

ANC 6D

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D Navy Yard | Capitol Riverfront | Buzzard Point | Southwest



September 12, 2022

1101 Fourth Street, SW
Suite W 130
Washington, DC 20024
202.554.1795
Email: 6d@anc.dc.gov
Website: www.anc6d.org

Anthony Hood, Chairman
Commissioners May, Miller, Shapiro, and Imamura
DC Zoning Commission
441 4th St. NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

OFFICERS

Chairman
Edward Daniels
Vice Chair
Fredrica Kramer
Secretary
Jared Weiss
Treasurer
Ronald Collins

Via email: zcsubmissions@dc.gov

RE: Report on ZC Case 21-27, 1301 South Capitol Street, SW

Dear Chair Hood and Commissioners:

ANC 6D, at a duly noticed public meeting on September 12, 2022, with a quorum present, a quorum being four Commissioners, **voted 6-0-0** to provide **conditional support** to the Applicant's submission in ZC Case 21-27, the design review of 1301 South Capitol Street SW (Sq. 653, Lots 65, 66, 827, 829 and 830).

The project has benefited immensely from multiple collaborative discussions between the project team and ANC 6D, and the improvements from those discussions are evidenced in the details below. However, ANC 6D has had two continuing concerns, the most important of which is how the project will function in relation to traffic and parking immediately and as the area around it redevelops. The second issue relates to the aesthetic design itself.

COMMISSIONERS

SMD 1 *Marjorie Lightman*
SMD 2 *Jared Weiss*
SMD 3 *Ronald Collins*
SMD 4 *Andy Litsky*
SMD 5 *Fredrica Kramer*
SMD 6 *Rhonda Hamilton*
SMD 7 *Edward Daniels*

Traffic and Parking

The first, most serious, concern with the current proposal is that it continues to risk major traffic problems on N St., which will endure and perhaps worsen as redevelopment in the area continues. All on-street parking in front of the building are proposed to be eliminated, using one 3-space curbside section for PUDO or rideshare and other short-term car services, and an adjoining 50ft. length for truck loading and unloading and residential and commercial trash pickup.

N Street is a very narrow street. Sharing curb space for commercial loading/unloading, trash pickup, moving vans and such will inevitably result in double parking on N St. The Applicant's claim that this will be handled by a loading dock manager is not persuasive, since this is a small building likely to have minimal staff and has shared no details on building management for any functions.

The original plan for vehicular access to the building was to use of the alley easement behind the So. Capitol St. rowhomes, and included limited below grade parking, but was dropped after objections from neighboring owners. Once the original plan to use the alley easement behind the So. Capitol St. rowhomes to the south was dropped for access to the building and below grade parking, the project eliminated off-street parking entirely and created odd and unworkable adjustments to provide access for commercial functions.

The Applicant then proposed creating a 15-foot-wide alley on the west side of the property, not to accommodate off-loading vehicles, but to move trash from the rear of the building out to N St, to be picked up by trucks waiting in the curbside loading zone. Residential and commercial trash, from 49 apartments, 3 ground-floor businesses and second-floor offices, would be transported by foot ~120 feet out of the building and down the side alley.

Happily, the design you now have before you has moved the trash route to an interior space closer to the center of the building, eliminating disturbance to the neighboring properties and in close proximity to waiting trash trucks for example. ANC 6D is hopeful that a small edit to this latest redesign, widening the new interior alley, would largely remove the problem of frequent and multiple uses of the curbside truck loading space.

There is the issue of the curb cut. ANC 6D understands DDOT's hesitance to permit new curb cuts that interfere with pedestrian through traffic, which this edit would involve. There is an existing curb cut on N St. that appears to be approximately aligned with what would be needed to widen the proposed pedestrian alley to accommodate truck loading. As we have seen recently in other projects, this small adjustment to the existing curb cut would address the severe problems we anticipate on N Street should all PUDO and loading be assigned to the curb. ANC 6D looks forward to advancing its suggested approach when the Public Space Committee considers the proposal.

Since the traffic and loading design as proposed creates an existential problem, **ANC 6D offers conditional support for the project only on the condition that the newly proposed interior alley be widened to permit off-street loading.** Without it ANC 6D feels the project will create a burden to the community upon its creation and as nearby properties on So. Capitol Street continue to redeveloped.

Aesthetics and Design

The project will cover a small footprint in comparison to the many redevelopment projects that ANC 6D has had to review. However, as ANC 6D has emphasized in earlier filings, the project is on a very important corner—the intersection of So. Capitol St. and N St. SW and therefore must reflect both the dictates of the Capitol Gateway Overlay, and serve as an entrance to Old Southwest.

Commissioner Hamilton worked for several years with the developers of 1319 So. Capitol St., the property that will directly surround 1301, which produced one of the most significant outcomes we have seen in our community—a building whose color and fine details reiterate key attributes of Old Southwest, and one that will preserve and renovate for family-sized affordable units four of the oldest rowhouses in Old Southwest, and allow residents in the N St. houses to access directly the amenities in the new high-rise into which their houses will back.

Four houses on South Capitol St. of a similar era will also remain. Two are owned by 1319 and will be preserved. In addition, the footprint of a fifth house owned by the 1319 project that will be razed will be curated so that Old Southwest will be memorialized in the new development. The two other houses in the So. Capitol row will most likely remain since their placement and small footprint will not accommodate redevelopment of these individual and non-adjointing parcels. The Applicant plans to raze the two houses it owns on the ends of the So. Capitol and N St. rows that flank its property.

ANC 6D hoped a similar dialogue might produce a similar result as the Applicant for 1301 could seize the opportunity to create a visual link between the new building and the four remaining houses on either side, and a striking entrance to Old Southwest. The oral presentations to ANC 6D speak to reflecting the scale and style of the rowhouses, but our Commission sees little in the execution that effectively incorporates that intention.

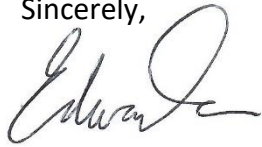
ANC 6D has suggested small tweaks, such as continuation of the lintels from historic houses to the ground and second stories of the new building, and more accurate scale and placement of the second story windows to make the link, and thereby elevate the four somewhat orphaned houses on either side, to a readable echo of the history of black working-class Old Southwest.

In addition, ANC 6D has asked for a commitment to specific building materials and brick color so that our Commission can be assured that the final execution resonates without mimicking the design and color of 1319 and the other Southwest buildings the new building is meant to reflect.

As by law, we ask that our feedback is given the great weight afforded to the ANC in which we reside.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at edward.daniels@anc.dc.gov .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Daniels". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Edward" being more prominent than the last name "Daniels".

Edward Daniels
Chairman, ANC 6D
Southwest, Navy Yard, & Buzzard Point