about the project, ask questions of the applicant, and provide feedback to the applicant. DOEE provided written comments to OP, which are included at Attachment 2. DOEE’s comments state that they commend the applicant “for setting innovative

sustainability goals and utilizing low carbon materials such as mass timber. DOEE especially applauds the applicant for committing to achieving LEED Gold certification, fully electrifying the building, and targeting net-zero energy performance.” OP’s Neighborhood Planning Division submitted comments that emphasize the connections to future development at Poplar Point, and seek refinements to the form and architecture of the building. As of this writing no comments from other agencies have been submitted to the record or received by OP.

VII. ANC COMMENTS

Exhibit 6 is a memo in support from ANC 8A.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of this writing, the record contains no comments from the community.

IX. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Comprehensive Plan Policies

Attachment 2 – DOEE Comments

Attachment 3 – Office of Planning Neighborhood Planning Division Comments

Attachment 4 – Poplar Point Environmental Assessment Preferred Alternative Proposed Land Use Plan

JLS/mrj

Attachment 1
Comprehensive Plan Policies

Chapter 3 Land Use Element

LU 1.1 – Supporting Growth

As the Land Use Element guides the direction of future growth, it also affects future access to housing, education, jobs, services, amenities, and transportation and impacts the health and safety of residents. Growth can and must occur in a way that expands access to affordable housing, education, transportation, employment, and services for communities of color, low-income households, and vulnerable populations. Achieving equitable development requires attention to both the context and needs of different planning areas and to District-wide equity issues, described throughout the Comprehensive Plan. (10-A DCMR 304.4.)

Policy LU-1.1.2: Resilience and Land Use

Implement District-wide, neighborhood-scale, and site-specific solutions for a climate adaptive, emergency responsive, and resilient Washington, DC. 304.9

Policy LU-1.2.2: CEA [Central Employment Area]

...Additionally, the CEA shall include the greatest concentration of the District's private office development, and higher-density mixed land uses, including commercial/retail, hotel, residential, and entertainment uses... 305.7

Policy LU-1.2.3: Appropriate Uses in the CEA

Ensure that land within the CEA is used in a manner which reflects the area's national importance, its historic and cultural significance, and its role as the center of the metropolitan region. Federal siting guidelines and District zoning regulations should promote the use of this area with high value land uses that enhance its image as the seat of the national government and the center of Washington, DC and that make the most efficient possible use of its transportation facilities. An improved balance in the mix of uses will help to achieve Washington, DC's aspiration for an even larger living downtown. 305.8

Policy LU-1.4.1: Station Areas as Neighborhood Centers

Encourage the development of Metro stations as anchors for residential, economic, and civic development and to accommodate population growth with new nodes of residential development, especially affordable housing, in all areas of the District in order to create great new walkable places and enhance access and opportunities for all District residents. The establishment and growth of mixed-use centers at Metrorail stations should be supported as a way to provide access to housing opportunities at all income levels and emphasizing affordable housing, improve air quality, increase jobs, provide a range of retail goods and services, reduce reliance on the automobile, enhance neighborhood stability, create a stronger sense of place, provide civic gathering places, and capitalize on the development and public transportation opportunities that the stations provide. Station area development should have population and employment densities guided, but not dictated, by desired levels of transit service. This policy should be balanced with other land use policies, which include conserving neighborhoods. The Future Land Use Map expresses the desired intensity and mix of uses around each station, and the Area Elements (and in some cases Small Area Plans) provide more detailed direction for each station area. 307.9

Policy LU-1.4.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations

In developments above and around Metrorail stations emphasize land uses and building forms that minimize the need for automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas. 307.10

Policy LU-1.4.3: Housing Around Metrorail Stations

Build housing adjacent to Metrorail stations that serves a mix of incomes and household types, including families, older adults, and persons with disabilities, and prioritize affordable and deeply affordable housing production. Leverage the lowered transportation costs offered by proximity to transit to increase affordability for moderate and low-income households. 307.11

Policy LU-1.4.5: Design to Encourage Transit Use

Require architectural and site-planning improvements around Metrorail stations that support pedestrian and bicycle access to the stations and enhance the safety, comfort, and convenience of passengers walking to the station or transferring to and from local buses. These improvements should include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, lighting, signage, landscaping, and security measures. Discourage the development of station areas with conventional suburban building forms, such as shopping centers surrounded by surface parking lots or low-density housing. 307.13

Policy LU-1.4.6: Development Along Corridors

Encourage growth and development along major corridors, particularly priority transit and multimodal corridors. Plan and design development adjacent to Metrorail stations and corridors to respect the character, scale, and integrity of adjacent neighborhoods, using approaches such as building design, transitions, or buffers, while balancing against the District's broader need for housing. 307.14

Policy LU-2.2.4: Neighborhood Beautification

Encourage projects which improve the visual quality of the District's neighborhoods, including landscaping and tree planting, façade improvement, anti-litter campaigns, graffiti removal, improvement or removal of abandoned buildings, street and sidewalk repair, and park improvements.

