GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

MEMORANDUM

To: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Office of Zoning

From: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

Date: May 23, 2007

Subject: **ZC 05-35 – Consolidated PUD and Zoning Map Amendment**
Stanton Square - Stanton and Pomeroy Roads, SE

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application and other materials for the subject site. DDOT cannot approve the Consolidated PUD application as drafted, in that the Department does not have the authority to approve public roadway designs that are inconsistent with existing DC Code requirements. The Department will be seeking authority to permit more narrow minor roadway cross sections, similar to those proposed in this application, however, we do not have that authority at this time. We recommend that the applicant review our comments outlined below and modify their plans accordingly, while DDOT seeks amendment to the District Code that would allow us the authority to approve this request.

An alternative approach would be for the applicant to construct these roadways as private streets.

Overview

The applicant, Horning Brothers, seeks approval of a consolidated PUD and related Zoning Map Amendment from R-3 to R-5-A, for the construction of a new residential community on the site generally bounded by Pomeroy, Stanton and Elvans Roads, SE and comprised of Square 5877, Lots 60, 61, 78, 832, 853-858, 873, 878 and 879. The project proposal calls for constructing a new residential community with three new public roads, five private alleys and 187 town-home style units with garage parking provided for each unit.

A total of four access points link the project to the adjacent road network with one off Elvans Road, SE across from Gainesville Street, SE, and three access points off Stanton Road, SE. For the purposes of this report the project is separated into two areas linked by a pedestrian walkway, designated the Stanton Road and Elvans Road portions of the project based on public roads providing direct access to each area. (Attachment - A)

Public Roads and Alley Dedication

Legal representatives for the applicant sent a letter to DDOT dated April 26, 2007 regarding the overall project and in the section Conclusion and Next Steps, provides the following statement regarding public streets,

> *"It is very important to the success of these affordable units that the monthly homeowners association fee be kept to a minimum. A significant measure that can be taken to maintain modest monthly homeowners fees is to make the streets in this project public streets."*

DDOT supports this position and recommends the applicant also design and construct the proposed private alleys to DDOT design standards and dedicate them as public alleys. This action will reduce the burden and overall costs for homeowners for maintenance of public areas as DDOT and the District will then become responsible for future repairs to sidewalks, roadways, signage, streetlights, etc. Designing and constructing the streets and alleys will become a one-time expense for the applicant that can be incorporated into the project cost. The proposed new roadways and alleys must be constructed to DDOT standards to be accepted and dedicated as public roads and right-of-ways; in addition DDOT will not accept any construction in public space that does not meet the minimum design criteria for construction. Unfortunately, current District Code requires a minimum 55 ft. R-O-W for one-way streets and a 75 ft. R-O-W for two-way roads; with 10 ft. setbacks on both sides of the roadway. (Attachment – B) These minimum design criteria are used to ensure safe movements of pedestrians and vehicles while also providing landscaping between the roadway and the property lines. The applicant proposal for R-O-W widths varying from 35 ft. for the one-way roadways to 47 ft. for the proposed two-way roadway cannot be approved until this section of the DC Code is amended.

Review and Comment on the Application

DDOT reviewed the request to reduce the R-O-W and compared it to the existing and proposed circulation patterns for the internal and external roadways and alleys. Regarding the Stanton Road portion, once granted appropriate authority under the DC Code, DDOT would recommend the applicant design the one-way roadway with a minimum 44 ft. wide public R-O-W. The 44 ft. wide R-O-W would allow for a 22 ft. wide roadway with one travel lane and one lane of parking, a one-foot (1 ft.) wide curb on both side of the roadway, a minimum four-foot (4 ft.) wide continual landscaping strip with new trees adjacent to the curb and six-foot (6 ft.) wide sidewalks between the

landscaping strips and property lines. Vehicular traffic would operate in a clockwise direction, as shown on the submitted Circulation Plan.

To maintain the building footprint on the proposed two-way "Main Street" that bisects that portion of the project DDOT would recommend changing the street to a one-way roadway heading outbound to Stanton Road, SE, following the R-O-W allotment listed in the above paragraph. This would reduce the paved area of the roadway by two-feet (2 ft.).

