



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Karen Thomas, Development Review Specialist

JLS
Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review and Historic Preservation

DATE: October 13, 2023

SUBJECT: ZC 20-29A: Harvard University/Dumbarton Oaks - Campus Plan Amendment and Further Processing to construct the Farrand House -1732 32nd St NW

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the amendment to, and further processing of the Harvard University Campus Plan as submitted under ZC 20-29A including the following:

- New Construction of approximately 10,000 square feet of gross floor area (“GFA”) of a mixed-use building, Farrand House as Building 7, in lieu of a previously approved new greenhouse; and
- Relocation of the cooling towers, mechanical equipment and service court (Buildings 12 and 13 shown on the new plan).

The conditions of the Order would essentially remain unchanged except for the changes in the plans as [Exhibit 4C](#) and changes to the Decision of the Order as proposed and highlighted on [Page 11 of this report](#).

II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

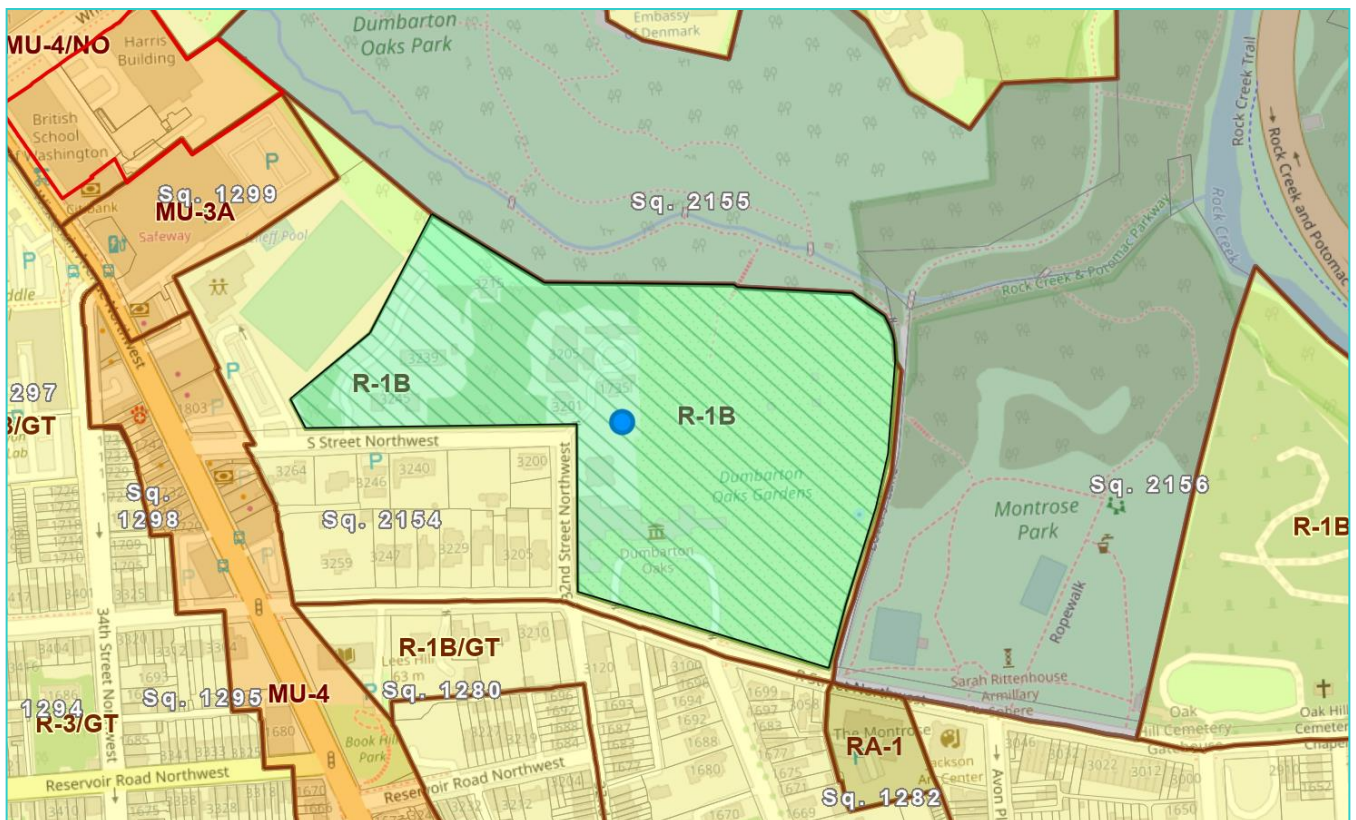
Location	1730 32 nd Street, N.W.
Legal Description	Square 2155 Lot 0812
Ward/ANC	Ward 2, ANC-2E
Zoning	R-1-B:
Area	707,729 sf