Chapter 4 Transportation Element

Policy T-1.1.3: Context-Sensitive Transportation

Design transportation infrastructure to support current land uses as well as land use goals for mixed-use, accessible neighborhoods. Make the design and scale of transportation facilities compatible with planned land uses. Facilities should comply with the District's Complete Streets policy, adopted in October 2010, with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle-friendly design. 403.9

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. Encourage development projects to build or upgrade the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure leading to the nearest transit stop to create last-mile connections. Pedestrian movements and safety should be prioritized around transit stations. 403.10

Policy T-1.1.5: Joint Development

Maximize ridership potential, housing, including affordable housing, and economic development opportunities by fostering transit-supportive commercial and residential joint development projects on

WMATA-owned or -controlled land, public land, and private properties adjacent to Metrorail stations. 403.11

Policy T-1.1.7: Equitable Transportation Access

Transportation within the District shall be accessible and serve all users. Residents, workers, and visitors should have access to safe, affordable and reliable transportation options regardless of age, race, income, geography or physical ability. Transportation should not be a barrier to economic, educational, or health opportunity for District residents. Transportation planning and development should be framed by a racial equity lens, to identify and address historic and current barriers and additional transportation burdens experienced by communities of color. 403.13

Policy T-1.2.1: Major Thoroughfare Improvements

Beautify and stabilize gateways and major thoroughfares by implementing coordinated multimodal transportation, economic development, and urban design improvements. 404.4

Policy T-1.4.1: Street Design for Placemaking

Design streets, sidewalks, and transportation infrastructure—such as bike racks and other public places in the right-of-way—to support public life, in addition to their transportation functions. This includes incorporating seating, plantings, and the design of spaces for gathering, lingering, and engaging in commerce and social or cultural activities. 406.2

Policy T-2.2.2: Connecting District Neighborhoods

Improve connections among District neighborhoods by upgrading transit, auto, pedestrian, and bike connections, and by removing, ameliorating, mitigating, or minimizing existing physical barriers, such as railroads and highways. Recognize where transportation infrastructure has separated communities, particularly low-income residents and communities of color, and encourage strategies that rebuild connections. However, no freeway or highway removal shall be undertaken prior to the completion of an adequate and feasible alternative traffic plan and that plan's approval by the District government. 409.7

Policy T-2.3.1: Better Integration of Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Integrate bicycle and pedestrian planning and safety considerations more fully into the planning and design of District roads, transit facilities, public buildings, and parks such that residents of each of the District's wards have access to high-quality bicycling and pedestrian facilities. 410.9

Action T-2.3.B: Bicycle Facilities

Wherever feasible, require large, new commercial and residential buildings to be designed with features such as secure bicycle parking and lockers, bike racks, shower facilities, and other amenities that accommodate bicycle users. Residential buildings with eight or more units shall comply with regulations that require secure bicycle parking spaces. 410.16

Policy T-2.4.1: Pedestrian Network

Develop, maintain, and improve pedestrian facilities. Improve the city's sidewalk system to form a network that links residents across the city. 410.5

Policy T-2.4.2: Pedestrian Safety

Improve safety and security at key pedestrian nodes throughout the city. Use a variety of techniques to improve pedestrian safety, including textured or clearly marked and raised pedestrian crossings, pedestrian-actuated signal push buttons, and pedestrian count-down signals. 410.6

Policy T-3.1.1: TDM Programs

Provide, support, and promote programs and strategies aimed at reducing the number of car trips and miles driven (for work and non-work purposes), to increase the efficiency of the transportation system. 415.10

Chapter 5 Housing Element

Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support

Encourage or require the private sector to provide both new market rate and affordable housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives. (10-A DCMR § 503.3.)

Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth

Strongly encourage the development of new housing, including affordable housing, on surplus, vacant, and underused land in all parts of Washington, DC. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the District 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. (10-A DCMR § 503.5.)

Policy H-1.1.4: Mixed-Use Development

Promote moderate- to high-density, mixed-use development that includes affordable housing on commercially zoned land, particularly in neighborhood commercial centers, along Main Street mixed-use corridors and high-capacity surface transit corridors, and around Metrorail stations. (10-A DCMR § 503.6.)

