

August 23, 2016

VIA IZIS

Chairman Anthony Hood  
District of Columbia Zoning Commission  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 210S  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Z.C. Case No. 16-02 – Applicant’s Pre-Hearing Submission

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

The above-referenced case was set down for a public hearing at the Commission’s March 14, 2016 public meeting. This letter and the attached exhibits serve as the Applicant’s statement in support of its pre-hearing submission, and the Applicant requests that you schedule a public hearing for as soon as possible.

As described in detail below, the Applicant has revised the proposed project in two fundamental ways. First, the site plan now includes a two-way private street (available to the public) along the east side of the stadium that will extend and realign 1<sup>st</sup> Street through the site. As a result, the loading access and maneuvering has changed, and the media trucks will now park just outside the stadium. Second, the PUD boundary now includes the plaza to the northeast of the stadium, and the plaza will include many features to activate it. Both of these changes will be described in greater detail below. Also, information and explanations in response to comments from the Commission and OP are provided below.

1. General Project, Operations, and Programming

A. *Additional information about parking arrangements and operations*

The Applicant has secured the availability of 3950 committed parking spaces in the general vicinity of the stadium. The exact locations and number of spaces at each location are described in the attached parking summary in Exhibit A. The parking locations are shown on page 2.05 of the plans and drawings attached as Exhibit B (the “Plans”). The Applicant has a signed commitment from the owner/operator of each parking location.

*B. Pedestrian routes from Metrorail stations*

The pedestrian routes from the Waterfront and Navy Yard Metrorail stations are shown on pages 2.07 – 2.08 in the Plans. The primary bicycle routes are shown on these pages too.

*C. Revised circulation plan, including considerations for South Capitol Street bridge construction*

The revised circulation plan that accounts for the South Capitol Street bridge construction and the realigned 1<sup>st</sup> Street through the site is shown on pages 2.05 – 2.06 in the Plans.

*D. Vision Framework goals for activation at the pedestrian level (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets) and connection to waterfront*

As the Plans show, the Applicant has significantly revised the site plan for the east side of the stadium to increase north-south connectivity – both for pedestrians and automobiles. The previously submitted site plan included a pedestrian-only right-of-way along the east side of the stadium. However, following discussions with various District agencies, including DDOT and OP, the Applicant incorporated a private two-way road (realigned 1<sup>st</sup> Street SW) along the east side of the stadium that will be open to the public and will provide a direct connection for cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians toward the waterfront through the stadium site. Although the Buzzard Point Vision Framework Plan (BPVFP) does not identify this road, it will provide more connectivity in the neighborhood, which generally is a goal in the BPVFP. As shown throughout the Plans (but particularly on the site plans on pages 2.02, 2.06, & 2.08), the road will be 23 feet wide and flanked by sidewalks on each side. The sidewalk on the west side of the road, adjacent to the stadium, will be 30 feet wide, and the sidewalk on the east side of the road will be 13 feet wide. South of S Street, the west sidewalk will narrow to 13 feet, and there will not be an east side walk that will become a two-foot wide buffer. On game days, when the plaza will host pre- and post-game activities, this road will be closed.

The sidewalks along the extended 1<sup>st</sup> Street right-of-way will continue to be active pedestrian spaces adjacent to the large plaza and main entry gate at the north side of the site and terminating with a coffee shop and offices at the south side of the site. The sidewalks will be well-lit, and the plaza area directly northeast of the stadium (near the primary entrance) will include a sculpture of “DC United” and a non-game day splash fountain. These features will provide pedestrians with a safe and engaging experience as they walk along the outside of the east side stadium. Furthermore, the plaza area also will include a shaded (tree canopy) seating area and a structural canopy area for more shade and food vendors (and similar uses). All of these features are consistent with the BPVFP goals of creating safe and welcoming pedestrian environments. Additional explanation regarding the project’s consistency with the BPVFP is included in pages 3.01 – 3.02 in the Plans.

Similarly, the sidewalk along the east side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, adjacent to the stadium, will include parklets to provide an unconventional but active and engaging experience for pedestrians and fans. Images and explanations of the programming for the parklets are included in pages

3.13 – 3.16 in the Plans. The parklets will include seating areas and bike parking. Similarly, these design enhancements will promote the BPVFP’s goals of creating safe and welcoming pedestrian environments.

*E. Input from Ft. McNair and neighborhood to north*

The Applicant met with representatives from Ft. McNair at least three times. At this point, the Applicant understands that representatives of Ft. McNair are satisfied with the design of the stadium. In addition, regarding the residential neighborhood to the north, the Applicant has met with both the full ANC and the ANC single member district representative for the neighborhood on multiple occasions to hear feedback that incorporates the thoughts and concerns of the neighborhood to the north.

