

GOVERNMENT
OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

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PUBLIC HEARING

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 IN THE MATTER OF: :
 :
 THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF : Case No.
 AMERICA - AMENDMENT TO AN : 12-01C
 APPROVED CAMPUS PLAN AND :
 FURTHER PROCESSING OF A :
 CAMPUS PLAN FOR THE :
 CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF :
 AMERICA @ SQUARE 3821, LOT 44:
 :
 ----- :

Monday,
July 20, 2020

Video/Teleconference

The Public Hearing of Case No. 12-01C by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened at 4:00 p.m. EDT, Anthony J. Hood, Chairman, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- ANTHONY J. HOOD, Chairperson
- ROBERT MILLER, Vice Chairperson
- MICHAEL G. TURNBULL, FAIA, Commissioner (AOC)
- PETER G. MAY, Commissioner (NPS)
- PETER SHAPIRO, Commissioner

OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

- SHARON S. SCHELLIN, Secretary
- PAUL YOUNG, Zoning Data Specialist

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

MATT JESICK, Development Review Specialist

The transcript constitutes the minutes from the Public Hearing held on July 20, 2020.

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

3:59 p.m.

1
2
3 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good afternoon, ladies and
4 gentlemen. We are convened and broadcasting this public
5 hearing by video conference.

6 My name is Anthony Hood. Joining me this
7 evening are Vice Chair Miller, Commissioner Shapiro,
8 Commissioner May, and Commissioner Turnbull. We also have
9 from the Office of Zoning Staff, Ms. Sharon Schellin, as
10 well as Mr. Paul Young, who will be handling all of our
11 virtual operations.

12 A copy of today's virtual public hearing,
13 notices are available on the Office of Zoning's website.
14 Please be advised that this proceeding is being recorded
15 by a court reporter, and is also Webcast live, including
16 WebEx and YouTube Live. The video will be available on
17 the Office of Zoning's website after the hearing.

18 Accordingly, all those listening in WebEx or by
19 phone will be muted during the hearing until the
20 appropriate time. Please state your name and home address
21 before providing all testimony on your presentation.

22 When you are finished speaking, please mute
23 your audio, so that your microphone is no longer picking
24 up sound or background noise. If you experience
25 difficulty accessing WebEx or with your telephone call

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1 in, then please call our OZ hotline number at 202-727-5471
2 to sign up or to receive WebEx log in or call in
3 instructions.

4 All persons planning to testify, either in
5 favor, opposition, or undeclared, in this virtual hearing,
6 we encourage you to sign up in advance. At the time of
7 the sign up all participants complete the oath of
8 affirmation required by Subtitle Z, Section 408.7.

9 If you wish to file written testimony, or
10 additional supporting documents during the hearing, please
11 be prepared to describe and discuss it at the time of your
12 testimony, as we have not had time to review that
13 submission.

14 The hearing will be conducted in accordance
15 with provisions of 11Z DCMR, Chapter 4 as follows:
16 Preliminary Matters, Applicant's Case, Report of Office of
17 Planning and District Department of Transportation, Report
18 of Other Government Agencies, Report of the ANC. Reports
19 of the ANC and testimony of organizations will be five
20 minutes, and individuals will be three minutes, and we'll
21 hear in the order from those in support, opposition, and
22 undeclared. And then, we'll have rebuttal and closing by
23 the applicant.

24 While the Commission reserves the right to
25 change the time limits of presentations if necessary it

1 notes to adhere to the time limits as strictly as
2 possible, and no time shall be ceded.

3 Again, the OZ hotline number is 202-727-5471
4 for any outstanding issues during this hearing.

5 Again, today's date is July 20, 2020. We have
6 Zoning Commission Case No. 12-01C, this is the Catholic
7 University Plan Amendment and further processing for a new
8 dorm.