<p>Site Description</p>	<p>The 16-acres campus is bounded by S Street, 32nd Street and R Street on the south, Jelleff Field and single-family residential uses to the west, Dumbarton Oaks Park to the north and Montrose Park to the east. The site is developed with extensive gardens and structures including a mansion located at 32nd Street between S and R Streets. The mansion, known as Dumbarton Oaks, is now used to accommodate a research library and art collection. The landscaped grounds and buildings are designated a historic landmark and are open to the public for tours. Pre-Columbian and Byzantine collections are on display in the campus' museum.</p>
<p>Surrounding Neighborhood</p>	<p>The residential neighborhood to the south consists of a mix of detached, semidetached and row homes within the historic Georgetown neighborhood.</p>
<p>Proposal</p>	<p>The amendment to the 2020-2040 campus plan for the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library as a special exception pursuant to Subtitle X §§101 and Chapter 9, including approval to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a new mixed-program building, to be known as the Farrand House, in lieu of the new greenhouse identified as Building 7 on the Approved Campus Plan. The Farrand House will consist of approximately 10,000 square feet of floor area, and will be comprised primarily of classrooms, a digital humanities center, an artists' studio, and public galleries. (The approved plan consisting of approximately 7,130 square feet of gross floor area ("GFA") for a new greenhouse would not be included.) • Relocation of the cooling towers, mechanical equipment, and service court – New Buildings 12 and 13. <p>The following would not be altered and will not be the subject of this review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconstruction of a pithouse/coolhouse that previously existed on the campus; - the approved enrollment increases from 30 fellows to 50 fellows and 139 staff; and - maintenance of a minimum of 63 vehicle parking spaces.

