

Memorandum

Government of the District of Columbia

TO: D.C. Zoning Commission

Department,
Agency, Office:

FROM: Fred L. Greene, Director
Office of Planning

Date: MAR 31 1988

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case No. 86-26, Comments on Planned
Unit Development Limits (PUD)

The Zoning Commission requested that the Office of Planning provide a further memorandum addressing the question of special height and bulk limits on planned unit developments in the Cleveland Park and Woodley Park commercial overlay areas. This memorandum addresses that issue in the context of some background on the purposes of the planned unit development process and the permitted height and bulk increases in all zones.

Purposes of the Planned Unit Development Process

Over the past two years, the Zoning Commission has thoroughly updated the planned unit development regulations as found in DCMR 11 Chapter 24. Final adoption will occur within the next two months. The Preamble to the revised regulations (Section 2400) consists of several specific purposes which may be summarized as follows:

- to encourage high quality developments which provide superior public benefits;
- to provide for a thorough public review to evaluate proposed developments;
- to permit flexibility in site planning and design, together with incentives such as increased building heights and densities in exchange for superior public benefits, provided that the intent of the Zoning Regulations is not circumvented; and

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ZONING SECRETARIAT,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ZONING COMMISSION
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EXHIBIT NO. 423
Exhibit

6/11/4/4/46

- to establish reasonable controls such as time limits and to approve lesser amounts of height and bulk increases than requested by the applicant.

Increased Bulk or Density

The various zone districts vary considerably as to the amount of increased density, or floor area ratio (FAR) that is permitted with a PUD. The Office of Planning has reviewed the present system and has calculated the percentage increase for all zones except the R-1 through the R-4 zones, which do not have a straightforward density increase system. The remaining zones breakdown into the following groupings:

- Zones which provide no increase in density with a PUD:

R-5-D
C-1
C-2-C
W-2, W-3
CM-1, CM-2, CM-3, M

- Zones which provide for an increase of 14% or less over matter-of-right density:

R-5-A, R-5-C
SP-1, SP-2
C-3-A, C-3-B, C-3-C
C-4 (on streets of 110' or wider)

- Zones which provide significant increases in density with PUD, as indicated below:

C-2-A, W-1, C-5	20%
C-4 (lesser streets)	24%
CR	33%
R-5-B	71%

It should be noted that raw percentages do not tell the entire story. The base density and expected building configuration for both matter-of-right and PUDs relate to building prototypes of various types. Also, in some zones, the total density does not increase, but the commercial component does; for example, in C-2-C the total density stays at 6.0, but with a PUD the commercial component may increase from 2.0 to 2.5.

The same review of increased building heights permitted with PUDs is summarized below. It should be noted that the permitted heights have a historic relationship to the Height Act of 1910, which established certain formulas in commercial and residential areas which have been followed in some zone districts. Also, in some zones the percentage increase in height must be related to building prototypes. These zones are categorized below:

- Zones permitting no height increase with PUD:

W-2, W-3
 CM-3, M
 R-5-C, R-5-D
 SP-2
 C-1, C-2-C
 C-4 (wider streets)

- Zones permitting an increase in height of 40% or less:

SP-1
 CR
 C-2-A, C-2-B, C-3-A, C-3-B
 C-4 (narrower streets)
 C-5

- Zones permitting the greatest increases in height:

W-1, CM-1, CM-2, R-5-A, R-5-B	50%
C-3-C	44%

Recommendations

In the Cleveland Park Commercial Overlay zone, the Zoning Commission has adopted on a preliminary basis a reduced height limit of 40 feet, as against the normal 50 feet in the C-2-A District. It would seem reasonable to permit the increase to 50 feet with a PUD, recognizing that this matches the height of several of the tallest buildings in the area, the apartment buildings at some corner locations. The remaining buildings in the area have a substantially lower height profile: 70% are only one-story, 20% are two-story, and 10% are three-story.

A floor area ratio of 2.5 would seem suitable as the guideline density. This would keep the relationship between bulk and building height the same as at present. The limited FAR recognizes the usually low

existing FAR in the area and the fact that this is a designated historic district in which only limited land assembly and redevelopment are likely to occur. Projects of exceptional merit would be able to exceed these guidelines. In the case of both height and FAR increases above the guidelines, Chapter 24 specifies that "the applicant shall have the burden of demonstrating and justifying the public benefits and other meritorious aspects of the proposal that will result if the additional height is approved." (2403.4, 2403.10)

As to the Woodley Park Commercial Overlay Zone, we offer the following comments and recommendations. In the C-2-B portion of the area (Square 2204), the Commission preliminarily adopted a maximum matter-of-right FAR of 3.0 as against 3.5 normally permitted in C-2-B. The 3.0 would be the maximum total and residential density, of which up to 1.5 would be permitted for commercial use and development. The matter-of-right maximum height would be 50 feet rather than the normal 65 feet in C-2-B Districts.

OP's recommendation is to permit a 0.5 FAR increase in the residential component of a development, so that the total FAR would be 3.5 as a PUD, with the commercial component limited to 1.5. Maximum permitted building height should be 55 feet.

It should be noted that the height and density profile of existing buildings in this location is 30 to 40 feet and typically approximately 2.0 to 2.5 FAR. It should also be noted that the normal PUD guidelines in C-2-B are 6.0 FAR and 90 feet.

In the C-2-A portion of the area, Squares 2202 and 2203, the Commission left the existing matter-of-right standards in place, namely 2.5 FAR of which up to 1.5 may be commercial, and a 50-foot height limit. OP recommends that these limits also apply to PUDs.