

Memorandum

Government of the District of Columbia

TO: D.C. Zoning Commission

Department,
Agency, Office: Planning

FROM: Fred L. Greene, Director
Office of Planning

Date: OCT 28 1986

SUBJECT: Additional Proposed Zoning Actions -- Connecticut
Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue Corridor Studies

The following areas related to the Connecticut Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue Corridor Studies are being considered by the Office of Planning for potential zoning actions in order to implement the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Office has recently begun special land use and zoning studies of the four areas discussed below. We will make further recommendations to the Zoning Commission in 30 days as to the recommended timing and scheduling of proposed zoning actions.

These are locations where neighborhood-scale commercial services or housing are proposed to be protected in essentially their existing character in the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, but which, over the near or long term, may face pressures for redevelopment and change of character. The study of these areas will include a detailed evaluation of existing development, the existing zoning controls, the applicable land use recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and any zoning map or text amendments which are required to resolve potential long-term problems. Three of these areas are neighborhood shopping clusters, the other is an area developed primarily with townhouses.

The four areas are:

- the west side of Connecticut Avenue from Wisconsin Avenue to Military Road;
- the neighborhood shopping center and office cluster at 49th Street and Massachusetts Avenue;

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- the Park and Shop shopping center on Connecticut Avenue in the Cleveland Park neighborhood; and,
- the neighborhood-serving commercial cluster at Wisconsin Avenue at Newark and Macomb Streets.

Connecticut Avenue -- Nebraska Avenue to Military Road

Most of Connecticut Avenue, from Florida Avenue to the Maryland boundary at Chevy Chase Circle is zoned R-5-C, except for regularly spaced nodes of commercial zoning at major intersections and Metrorail stations. The R-5-C District is a high-rise apartment house zone permitting buildings of up to 90 feet in height and a medium-high density of 3.5 FAR. A great many of the apartment houses lining Connecticut Avenue are developed to this standard.

The Generalized Land Use map of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan designates these apartment house areas as High Density Residential, except in one location -- the west side of the Avenue from Nebraska Avenue (or Chevy Chase Parkway which also intersects at this location) to Military Road. In this segment of the Avenue, the Land Use Map establishes a policy of Moderate Density Residential Development. This was adopted because the existing development pattern is clustered townhouses which in turn abut a low-density residential neighborhood to the west. The Moderate Density Residential designation is defined as follows: "Row houses and garden apartments are the predominant uses; may also include low density housing". There is one remaining vacant site for development which under existing R-5-C zoning could be built with a 90-foot apartment building except for private covenants on properties in this neighborhood which restrict development to single-family homes.

The Chevy Chase Citizens' Association, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3G and the Chevy Chase Defense League have petitioned the city to rezone the property from R-5-C to R-3 or some other low to medium density residential classification. The purpose would be to relieve the townhouses from redevelopment pressures and to ensure only moderate density development of the remaining development site at Military Road and Connecticut Avenue.

Regarding this area, the Office of Planning has already submitted to the Zoning Commission a report recommending that a public hearing be scheduled on rezoning to a more restrictive residential zone designed to protect existing character and implement the Comprehensive Plan.