Campus Plan Boundary

III. BACKGROUND



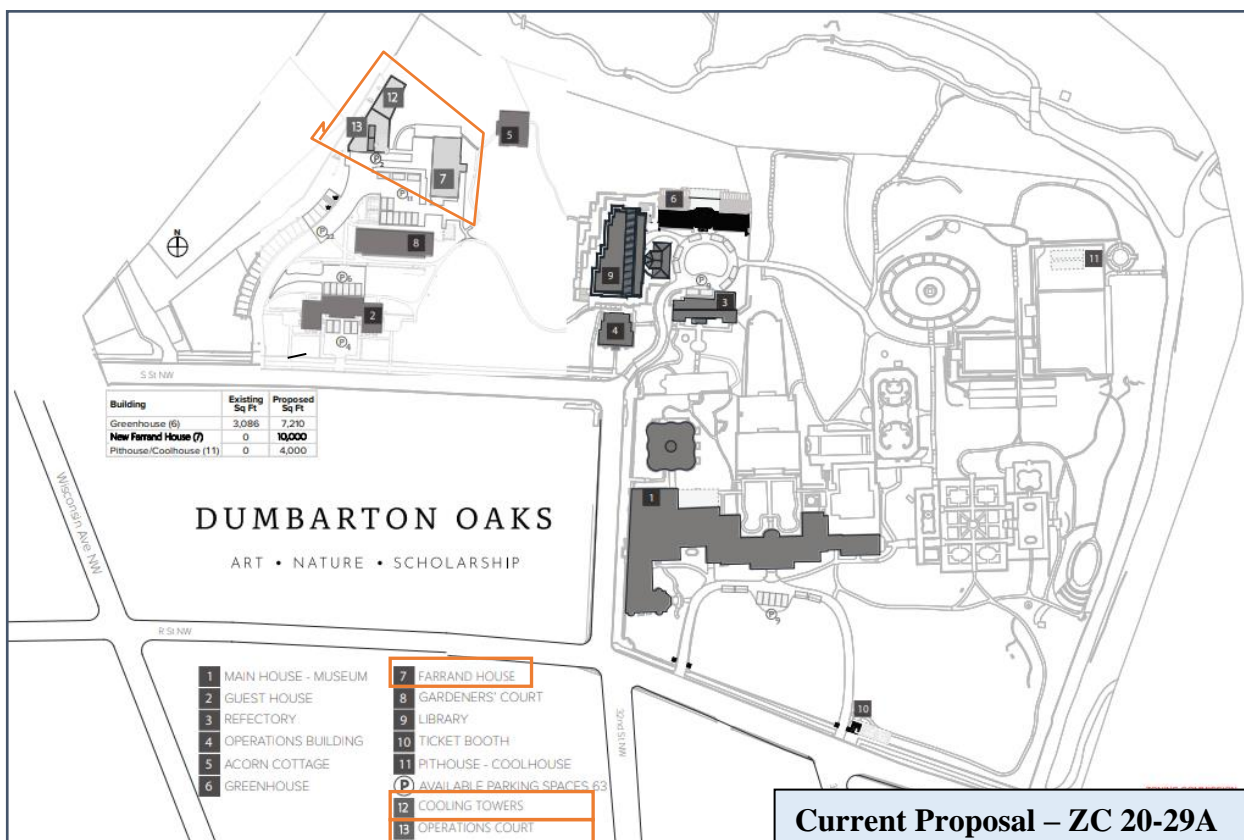
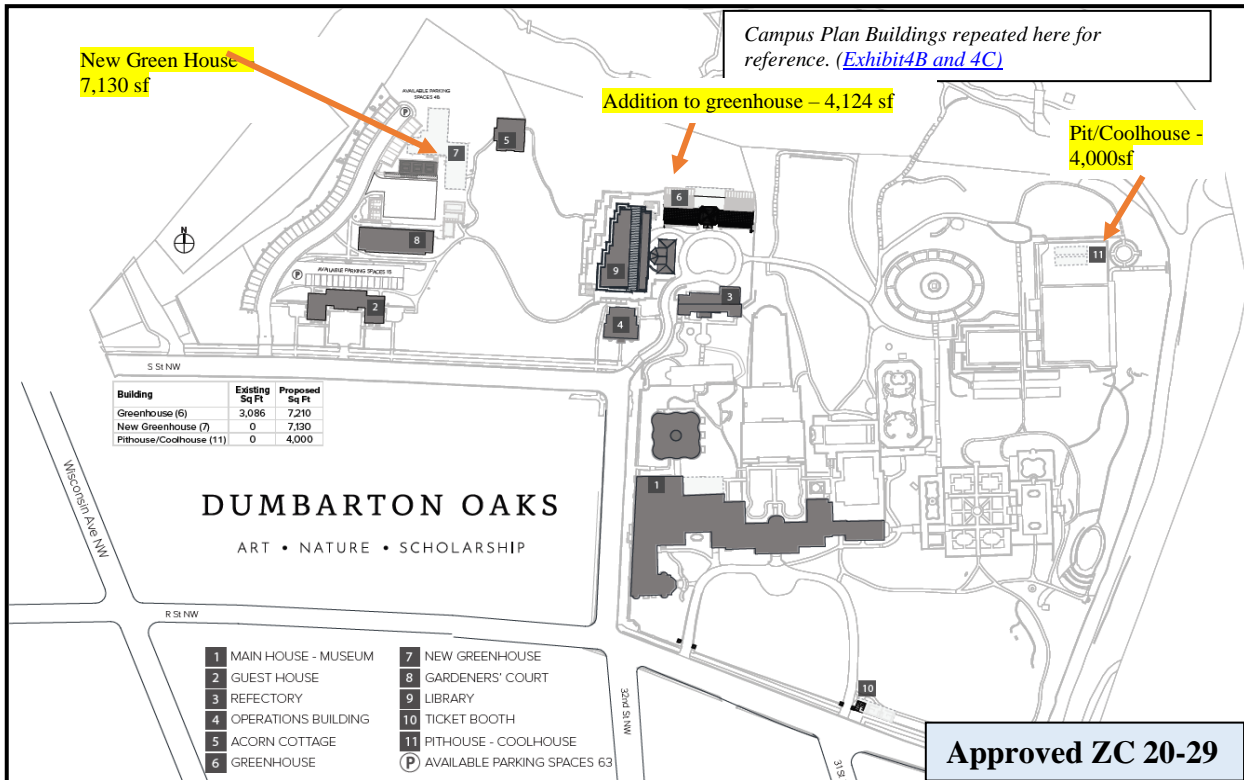
2020 CAMPUS PLAN and PRIOR APPROVALS