Policy H-1.1.5: Housing Quality

Require the design of affordable and accessible housing to meet or exceed the high-quality architectural standards achieved by market-rate housing. Such housing should be built with high-quality materials and systems that minimize long-term operation, repair, and capital replacement costs. Regardless of its affordability level, new or renovated housing should be indistinguishable from market rate housing in its exterior appearance, should be generally compatible with the design character of the surrounding neighborhood, and should address the need for open space and recreational amenities. 503.7

Policy H-1.1.9: Housing for Families

Encourage and prioritize the development of family-sized units and/or family sized housing options which generally have three or more bedrooms, in areas proximate to transit, employment centers, schools, public facilities, and recreation to ensure that the District's most well-resourced locations remain accessible to families, particularly in areas that received increased residential density as a result of underlying changes to the Future Land Use Map. Family-sized units and/or family-sized housing options include housing typologies that can accommodate households of three or more persons and may include a variety of housing types including townhomes, fourplexes and multi-family buildings. To address the mismatch between meeting the needs of larger households and the financial feasibility of developing family-sized housing, support family-sized housing options through production incentives and requirements that address market rate challenges for private development that may include zoning, subsidies or tax strategies, or direct subsidy and regulatory requirements for publicly owned sites. (10-A DCMR § 503.11.)

Policy H-1.2.2: Production Targets

Consistent with the Comprehensive Housing Strategy, work toward a goal that one-third of the new housing built in Washington, DC from 2018 to 2030, or approximately twenty thousand (20,000) units, should be affordable to persons earning eighty percent (80%) or less of the areawide MFI. In aggregate, the supply of affordable units shall serve low-income households in proportions roughly equivalent to the proportions

shown in Figure 5.8: thirty percent (30%) at sixty to eighty percent (60%-80%) MFI, thirty percent (30%) at thirty to sixty percent (30%-60%) MFI, and forty percent (40%) at below thirty percent (30%) MFI. Set future housing production targets for market rate and affordable housing based on where gaps in supply by income occur and to reflect District goals. These targets shall acknowledge and address racial income disparities, including racially adjusted MFIs, in the District, use racially disaggregated data, and evaluate actual production of market rate and affordable housing at moderate, low, very-low, and extremely-low income levels. (10-A DCMR § 504.9.)

Policy H-1.2.11 Inclusive Mixed-Income Neighborhoods

Support mixed-income housing by encouraging affordable housing in high-cost areas and market rate housing in low-income areas. Identify and implement measures that build in long-term affordability, preferably permanent or for the life of the project, to minimize displacement and achieve a balance of housing opportunities across the District. 504.19

Policy H-1.3.1: Housing for Larger Households

Increase the supply of larger family-sized housing units for both ownership and rental by encouraging new and retaining existing single-family homes, duplexes, row houses, and three- and four-bedroom market rate and affordable apartments across Washington, DC. The effort should focus on both affordability of the units and the unit and building design features that support families, as well as the opportunity to locate near neighborhood amenities, such as parks, transit, schools, and retail. 505.8

Policy H-1.6.1: Resilient and Climate-Adaptive Housing

Incorporate current best practices for resilient, climate-adaptive design in the adoption and enforcement of the District's building and housing construction codes. Base the codes on projected future climate or natural hazard conditions for the District informed by the best available data. 508.5

Chapter 6 Environmental Protection Element

Policy E-1.1.2: Urban Heat Island Mitigation

Wherever possible, reduce the urban heat island effect with cool and green roofs, expanded green space, cool pavement, tree planting, and tree protection efforts, prioritizing hotspots and those areas with the greatest number of heat-vulnerable residents. Incorporate heat island mitigation into planning for GI, tree canopy, parks, and public space initiatives. (10-A DCMR § 603.6)

Policy E-1.1.5: Resilient Infrastructure

Design infrastructure, such as roads and parks, to withstand future climate impacts, and increase Washington, DC's resilience by having roads and parks serve multiple purposes where possible, including flood risk reduction, urban heat island mitigation, and stormwater management. (10-A DCMR § 603.9)

Policy E-2.1.2: Tree Requirements in New Development

Use planning, zoning, and building regulations to promote tree retention and planting, as well as the removal and replacement of dying trees when new development occurs. Tree planting and landscaping required as a condition of permit approval should include provisions for ongoing maintenance. 605.6

Policy E-2.1.3: Sustainable Landscaping Practices

Encourage the use of sustainable landscaping practices to beautify the District, enhance streets and public spaces, reduce stormwater runoff, and create a stronger sense of character and identity. District government, private developers, and community institutions should coordinate to significantly increase the use of these

practices, including planting and maintaining mostly native trees and other plants on District-owned land outside the rights-of-way in schools, parks, and housing authority lands. (10-A DCMR § 605.7)