For the Elvans Road portion of the project, access to the site will be provided by a two-way roadway aligned with Gainesville Road, SE located across Elvans Road, SE. The roadway connects to a T-intersection with the 25 ft. wide roadway turning to the left and a 25 ft. wide alley going to the right. The roadway is U-shaped and varies in width from 30 ft. at the street intersection to 25 ft. wide at the end where it stubs-out between unit No. 138 and No. 139. DDOT would recommends the applicant modify the design of this roadway by changing it to a one-way traffic pattern, entering the site at the proposed new intersection across from Gainesville Street, SE and exiting the site through a roadway extension constructed between Unit Nos. 138 and 139 with a new street intersection with Elvans Road, SE. (Attachment – C) This option allows the applicant to maintain the proposed building footprint along the street while reducing the paved area of the roadway by 10 ft., providing five-feet (5 ft.) of additional land on each side of the road that can be added to the front yards of the properties or to the landscaping strip. The proposed public R-O-W for this roadway can remain as proposed.

Pedestrian Circulation

The overall design of the site is positive in regards to pedestrian circulation with sidewalks installed on both sides of all new roadways and on the existing public streets abutting the site. Pedestrian pathways link the two portions of the project that are separated from severe grade changes, however there are no internal crosswalks and the proposed sidewalks are only 4 ft. in width.

DDOT recommends the applicant provide 6 ft. wide sidewalks, the minimum width allowed. This change can be made by reducing the width of the curbside landscape strip from the project proposal of 6 ft. wide to 4 ft. in width, the minimum dimension allowed by DDOT Design Manual. The project is requesting waivers from the minimum 8 ft. side-yard and 20 ft. rear yard requirements, as a result almost all of the units have only front yards with the rear of the buildings abutting paved alleys that access garages. The applicant proposes two pocket parks, a landscaped retaining wall with steps that links the project and two rain gardens on site; however they do not provide adequate recreational facilities for 178 families.

Pedestrian circulation in and around the site is important as sidewalks will serve as routes to the nearby Turner Elementary School playground, Fort Stanton Recreation Center, Fort Stanton Park, the Smithsonian Anacostia Museum and a combined

bicycle/walking path along the northern side of Suitland Parkway, all located less than five blocks away from the site, neighborhood amenities within walking distance that add to the overall appeal of the project.

Vehicular Circulation - Internal

Vehicle circulation within the site is restricted by alleys and roadways that do not connect to streets and dead-end without appropriate areas for vehicles to turn-around. The applicant submitted vehicle tracking diagrams that show the turning for 35 ft. long trash collection trucks, WB-40 tractor trailer trucks and fire trucks. The circulation plan shows both trash and fire trucks heading-in and backing-out of some of the alleys because they dead-end, often crossing private property lines and the curb. The alley system is used to access almost all of the garages for the new town-homes and it is of critical importance that they are accessible at all times. Providing more connections within the site and to surrounding roads will improve overall circulation.

For the Stanton Road portion of the project DDOT recommends the applicant connect the proposed alley at the northwest corner of the site running parallel to Pomeroy Road, SE that ends between Unit No. 1 and Unit No. 31, to the proposed north-south alley ending at Unit No. 32. (Attachment - D •) Connecting these two alleys will allow trash trucks and snow removal vehicles to head-in and head-out of the alleys without making numerous turning movements, however Unit. No. 31 may have to be eliminated to accommodate this connection.

For the Elvans Road portion of the project DDOT recommends changes to the circulation pattern by changing the proposed U-Shaped public road from two-way to one-way traffic moving in a counterclockwise direction, with a new street connection at Elvans Road, SE. This change will not restrict access to residents occupying Unit Nos. 155 -187. However, the proposed alley L-shaped alley that serves the rear of these units should be modified and redesigned to include a turn-around for vehicles where it currently dead-ends.

Vehicular Circulation – External

A total of four access points were proposed to link the site to the existing roadway network with three entrances off Stanton Road, SE and one off Elvans Road, SE. As noted earlier in this report, DDOT recommends adding an additional access point to Elvans Road, SE allowing for the proposed new public road in that area to operate as a thru-street and not a dead-end. The proposed one-way street circulation pattern proposed by DDOT will discourage through-traffic.

The applicant retained a traffic consultant to prepare a traffic impact study to determine the future impacts of the project on the transportation network and to analyze the transportation related aspects of the project. The study determined the traffic expected to be generated from the project can be adequately accommodated by the existing road network and all key intersections in the project area currently operate at an acceptable

Level-Of-Service B (LOS-B) or better during both the AM and PM peak-hour. DDOT concurs with these observations.

DDOT requests the traffic consultant perform a signal warrant analysis at the intersection of Elvans Road and Gainesville Street, SE and the intersection of Elvans Road and Stanton Road, SE. The traffic impact study takes only capacity analysis under consideration to determine the need for signalizing these two intersections. DDOT is concerned that access to and from the site, especially at the proposed new intersection at Gainesville Road extended, could be unsafe without signalization due to the curvature and slope of Elvans Road, SE.