Dumbarton Oaks has been approved by the Board as Harvard University's center of scholarship in Byzantine, Pre-Columbian Art and Landscape Studies since 1941. Board of Zoning Adjustment Appeal No. 568 approved the facility for the "use and study of the Works of Art and the Library" as an educational institution. Subsequent approvals for modifications and further processing through 2020 were related to improvements and additions to the facilities in support of the center's research functions, as summarized in the table below.

Case #/Adoption Date	Amendment and Further Processing
BZA 568 /July 16, 1941	Board approves use as educational use and a school within the meaning of the Zoning Regulations.
BZA 4456/ June 1, 1956	Two enlargements of buildings approved, including a new second floor added to the existing building for use as a library.
BZA 5232/March 20, 1961	Addition of a one-story museum wing and a one- story basement library wing to the existing building.
BZA 14584/June 12, 1987	Approval to allow construction of an addition to the existing museum library. (New sf = 64,081 sf. FAR 0.09)
BZA 16555/Dec 11, 2000	Special exception for further processing of an amendment to the campus plan for a proposed library addition north of the Gardeners' Cottage, for two proposed gardeners' court buildings and for other related minor changes to existing buildings, including provision of ADA access. Conditions included: number of fellows limited to 25 and number of parking spaces to 60. Approval for 10 years until 12/31/2010.
ZC 10-13/ Oct. 15, 2010	Approval for 10 years until Dec. 31, 2020. Increase in the number of fellows to no more than 30. Number of employees and staff not to exceed 139 and number of parking spaces no less than 63 spaces.
ZC 20-29	Approval of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -renewal for an additional 20 years (2020-2040), - Max of 139 employees - Min. of 63 parking spaces - 0.16 FAR - construction of a new greenhouse, - an addition to the existing greenhouse and - a new pit for a total of 15,254 sf to the existing development. - an increase in the number of fellows and scholars from 30 to 50. (See Exhibit 4A of the record)
ZC 20-29A Current Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of the approved greenhouse (Building 7) with a10,000 sf mixed purpose building identified as the Farrand House on the site plan as Building 7. - Relocation of the cooling towers, mechanical equipment and service court <p>In addition, the total of 63 on-site parking spaces would be allocated in parts to different areas of the campus.</p>

IV. OP ANALYSIS

The amendments would modify future construction plans, including a new Building 7 in lieu of the new greenhouse and relocation of the cooling towers and service areas as Building 12 and 13.



CAMPUS PLAN REVIEW STANDARDS

Pursuant to Subtitle X § 101 and Subtitle X, Chapter 9 of the Zoning Regulations the standards for reviewing campus plans and the analysis of the campus plan elements and projects against criteria are discussed below. Unless specified, the analysis refers to the entire campus and addresses specific impacts of certain project features.