Policy E-2.2.1: River Conservation

Improve environmental conditions along the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and other water bodies, including shorelines, wetlands, islands, tributaries, and the rivers themselves. Particular attention should be given to eliminating toxic sediments, improving river edges to restore vegetation and reduce erosion, enhancing wetlands and wildlife habitats, creating new wetlands, and reducing litter. Particular focus on the Anacostia is important to address its history of neglect and pollution and to improve conditions for adjoining neighborhoods. 606.6

Policy E-2.5.3: Habitat Management on Private Land

Encourage environmentally sound landscaping and gardening techniques by District homeowners and institutional landowners, and on federal lands to maximize the habitat value of privately owned and federal land. Such techniques should include reduction of herbicide and pesticide use; the selection of disease-resistant, drought-resistant, and native species; the removal of invasive plants; the use of rain gardens to reduce runoff; and landscaping that provides food and cover for wildlife. 609.6

Policy E-3.2.3: Renewable Energy

Promote the efficient use of energy, additional use of renewable energy, and a reduction of unnecessary energy expenses. The overarching objective should be to achieve reductions in per capita energy consumption. 612.5

Policy E-3.2.6: Alternative Sustainable and Innovative Energy Sources

Support the development and application of renewable energy technologies, such as active, passive, and photovoltaic solar energy; fuel cells; and other sustainable sources such as shared solar facilities in neighborhoods and low- or zero-carbon thermal sources, such as geothermal energy or wastewater heat exchange. Such technology should be used to reduce GHGs and imported energy, provide opportunities for economic and community development, and benefit environmental quality. A key goal is the continued availability and access to unobstructed, direct sunlight for distributed energy generators and passive solar homes relying on the sun as a primary energy source. (10-A DCMR § 612.8)

Policy E-3.2.8: Locally Generated Electricity

Support locally generated electricity from renewable sources, including both commercial and residential renewable energy projects. Policies could support the option to share a solar project among several neighbors (i.e., community solar), financial incentives, research and education, and maximizing existing programs to help install solar panels and solar thermal systems throughout the District. 612.10

Policy E-4.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff

Promote an increase in tree planting and vegetated spaces to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate the urban heat island, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces. 615.4

Policy E-4.2.1: Support for Green Building

Broaden the requirements for the use of green building methods in new construction and rehabilitation projects to include all building typologies, and develop green building standards for minimum performance or continued improvement of energy use through improved operation and maintenance activities. 616.3

Policy E-6.1.3: Control of Runoff

Continue to implement water pollution control and management practices aimed at reducing runoff and pollution, including the flow of sediment and nutrients into streams, rivers, and wetlands. 622.8

Chapter 9 Urban Design

Policy UD-1.3.6: Waterfront Access and Connectivity

Improve the physical connections between neighborhoods and nearby waterfronts. Where feasible, extend the existing urban grid into large waterfront sites to better connect nearby developed areas to the shoreline. Greater access to the waterfront should also be achieved by reconfiguring roadways and other infrastructure along the waterfront to reduce access impediments for neighborhoods with limited access, and for pedestrians and bicyclists. Provide a consistent design treatment for waterfront trails (see Figure 9.11). 905.11

Policy UD-1.3.7: Anacostia River Gateways

Improve visual design qualities and pedestrian access of the gateways to and from Wards 7 and 8 neighborhoods from the Anacostia River crossings, with landscape and transportation improvements along Howard Road, Martin Luther King, Jr Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, Randle Circle (Minnesota and Massachusetts SE), Benning Road, East Capitol Street, and Kenilworth Avenue. 905.13

Policy UD-2.1.1: Streetscapes That Prioritize the Human Experience

Commercial streetscapes should be designed to be comfortable, safe, and interesting to pedestrians. At a minimum, commercial corridor sidewalks should be designed with clear, direct, accessible walking paths that accommodate a range of pedestrian users and facilitate a sense of connection to adjacent uses. Where width allows, corridors should have a generous presence of shade trees and café seating areas, as well as bicycle facilities. In areas with large pedestrian volumes, streetscapes should provide seating, drinking fountains, publicly accessible restrooms, and other infrastructure that supports increased frequency and duration of walking. 908.3

Policy UD-2.1.2: Neighborhood Streetscapes

Neighborhood streetscapes should be designed to visually reflect the character and level of intensity of the adjacent land uses. For instance, narrow sidewalks may be appropriate for narrow streets with low scale buildings, while sidewalks with more trees and vegetation may be appropriate for large-scale development. Pedestrian-oriented lighting should be designed to enhance walkability for all users, as well as visually reflect the character of neighborhood. 908.4