Parking

Each town-home unit is provided with a one or two-car parking garage. The new alleys will provide parking to most units while 21 of the proposed new 178 dwelling units will have driveway access directly from proposed public streets. The Zoning Regulations require a minimum distance of "twenty-eight (28 ft.) from all adjacent driveways that provide access directly from a street to a row dwelling or a flat". The proposed driveways in this project are placed approximately six ft. (6 ft.) to eight ft. (8 ft.) apart. DDOT observes that the proposed lot widths, which vary from 14 to 20 ft. wide, restricting the applicant from satisfying this clearance requirement while still providing garage parking for each unit.

The current project proposal provides a total of 37 on-street parking spaces. The recommended changes to the circulation patterns by changing two of the proposed new roadways from two-way travel to one-way travel will add up to 23 additional curbside parking spaces, providing upwards of 60 on-street parking spaces for the project. (Attachment – E)

Other Items

Dwelling Units Nos. 178 – 187 do not have frontage along a public streets or alleys or open courts and the front entrances face an abutting property. *§410 - Special Exceptions for Groups of Residential Buildings in R-5 and R-4 Districts,* lists requirements for special this type of development and lists in *§410.13 (b), "All front entrances of the group shall abut a street, front yard, or front court;".* DDOT requests the Board make a determination if the placement of the units is appropriate and complies with the intentions of the Zoning Regulations. Of primary concern to DDOT is how these units are accessed in case of a fire or emergency. Another issue will arise when these units have to apply for street addresses as they do not face a public street, alley, open-court or right-of way.

The existing public space abutting the site and proposed new public dedications must be designed to comply with DDOT regulations and standards, DDOT will not accept any construction in public space that does not meet the minimum design criteria for construction. DDOT staff is available to assist the applicant in developing a public

space improvement plan that includes, but is not limited to new sidewalks, streetlights, trees, landscaping, crosswalk marking and signage.

Conclusion

The overall project has been designed to provide quality housing units in an underserved area of the District, reusing vacant land. Dedicating the proposed streets and alleys for public use will reduce future homeowner association fee costs regarding maintenance and will ensure the project is built with all safety and circulation considerations addressed. This will also lessen the liability of property owners in the instance of an accident within the alley system as MPD has jurisdiction over motor vehicle violations on public R-O-W's. DDOT staff is available to assist the applicant in addressing the comments listed in the report, and working with the applicant, seek to make the project a success. However, as stated previously, DDOT will need to seek an amendment to the DC Code to allow for the design of public streets with a width less than 55 feet. Until the DC Code is amended to grant DDOT this authority, we cannot recommend approval of these proposed roadways as future public roads.

DDOT recommends the applicant consider the following alternatives:

1) Design and construct the proposed alleys and streets to DDOT design standards and dedicate them for public use after DDOT has obtained the authority to approve right-of-ways less than 55 feet wide;

2) Modify the design of the new roadway across from Gainesville Street, SE by changing it to a one-way traffic pattern and connecting it with Elvans Road, SE;

3) Modify the proposed two-way roadway in the middle of the Stanton Road portion of the project parcel to one-way heading out to Stanton Road, SE

4) Connect the proposed alley SE that ends between Unit No. 1 and Unit No. 31, to the proposed north-south alley ending at Unit No. 32;

4) Perform a signal warrant analysis at the intersections of Elvans Road and Gainesville Street, SE and Elvans Road and Stanton Road, SE; and

5) Coordinate with appropriate DDOT staff in designing public space improvements, street markings and regulatory signage.

Attachments

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ATTACHMENT – A

LESSARD GROUP INC.

BURIED BASEMENT LOCATION

TOWN HOMES AT STANTON SQUARE

ATTACHMENT – B

30.11 Major Cross Section Elements

30.11.1 General

The major cross section elements considered in the design of streets and highways include the pavement surface type, cross slope, lane widths, shoulders, roadside or border, curbs, sidewalks, driveways, and medians. NOTE: For additional information and criteria relative to major cross section items, refer to the **AASHTO Green Book.**