101 CAMPUS PLANS

101.1 Education use by a college or university shall be permitted as a special exception subject to review and approval by the Zoning Commission under Subtitle X, Chapter 9 after its determination that the use meets the applicable standards and conditions of this chapter.

The educational use of this property was established first under BZA Appeals Order 548, in 1941. Harvard University at Dumbarton Oaks seeks an amendment and further processing to the recent approval under ZC 20-29

101.2 The uses shall be located so that they are not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, parking, number of students, or other objectionable conditions.

Noise

The campus does not directly abut any residential properties. The property abuts federal parkland, Rock Creek Park, to the north. To the west the campus borders on District-owned recreational property. The additional distance provided by S, 32nd and R Streets aids in reducing any potential impact the campus may have on residences on the south side of these streets. The application does not propose the expansion of the campus beyond its current boundaries. The use of the library and research center currently do not generate noise by academics and is not anticipated to do so in the future with the mixed-use building - Farrand House - that is currently proposed.

The Farrand House would be a brick pavilion with an open, glassy second floor. [The Old Georgetown Board \(OGB\) report and approval](#) (April 2023) concludes that the scale and massing of the building will be harmonious with the landscape and adjacent buildings, and the materiality of the design will blend with its surroundings.

The addition of the two-story multi-purpose building is unlikely to add to noise or other objectionable conditions beyond what currently exists. This building is intended as an artist studio on the lower level with a gallery space leading to an outdoor terrace and a circulation/multi-use space. The ground floor will consist of two classrooms and a circulation/multi-use space. The upper level will house an office, conference room, lounge area, and an innovation lab. These uses are unlikely to add noise to the campus.

In addition, outdoor activities are and will continue its passive nature, including maintenance of the grounds through landscaping and gardening and visitor tours. Nearby residents use the existing network of paths and walkways throughout the gardens for passive recreation. Therefore, the University will not shift any closer to the surrounding residential areas. The other proposed relocations should not have any greater impact on the surrounding area than currently exists.

Traffic and Parking

The D.C. Department of Transportation has not issued a report to date to indicate whether or not the amendment of the campus plan would create ... “a large increase in traffic volume on neighboring streets, create objectionable traffic conditions, or have a negative impact on on-street parking supply.” Currently 63 spaces are provided on campus and the applicant has not proposed to reduce the existing number of spaces. These spaces accommodate visitors, all staff, and employees. Fellows of the program live nearby and are not permitted to drive, except ADA fellows and those with children who typically utilize off-street parking. OP does not anticipate that the proposed changes would become

objectionable to neighboring properties because of traffic. The Applicant intends to abide by its Traffic Demand Management Plan for the life of the campus plan under the recent approval of Order 20-29.

The District Department of Transportation is anticipated to submit its report under separate cover to the record.

Number of Students and Staff

The applicant is not requesting an amendment to the conditions of the order, including the previously approved maximum of 50 fellows and would not exceed the approved 139 maximum number of staff/employees described in the 2040 campus plan approval process.

Housing

The application indicates that fellows currently reside in off-campus housing. No changes are proposed.

Other Objectionable Conditions. No other objectionable conditions are anticipated. The existing security and caretaking of the property is anticipated to continue and no change to operations and curriculum are proposed.

101.3 Any commercial use customarily incidental to a university use in an R, RF, or RA zone, or as an adjunct use to a university building, shall be subject to the following conditions:

- (a) *There shall be a demonstrated and necessary relationship between the use and the university functions.*

No commercial uses are proposed under the elements of this further processing, including the replacement of the greenhouse building with Farrand House or the relocation of the mechanical equipment and service court of the plan.

- (b) *The total floor area of all commercial uses, including basement or cellar space, shall occupy no more than ten percent (10%) of the gross floor area of the total campus plan floor area; and*

The proposed campus plan would include approximately 18,124 square feet of new GFA, an increase from the previously approved 15,254 square feet under ZC 20-29. This should minimally increase the overall approved density of 0.16 FAR. However, the Applicant stated to OP that only 0.151 was to be constructed. Therefore, the new structure should not substantially increase the approved FAR and the density would remain well within the maximum density of 1.8 FAR permitted under the Zoning Regulations.