Policy UD-2.1.4: Connections Between Public Spaces and Streets

Public spaces, such as parks and plazas, should have entry points that create clear and porous visual and physical connections to the adjacent public realm. Where possible, coordinate streetscape designs to create a continuous experience between parks and streets. Limit the installation of tall fences or grade changes that create boundaries between parks and public rights-of-way. Public gathering spaces should be incorporated directly into the streetscape through pedestrian amenities, such as benches, public art, spacing of shade trees, and gardens. 908.6

Policy UD-2.1.6: Minimize Mid-Block Vehicular Curb Cuts

Curb cuts should be avoided on streets with heavy pedestrian usage and minimized on all other streets. Where feasible, alleys should be used in lieu of curb cuts for parking and loading access to buildings. Curb

cuts for individual residences should only be allowed if there is a predominant pattern of curb cuts and driveways on the block face. 908.8

Policy UD-2.1.7: Streetscapes That Encourage Activation

Design new streetscape projects with public spaces that can be flexibly programmed to enhance public life with short- or long-term uses throughout the year to meet the needs of a wide variety of community members. Such spaces can be sites for creative placemaking efforts, block parties, festivals, markets, pop-up retail, or food trucks. 908.9

Policy UD-2.2.3: Neighborhood Mixed-Use Centers

Undertake strategic and coordinated efforts to create neighborhood mixed-use centers that reinforce community identity and form compact, walkable environments with a broad mix of housing types, employment opportunities, neighborhood shops and services, and civic uses and public spaces. New buildings and projects should support the compact development of neighborhood centers and increase the diversity of uses and creation of public spaces where needed. 909.8

Policy UD-3.1.1: Freely Accessible Public Space

All people, including communities of color, all ages, LGBTQ+ populations and people with disabilities, should have the ability to enjoy public life, express their culture, and feel safe in public space. There should be low barriers for peaceful assembly and free expression in existing public spaces, and new and existing public space design should be accessible, welcoming, and support a mix of activities and users. 913.8

Policy UD-3.2.5: Safe and Active Public Spaces and Streets

The design of the built environment should encourage public activity throughout the day and help minimize the potential for criminal activity. Design measures include active building frontages (such as windows, balconies, and frequently spaced entrances) adequate lighting that avoids glare and shadow, maintaining clear lines of sight and visual access, and avoiding dead-end streets. Where feasible consider closing streets to vehicular traffic to enhance pedestrian and cycling uses of streets. 914.7

Policy UD-3.3.1: Neighborhood Meeting Places

Provide places for neighborhood public life through the creation of public plazas at existing Metro stations or urban squares in new development. Encourage the activation of such spaces through the design of adjacent structures, including the location of shop entrances, window displays, awnings, and outdoor dining areas. 915.3

Policy UD-3.3.3: Plazas for Diverse Uses

Design plazas to accommodate physical activities like dancing or ball play, passive activities like sitting and chess, and cultural events like concerts, exhibits, and historical celebrations. Plazas can also provide space for cafe-style seating and farmers markets. When programming plazas, consider the needs of users with varying mobility levels. 915.5

Policy UD-4.2.1: Scale and Massing of Large Buildings

Design the scale, height, volume, and massing of large buildings to avoid monotony and enhance the human scale. Varied roof heights, facade widths, and more expressive massing can provide variety and visual interest. Massing should be articulated with a special emphasis placed on corners, especially along important view corridors or intersections. Patterns of architectural elements, expressive structure, or other design tactics can provide variety and visual interest. 918.3

Policy UD-4.2.2: Engaging Ground Floors

Promote a high standard of storefront design and architectural detail in mixed-use buildings to enhance the pedestrian experience of the street. Promote a high degree of visual interest through syncopated storefronts that vary every 20 to 30 feet, provide direct lines of sight to interior social spaces, provide socially oriented uses along the public street, and use tactile, durable materials at the ground level. 918.4

Policy UD-4.2.4: Creating Engaging Facades

Design new buildings to respond to the surrounding neighborhood fabric by modulating façade rhythms and using complementary materials, textures, and color, as well as well-designed lighting. Varying design tactics may be used to engage a building with its surroundings. In contexts with smaller lot sizes and multiple closely spaced building entrances, breaking up a building façade in the vertical direction is encouraged, along with strongly defined and differentiated bases, centers, and tops of buildings. In areas lacking a strong building-form pattern, the use of complementary or reinterpreted materials and colors could strengthen architectural identity (see Figure 9.19 for recommended façade design strategies). 918.6