*F. Sound impacts of uses*

The Applicant conducted a preliminary study of the sound impacts of events on game days. The sound analysis is included in pages 8.05 – 8.06 in the Plans.

*G. Appropriate number of seats*

The proposed number of seats for the stadium – 19,000 – is commensurate with many other Major League Soccer (MLS) team stadia. A comparison of other stadia is shown on page 10.01 in the Plans. Across the comparison MLS stadia, the number of seats averages 20,225; thus, the number of seats for this stadium is appropriate.

*H. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) review of plans*

The Applicant has contacted MPD directly on several occasions, but they have not yet connected. In addition, as part of normal PUD review, the MPD has been offered the opportunity to comment on the project, and a representative from MPD attended a multi-agency meeting about the project hosted by OP several months ago.

*I. Verify infrastructure capacity to handle water usage*

The civil design included in pages 6.01 – 6.10 in the Plans addresses the infrastructure needs of the stadium, including water usage capacity, based on meetings with DC Water.

*J. Timing and proposed use of ancillary development parcel*

The ancillary development parcel is envisioned for a single building to include a hotel, office space, event space, and/or retail/restaurant space. While the anticipated program for this ancillary parcel could change depending on market conditions, the envisioned general massing and programming of such development is shown on pages 3.17 – 3.22 in the Plans. The Applicant expects to begin the development of the ancillary parcel in approximately 1-2 years.

2. Design and Drawings

A. *Precedent images of other soccer stadia set into neighborhoods*

Images and precedents of other urban soccer stadia around the world shown in their neighborhood contexts are included in pages 10.02 – 10.04 in the Plans. Once Buzzard Point is developed, the proposed stadium will similarly be surrounded by an active neighborhood that has specifically adapted to (and emerged because of) the presence of the stadium.

B. *Additional drawings showing neighborhood context*

Drawings of the proposed stadium in the context of the anticipated surrounding neighborhood are included in pages 2.02 – 2.04 in the Plans.

C. *More clarity and color on drawings of stadium exterior*

This is shown throughout the Plans.

D. *Design “maturity”*

This is shown throughout the Plans.

E. *Refinement of lower level enclosed spaces*

The lower level enclosed spaces are more clearly depicted on the level plans included as pages 4.03 – 4.04 in the Plans.

F. *Identification of bike parking*

A bike valet will be the primary location for bike parking, and it will be available on the south side of the stadium, as identified on page 4.04 in the Plans.

G. *Plaza images and programming, and why not included in PUD application*

The Applicant revised the PUD boundary to include the plaza to the northeast of the stadium. Images of the plaza and its programming as well as explanations of plaza programming are included in pages 3.03 – 3.12 in the Plans. As described above and in the Plans, the Applicant will incorporate many features in the plaza to activate it during both game and non-game days.

H. *Renderings of light monitors*

Renderings of the light monitors are shown throughout in the larger renderings in the Plans, but they are shown particularly on pages 5.09, 5.10, 5.12, 5.13, and 5.33.

I. *Impact of Pepco easement on design and how Pepco would access below-grade area of easement*

The impact of the utility easements on the stadium's design is illustrated on pages 4.01 – 4.02 in the Plans.

J. *Improved aspects of drawings*

These are shown throughout in the Plans.

K. *Improved east elevation and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street treatment*

As described above (and shown on pages 3.13 – 3.16 and 5.21 – 5.22 in the Plans), the Applicant improved the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street treatment by incorporating parklets. In addition, the Applicant improved the east elevation by incorporating varied materials, bike racks, and a ticket window, as shown in pages 5.29 – 5.30 in the Plans.

L. *Revised plans to correct inconsistencies*

The Applicant updated and revised the entire package of plans and drawings to correct inconsistencies; this is reflected in the Plans.

M. *Materials refinement and materials board*

As shown on the renderings in pages 5.01 – 5.34 in the Plans, the Applicant refined and more clearly depicted the materials for the stadium. The Applicant will provide a materials board at the public hearing.

3. Miscellaneous Information

A. *Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR)*

The Applicant will file its CTR with its supplemental pre-hearing submission.

B. *Stormwater management plans and GAR calculations*

The project will satisfy the required stormwater management standards and the GAR. The stormwater management system will include green roofs and an infiltration basis, and the GAR will be 0.202, which will satisfy the minimum required.

C. *Additional information regarding environmental benefits*

The stadium will be designed to attain at least LEED Gold certification. In addition, the stadium will include many environmental benefits such as energy savings, green roofs, and the use of sustainable materials. The environmental benefits are described in greater detail in pages 9.01 – 9.04 in the Plans.

*D. Signage plan*

The Applicant continues to prepare a signage and graphics plan that it will provide in its supplemental pre-hearing submission.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

/s/ Phil Feola  
Phil T. Feola

/s/ Cary Kadlecek  
Cary R. Kadlecek

Attachments