- (c) *The commercial use shall be located so that it will not become objectionable to non-university residential neighbors due to hours of operation, noise, parking, loading, lighting, trash, or other operational characteristics that are not customarily associated with a residential use.*

Commercial uses are not proposed with the Plan's amendments.

101.4 The campus plan process shall not serve as a process to create general commercial activities or developments unrelated to the educational mission of the applicant or that would be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

New development is not proposed that would not be in support of the University's educational mission.

101.5 *The maximum height and the maximum total floor area ratio (FAR) of all buildings and structures on the campus shall be as set forth in the following table:*

TABLE X § 101.5: MAXIMUM TOTAL DENSITY OF ALL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Zone	Maximum Height (Feet)	Maximum Floor Area Ratio
R and RF zones	50	1.8
RA-1	50	1.8
RA-2	60	1.8
RA-3, RA-4, RA-5	90	3.5

The maximum density of proposed buildings without Farrand House was approved at 0.16 FAR. The approved development with the new greenhouse (7,130 sf) and its replacement with the addition of the Farrand House (10,000 sf) would remain well within the bulk limits of the zone.

101.6 *Because of permissive increases as applicable to normal bulk requirements in the low-density zones regulated by this title, it is the intent of this subsection to prevent unreasonable campus expansion into improved low-density zones.*

Expansion of the campus is not proposed.

101.7 *In calculating floor area ratio (FAR), the land area shall not include public streets and alleys but may include interior private streets and alleys within the campus boundaries.*

This is not applicable. This is private property without public streets or alleys.

101.8 *As a prerequisite to requesting a further processing for each college or university use, the applicant shall have submitted to the Zoning Commission for its approval a plan for developing the campus as a whole, showing the location, height, and bulk, where appropriate, of all present and proposed improvements including, but not limited to, the following:*

- (a) *Buildings and parking and loading facilities;*
- (b) *Screening, signs, streets, and public utility facilities;*
- (c) *Athletic and other recreational facilities; and*
- (d) *A description of all activities conducted or to be conducted on the campus, and of the capacity of all present and proposed campus development.*

A campus plan diagram showing the locations of all existing and proposed buildings and parking facilities is submitted to the record as Exhibits 4C, 4E1 and 4E2. Currently the University's development plan proposes approximately 18,124 gross square feet under the current amendment. The activities of the campus would continue as it has for the past 80 years.

101.9 *The further processing of specific buildings, structures, and uses within an approved campus plan shall be approved as a special exception unless the campus plan approval was included in an order granting a first-stage planned unit development (PUD) for the campus, in which case the further processing shall be in the form of second-stage planned unit development applications filed consistent with the conditions of the approved campus plan/PUD.*

101.10 Within a reasonable distance of the college or university campus, and subject to compliance with Subtitle X § 101.2, the Zoning Commission may also permit the interim use of land or improved property with any use that the Zoning Commission may determine is a proper college or university function. The land need not be included in the campus plan. When a major new building that has been proposed in a campus plan is instead moved off-campus, the previously designated site shall not be designated for, or devoted to, a different major new building unless the Zoning Commission has approved an amendment to the campus plan applicable to the site; provided, that for this purpose a major new building is defined as one specifically identified in the campus plan.

No new temporary uses are proposed to be located off site at this time.

101.11 In reviewing and deciding a campus plan application or new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the Zoning Commission shall consider, to the extent they are relevant, the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Generally, the proposed campus plan is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The relevant policies of the Educational Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan are outlined under the Comprehensive Plan Section of this report.

101.12 As an integral part of the application requesting approval of new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the college or university shall certify and document that the proposed building or amendment is within the FAR limit for the campus as a whole, based upon the computation included in the most recently approved campus plan and the FARs of any other buildings constructed or demolished since the campus plan was approved.