9 At this time, the Commission will consider any
10 preliminary matters. Does the staff have any preliminary
11 matters?

12 MS. SCHELLIN: The first thing is at Exhibit 6
13 the applicant requests a waiver of the requirements for
14 notarized affidavits and posting of maintenance due to the
15 COVID, it's been difficult to get out and find a notary.
16 So, they'd ask that the Commission accept their
17 affirmation that was done, that the property was posted,
18 and that maintenance has been done with the signs.

19 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Commission, you heard
20 the request. Any objections? Okay. I see heads nodding
21 no, so no objection, Ms. Schellin.

22 Anything else?

23 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. And, there's one
24 proffered expert witness, Matthew Bell. He's previously
25 been accepted as an expert in architecture. And so, we'd

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1 ask the Commission Chair accept him in this case as an
2 expert in architecture.

3 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any objections to our
4 continuance of Mr. Bell being an expert in architecture?
5 Okay. So, I think we are good on that as well.

6 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. And then, we have
7 presenting this evening Allison Prince and/or Meghan
8 Hottel-Cox, and the applicant's witness, Debra Nauta-
9 Rodriguez from the Catholic University, wish to bring
10 those people forward.

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay, if all those could up,
12 and we will -- Ms. Hottel-Cox or Ms. Prince, whomever is
13 going to present, you may begin. The floor is yours.

14 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes. And, I'm not sure how much
15 time they need. Maybe they could tell us once they come
16 on, either Ms. Hottel-Cox or Ms. Prince when they come
17 forward.

18 MS. PRINCE: Hi, Allison Prince. Can you hear
19 me?

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes, we can hear you, Ms.
21 Prince.

22 MS. PRINCE: Terrific. We only need about ten
23 minutes.

24 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Let me ask a question
25 that I've learned from the BZA. Is it that you choose not

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1 to be seen, or you want to just use voice, it's up to you,
2 no problem. I just want to make sure.

3 MS. PRINCE: You get to see me. I'm trying,
4 it's not my video, can you still not see me?

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes, can you --

6 MS. PRINCE: It's a little dark here.

7 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

8 MS. PRINCE: Can you see me now?

9 CHAIRMAN HOOD: We can see you now. You may
10 begin.

11 MS. PRINCE: Excellent. It's excellent, what
12 an adventure.

13 Good afternoon, Chairman Hood, and Members of
14 the Commission. I'm Allison Prince, with Goulston and
15 Storrs, and I'm here today on behalf of the Catholic
16 University of America.

17 I am here with Megan Hottel-Cox with Goulston,
18 Debra Nauta-Rodriguez with Catholic University, and Matt
19 Bell of Perkins Eastman, to request special exception
20 relief for further processing under a Catholic Campus Plan
21 to approve a new residence hall in the northeastern corner
22 of the main campus.

23 The application also involves a revision to the
24 Campus Plan, the approved Campus Plan showed a residence
25 hall that's slightly smaller. Also, the footprints of --

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1 the conceptual footprints shown of the campus -- of the
2 residence hall in the Campus Plan placed the chapel at the
3 southern end of the building, and Perkins Eastman has
4 shifted the chapel to the midpoint of the building.

5 The building is well within old zoning limits.
6 In fact, the overall campus FAR after the construction of
7 this building is only a .27. The plan allows a total FAR
8 of .39. The residence hall will replace parking,
9 furthering the effort to bring the campus, the University
10 has made great strides in reducing the amount of parking
11 on the campus since the time of approval of the Campus
12 Plan. The current parking count is only 1,696 spaces
13 after assuming the construction of this building. It was
14 over 1,900 spaces just in 2012.

15 This is the second new building that's been
16 presented to the Commission. Since the approval of the
17 2012 plan, you recently considered and approved the new
18 dining hall which is now under construction.

19 The ANC supports the application and voted to
20 do so last month. They said that their letter was going
21 to be submitted into the record last week, it does not
22 seem to have made it.

23 The University enjoys a high level of
24 collaboration with the community, due to a regular meeting
25 process that was established in the Campus Plan order.

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1 If the Commission has no questions, I'd like to
2 proceed with the testimony of Debra Nauta-Rodriguez.