Policy UD 4.2.6: Active Facades

Prioritize the placement of multiple entrances for new multi-family and mixed-use buildings across the length of a block rather than a single lobby entrance at one location. New residential developments should promote active facades with spaces for social activity, such as porches, stoops, or patios along public streets, to encourage more activity along the sidewalk and increase social interaction in a neighborhood. 918.9

Policy UD-4.3.5: Building Projections that Promote Interaction

Encourage buildings with public parking along their frontage to use the flexibility of projection regulations for steps, porches, balconies, and awnings and create opportunities for in-between spaces that encourage social interaction and add visual interest to building facades. 919.12

Lower Anacostia Waterfront / Near Southwest Planning Area Element

Policy AW-1.1.2: New Waterfront Neighborhoods

Create new mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods on vacant or underused waterfront lands, particularly on large contiguous publicly owned waterfront sites. Within the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area, new neighborhoods should continue to be developed at the Southwest Waterfront, Buzzard Point, Poplar Point, and Navy Yard/Capitol Riverfront. These neighborhoods should be linked to new neighborhoods upriver at Reservation 13, and Kenilworth-Parkside via trails, additional water recreation opportunities, and improved park access points along the Anacostia shoreline. A substantial amount of new housing and commercial space should be developed in these areas, reaching households of all incomes, types, sizes, and needs. Opportunities for grid interconnected neighborhood-scale energy utilities systems as part of the development of these areas should be evaluated, using renewable energy sources to provide greater environmental benefits for the community. The new waterfront neighborhoods should integrate new parks and amenities, enhance public access to the waterfront, and incorporate resilient design to mitigate flooding. 1907.3

Policy AW-1.1.5: Flood-Resilient and Climate-Adaptive Development

Provide guidelines and promote the planning, design, construction, and management of resilient buildings in flood hazard areas within the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area. Design and construct developments to be adaptive to future flood hazard conditions due to storm surge and sea level rise. 1907.6

Policy AW-1.1.6: Resilient Affordable Housing

Incorporate climate resilience measures into the rehabilitation of existing and creation of new affordable housing located in the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Planning Area to protect these units against current and projected future flood conditions. 1907.7

Policy AW-1.1.7: Waterfront Area Commercial Development

Encourage commercial development in the waterfront area in a manner that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Such development should bring more retail services and choices to the Anacostia waterfront, as well as space for government and private sector activities, such as offices and hotels. A mix of high-density commercial and residential development should be focused along key corridors, particularly along Maine Avenue and M Street SE and SW, along South Capitol Street, and near the Waterfront and Navy Yard Metro stations. Maritime activities, such as cruise ship operations, should be maintained and supported as the waterfront redevelops. 1907.8

Policy AW-1.1.8: Waterfront Development Amenities

Leverage new development in the Waterfront Planning Area to create amenities and benefits that serve existing and new residents. These amenities should include parks, job training and educational opportunities, new community services, and transportation and infrastructure improvements. 1907.9

Policy AW-1.1.10: Pedestrian Orientation of Waterfront Uses

Provide a high level of pedestrian and cyclist amenities along the shoreline, including informational and interpretive signs, benches and street furniture, and public art. Pedestrian and cyclist facilities should be designed to accommodate the greatest number of users with varying abilities. Where possible, trail design should support the safe use of the trail in the evenings. Continue to coordinate with federal agencies to ensure the continuity of character and wayfinding and explore additional opportunities for public access on federally owned waterfront properties. 1907.11

Policy AW-2.4.3: Poplar Point Mixed Use Neighborhood

Create a new transit-oriented mixed-use neighborhood oriented around the Poplar Point Park and linked to the Anacostia and Congress Heights Metro stations. The neighborhood should include a significant component of affordable housing, as well as retail and civic uses that benefit the adjacent communities east of I-295. To minimize the loss of useable open space, development should use the land recovered after the realignment and reconstruction of the Frederick Douglass Bridge. 1913.9

Policy AW-2.4.5: Scale of Development at Poplar Point

Provide a scale and pattern of development at Poplar Point that recognizes the area's proximity to a Metro station and other major surface arterials. The area is physically separated from surrounding neighborhoods and, therefore, may accommodate buildings and site plans that are unlike but compatible with the fine-grained pattern found in nearby Historic Anacostia. Development should be pedestrian-oriented and include active ground floor uses. The massing, height, and bulk of buildings and related features, such as parking, also should respect adjacent park uses and environmentally sensitive areas. 1913.11