The University's approved new density is stated as 0.16 FAR with the new greenhouse (7,130 sf) (ZC 20-29 approved). The replacement building, Farrand House at 10,000 square feet would increase the total GFA by approximately 2,870 square feet, according to the Applicant's statement. This would increase the approved 0.16 FAR slightly but it would remain well within the maximum permitted FAR of 1.8.

101.13 Pursuant to Subtitle Z § 405.1, as soon as the application is accepted, the Office of Zoning shall refer the application to the Office of Planning, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Energy and Environment for review and written reports.

The Departments of Transportation (DDOT) and Energy and the Environment (DOEE) will submit reports under separate cover. OP notes that the approved Plan includes a Traffic Demand Management Plan for the life of the Campus Plan, ([ZC Order 20-29 Page 11](#))

101.14 Approval of a campus plan shall be based on the determination by the Zoning Commission that the application will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property, in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps, subject to the special conditions specified in this section.

The proposed renewal and amendments to the campus plan would meet the intent of the Campus Plan regulations as outlined at Subtitle X § 100.2. The plan's facilities are well designed for research purposes. Use of existing facilities would continue as intended since 1941. The campus plan is supported by well-designed facilities, including its lush landscaping and mature trees to minimize the impacts of noise and traffic on the residential uses to the south and visibility impact on adjacent National Park Service NPS land.

There are no commercial uses that are not adjunct to the museum, which is open to the public. The facility has an established connection with the Georgetown community, which continues

communication with the ANC, community organizations, and neighbors to provide information, allow input and transparency on educational, social and community activities on the campus.

Special Exception: Subtitle X Chapter 9

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The campus plan amendments to include the Farrand house as a replacement building in lieu of the previously proposed new greenhouse along with relocation of previously approved facilities are in harmony with the intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map. As an education use since 1941 this is the second/third request in 81 years for a new stand-alone building. The amendments and further processing are in harmony with the intent of the Regulations as the approved university uses will continue without changes to its operations. The existing and proposed buildings will comply with all bulk and height standards for university uses in the R-1B zone.

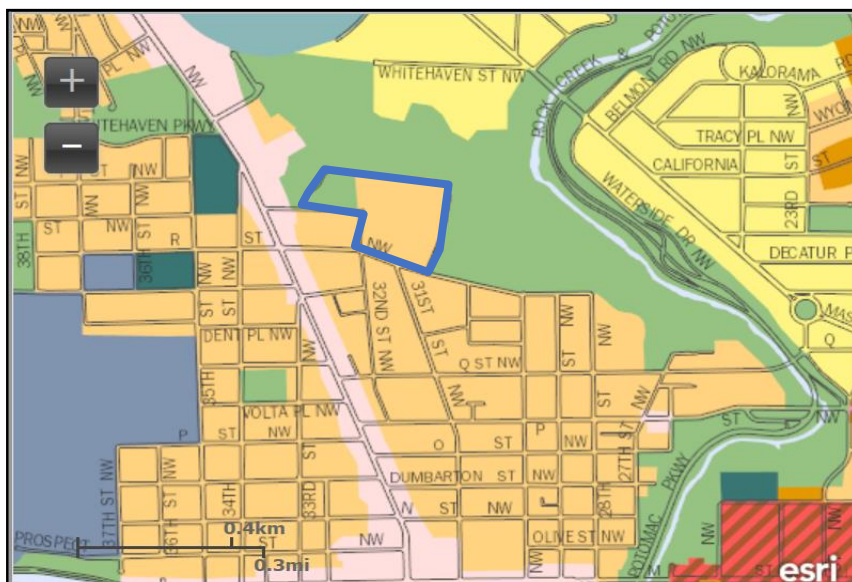
ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property?

The proposed campus plan renewal and amendment do not propose a change in the campus plan boundaries. The impact of the change for replacement of the new greenhouse with the mixed-use building should be minimal. The new building like the replaced greenhouse would be located well within the interior of the campus and not be immediately visible from public space.