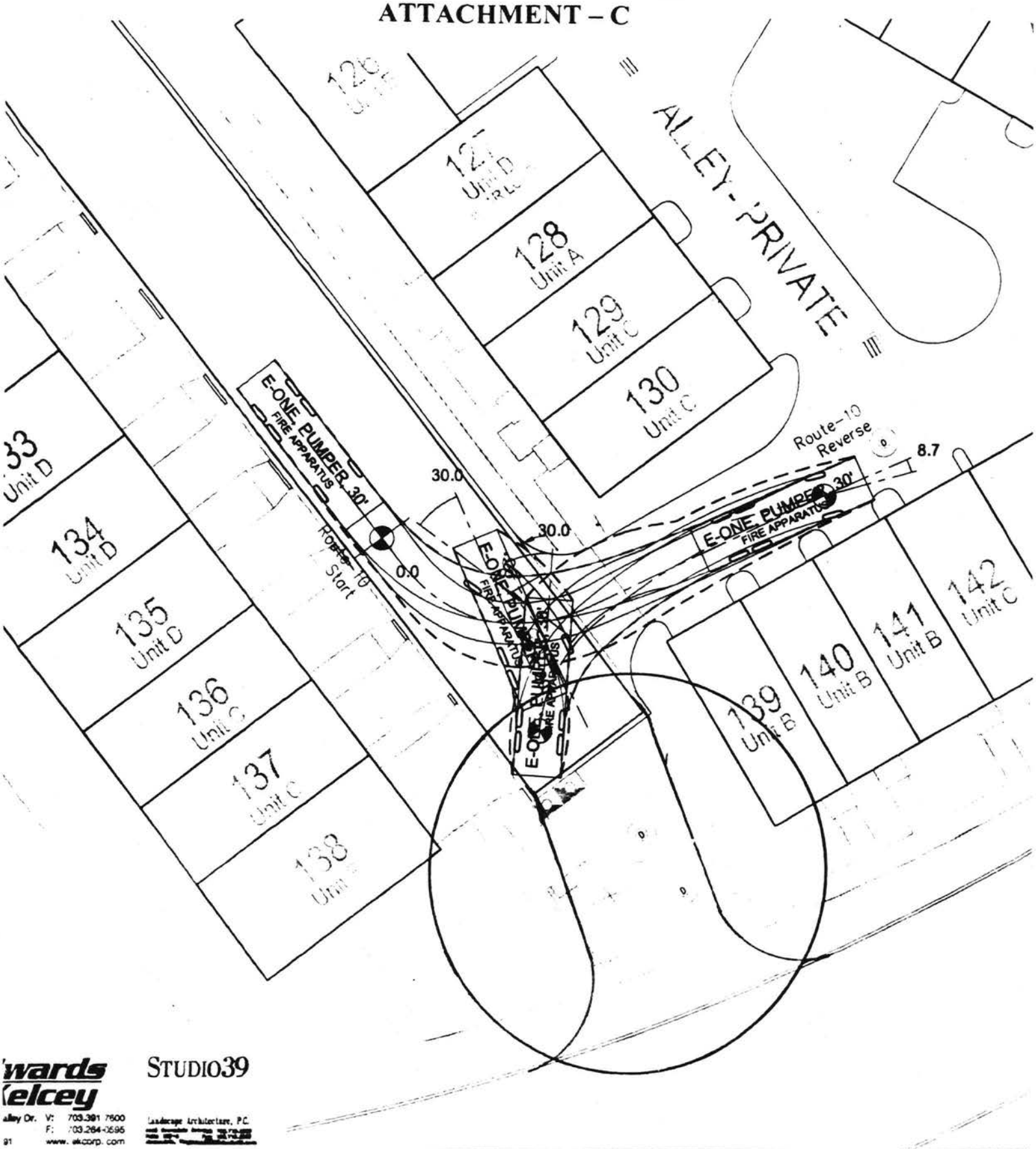
30.11.2 Standard Roadway Elements Width:

Minimum requirements are listed in Table 30-K below for new street construction, however every effort should be made to upgrade the existing streets to bring them to the current Department standard as much as practical.

Table 30-K:
Standard Roadway Elements Widths

ROADWAY	THE STANDARD WIDTH BASED ON DDOT GUIDELINE
The Minimum ROW for One-way travel Road	55' with 10' setback both sides
The Minimum ROW for Two-way Travel Road	75' with 10' setback both sides
Two-way Street, one lane each, with Parking both sides	36' Paved Surface Width (Prefer 38')
Two-way Street one lane each with one side parking	32' Paved Surface Width (Prefer 34')
One-way Street one lane with two side parking	30' Paved Surface Width
One-way Street one lane with one side parking	22' Paved Surface Width
Driving Lane	10' to 12' Paved Surface Width
Driving Lane having Buses	11' Paved Surface Width
Driving Lane, with parking	18' Paved Surface Width*
Driving Lane, with Parking and Have Buses	19' Paved Surface Width
Parking Lane	8' Paved Surface Width
Bicycle Lane one way	5' Paved Surface Width

ATTACHMENT – C



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Fire Apparatus- Pumper, Rou

May 15, 2007

ATTACHMENT – D