Policy AW-2.4.7: Poplar Point as an Economic Catalyst Use development at Poplar Point to bring economic development opportunities to adjacent neighborhoods, particularly Barry Farm and Historic Anacostia. Activities at Poplar Point should foster the success of existing businesses in Historic Anacostia, provide job opportunities, and create cultural, educational, and institutional uses that benefit communities in Wards 7 and 8. 1913.13

Policy AW-2.4.8: Access Improvements to Poplar Point Improve access to Poplar Point by redesigning the road system on the site's perimeter; rebuilding the Frederick Douglass (South Capitol) Bridge; converting the Anacostia Metro station to a multimodal terminal; adding provisions for pedestrians and bicycles along Howard Road SE, W Street SE, and Good Hope Road SE; and providing water taxi service on the Anacostia River. 1913.14

Attachment 2
DOEE Comments

DOEE Development Review Comments

ZC 25-07: Bridge District Parcel 5

Overall, DOEE commends the applicant for setting innovative sustainability goals and utilizing low carbon materials such as mass timber. DOEE especially applauds the applicant for committing to achieving LEED Gold certification, fully electrifying the building, and targeting net-zero energy performance. These strategies will support the District's goal of carbon neutrality and the objectives of the [Sustainable DC 2.0](#) and [Clean Energy DC](#) plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Please reach out to kate.tanabe@dc.gov with questions or for more information.

Stormwater

DOEE commends the applicant for meeting the 1.2-inch stormwater retention requirement and exceeding the green area ratio requirement for this zone. DOEE understands that the applicant will meet the 1.2-inch stormwater retention requirement of the Northern Howard Road zone but may fall short of the additional lot and square requirement of providing stormwater capacity to withstand a 1.7-inch stormwater event. Given the project's location in the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4), DOEE encourages the applicant to continue maximizing stormwater management practices on site as the design is finalized.

Solar

DOEE applauds the applicant for committing to installing on-site renewable energy systems. DOEE understands that the applicant may fall short of the lot and square requirement of generating at least 178 kilowatt hours (kWh) of renewable energy per 1,000 square feet of building area but appreciates that the applicant will exceed the requirement to generate 1% of total energy estimated to operate the building via on-site renewable energy. DOEE appreciates that the applicant has committed to generating approximately 100 kWh of renewable energy per 1,000 square feet of the building area via the rooftop solar array. As the design progresses, DOEE encourages the applicant to continue maximizing on-site solar energy generation and consider a campus approach if possible.

Given that the proposed design includes a green roof, DOEE encourages the applicant to review guidance for integrating solar photovoltaic arrays on the green roof. This guidance can be found on pages 41 & 42 of the [2020 Stormwater Management Guidebook](#).

Flooding

DOEE commends the project for raising the elevation of the residential program above the 500-year floodplain and for incorporating several residential design strategies. The applicant should continue coordinating with the DOEE's flood team as the design is finalized.