Therefore, the special exception application complies with the conditions identified in Subtitle X § 101 and meets the standards for special exception approval pursuant to Subtitle X Chapter 9, as no adverse impacts are anticipated by the proposed amendment for further processing.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM)



The 2006 Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Map identifies the campus within a split designation of moderate density residential and parks, recreation and open space. The moderate density designation is used to define neighborhoods generally, but not exclusively, suited for row houses as well as low-rise garden apartment complexes. The campus use is not inconsistent with this designation. The facility predates the Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive Plan
Generalized Land Use Map

The Generalized Policy Map places the site within the Neighborhood Conservation Area. The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods, but not preclude development, particularly to address city-wide housing needs. Maintenance of existing land uses, and community character is anticipated over the next 20 years. Where change occurs, it will typically be modest in scale and will consist primarily of infill housing, public facilities, and institutional uses.



VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ELEMENT

LAND USE ELEMENT

Policy LU-2.3.5: Institutional Uses: Recognize the importance of institutional uses, such as private schools, childcare facilities, hospitals, churches, and similar uses, to the economy, character, history, livability, and future of Washington, DC and its residents. Ensure that when such uses are permitted in residential neighborhoods, their design and operation is sensitive to neighborhood issues and neighbors' quality of life. Encourage institutions and neighborhoods to work proactively to address issues, such as transportation and parking, hours of operation, outside use of facilities, and facility expansion. 312.7

The Campus Plan is consistent with the Land Use Element's policies concerning the support of institutional uses as the Campus has been planned and will continue its operation in a manner that is sensitive to neighborhood issues. The Campus contributes to the character and quality of the surrounding neighborhood as well as the Georgetown Historic District. It provides and with the proposed addition will continue to provide high quality architecture and design while respecting the historic campus buildings.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Policy EDU-3.3.2: Balancing University Growth and Neighborhood Needs: Encourage the growth and development of local colleges and universities in a manner that recognizes the role these institutions play in contributing to the District's character, culture, economy, and is also consistent with and supports community improvement and neighborhood conservation objectives. Discourage university actions that would adversely affect the character or quality of life in surrounding residential areas. 1214.6

Policy EDU-3.3.3: Campus Plan Requirements: Continue to require campus plans for colleges and universities located in residential and mixed-use zone districts. These plans should be prepared by the institutions themselves, subject to District review and approval, and should address issues raised by the surrounding communities. Each campus plan should include provisions that ensure that the institution is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other similar conditions. 1214.7

Harvard / Dumbarton Oaks Campus Plan renewal and related amendment continues to be respectful of the character of the residential neighborhood by proposing modest development of the research facility during its 82 years at this location. The current proposal will maintain a density well below the maximum permitted 1.8 FAR, thereby ensuring that the institution would be unlikely to become objectionable to neighboring residential property, including along its southern boundary for the next twenty years. Its research program focuses on a unique discipline directed through academic scholarship and specific programming. It is unlikely in the future to generate an intensity of use beyond what currently exists.

The proposal supports both policies of the Comprehensive Plan for educational facilities noted above and is not inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map and Generalized Policy Map.

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The application was referred to the Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE).

VIII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

At the writing of this report, the ANC 2 E's report has not been submitted to the record.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning reviewed the request by the Trustees of Harvard for the existing campus at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections and found it to be in conformance with Subtitle X § 101 of the Zoning Regulations.

Therefore, the Office of Planning recommends approval of the requested amendment and further processing to the plan, subject to the following change in the **Decisions** of the Order: (~~Strikeouts with amendments in Bold~~)

DECISIONS

A. Campus Development

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5. The Campus Plan shall include the following improvements, comprising approximately ~~15,254~~ **18,124** square feet of GFA as identified in **Exhibit 4C**:
 - a.
 - b. ~~The construction of a new greenhouse, identified as Building 7~~ **The construction of a new building known as Farrand House as Building 7**; and.....
6. The Campus may increase its overall density to approximately 0.16-FAR in accordance with ~~Exhibit 3E~~. **Exhibit 4C**.