Resilience

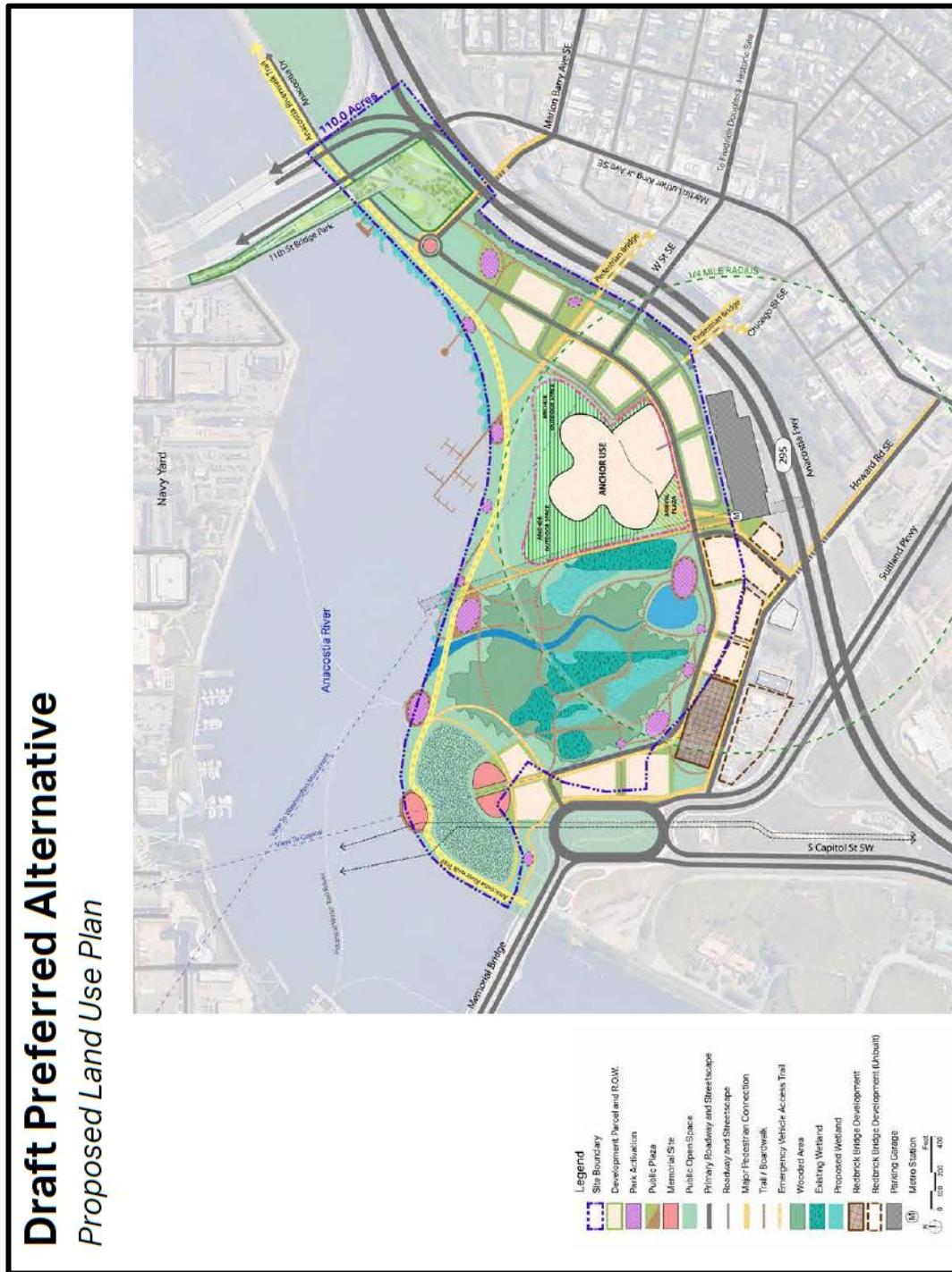
In addition to incorporating resilient design guidelines for flooding, including elevating mechanical and electric equipment above the 500-year floodplain, DOEE encourages the applicant to continue identifying climate risks and mitigation strategies related to extreme heat. This site is located in an area with a very high [Heat Sensitivity Exposure Index](#). Additional DOEE Climate Adaptation and Preparedness resources are available at doee.dc.gov/climateready.

Attachment 3
Office of Planning Neighborhood Planning Division Comments

The Office of Planning's Neighborhood Planning Division provided the following comments. The reference to Anacostia Drive refers to the proposed relocated Anacostia Drive, in this location running generally parallel to Howard Road, as shown in the Preferred Alternative for the Poplar Point Environmental Assessment (EA), conducted by the National Park Service. The EA is likely to be finalized this fall, and will be followed by a District-led master planning process for Poplar Point.

- **Relocate the main entrance and lobby closer to the center of the building on Howard Road.**
- **Side Streets should be accessible to pedestrians at all times to ensure connections between surrounding neighborhoods and the future multimodal Anacostia Drive, as follows:**
 - o **Street west of the development is pedestrian only, with adjacent commercial activity framing the pedestrian walk on both sides including sidewalk cafes, bike amenities, and ample vegetation. Accordingly, wrap restaurant and retail around the building similar to treatment at parcels 1 and 2, such that commercial activity is facing the west side of the building, along the pedestrian pathway. Redistribute vegetation on the street to meet minimum requirements while accommodating this activity; and,**
 - o **Street east of the development, though accommodating building service and parking, should also be accessible as a pedestrian pathway. As such, show 4' wide minimum tree boxes at the back of the sidewalk with a continuous row of trees and shaded benches, a 6' wide minimum pedestrian path of travel at the back of the tree box, and at a 3' wide minimum vegetated strip between the back of sidewalk and the building face to ensure vegetation survives and a pleasant pedestrian experience.**
- **Building massing should include a variety in heights within the parcel and frame views to the future remediated wetlands, inviting pedestrian intrigue and exploration. Include articulation to the building façade through embellishments such as cornices and pilasters, as well as a play in materials, all of which is in line with the Anacostia neighborhood character and transitioning from the character of the existing and permitted Redbrick buildings.**

Attachment 4
Poplar Point Environmental Assessment Preferred Alternative Proposed Land Use Plan⁵



⁵ The lots owned by the applicant, Redbrick, while outside of the Poplar Point EA study area, are highlighted on the land use plan for the purpose of understanding the context.