3 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: So, that was no
4 questions, I presume.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: We'll save all of our questions
6 to the end.

7 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Good afternoon.
8 My name, as Allison introduced me, is Debra Nauta-
9 Rodriguez. I'm the Associate Vice President for Planning,
10 for Facilities Planning and Management, at the University,
11 as well as the University architect, making me responsible
12 for all planning, design, construction, environmental
13 health and safety, risk management, sustainability,
14 maintenance, operations, and custodial.

15 I'm coming up on my two-year anniversary next
16 week. I came to the Catholic University of America after
17 28 years at the Smithsonian. We're in the public process
18 in the Federal arena is a little bit different, and
19 doesn't normally touch on zoning, but the underlining
20 principles of planning, building mass, and design and
21 community engagement, are all just as relevant.

22 A few notes about our recent situation in the
23 pandemic. The University submitted its reopening plan for
24 the District on June 30th. We've had discussions with
25 both the Department of Health and the Mayor, and submitted

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1 a few minor amendments. And, we expect that we will
2 receive the approval of the Department of Health shortly.

3 I wanted to give you just a little bit of
4 background on the broader concepts of the 2012 Master
5 Plan, which is about taking care of what we have, and
6 preparing for our future.

7 Aligning with the University's strategic plan
8 goals, the Master Plan established planning principles
9 that, one, reflects the University's Catholic mission and
10 values, two, strengthen academic excellence, three, foster
11 a collegiate atmosphere and vibrant experience, and, four,
12 create a more cohesive campus. There's great value placed
13 on both facility, stewardship, as well as environmental
14 sustainability, and we are balancing growth with a
15 continued emphasis on reducing our backlog of deferred
16 repair and maintenance.

17 As Pope Francis is unthinkable without the sea,
18 called upon humanity, to better care for our common home,
19 so, too, is the University committed to doing its part in
20 caring for the earth and our environment.

21 President Garvey signed the updated college and
22 university Sustainability Pledge last spring. We have an
23 Assistant Director of Campus Facilities and sustainability
24 who just completed a final draft of the Campus
25 Sustainability Plan. We are in the process of preparing

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1 it for website publication. She's our point of contact
2 with the Consortium of D.C. Universities, and was actively
3 involved with the discussions earlier this year with DoEE
4 regarding the Building Energy Performance Program for
5 Campuses, in response to the District's Clean Energy Act.

6 The University has a robust Green Cleaning and
7 Recycling Program, and we offset 100 percent of our
8 energies through the purchase of renewable energy credits.
9 This project, the Residence hall, targets LEED Silver
10 Certification, and will be connected to the Campus Central
11 Energy Plant for heating and cooling.

12 And, as we implement our Master Plan, we are
13 also consolidating parking areas and removing surface
14 lots, and continuing to green the campus.

15 In May, 2019, we filed our most recent
16 Transportation Demand Management Monitoring Report with
17 DDOT, in compliance with our zoning orders and
18 commitments. They recently agreed to allow us to postpone
19 the 2020 TDM until the fall semester, because of the
20 shutdown kind of skewing the count. And so, we are on
21 track to do that.

22 Overall, we are below all the maximum
23 enrollments, faculty and administration parking caps that
24 were allowed, and we've addressed the other conditions of
25 the zoning orders.

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1 So, the priority and need for this Residence
2 hall falls into the expansion and replacement of existing
3 resident facilities that was anticipated in the 2012
4 Campus Master Plan. Construction of this new Residence
5 hall will allow the University to implement a third year
6 requirement for on-campus housing. And, this, roughly,
7 350-bed facility will accommodate traditional style double
8 rooms for first-year students.

9 It's located, as Allison mentioned, just east
10 of our newest building on campus, which is Opus Hall,
11 already over a decade old. That's our newest building on
12 campus, but this location allows us to strengthen the
13 edge along John McCormack Road, at the farthest northeast
14 corner of main campus. It allows us to remove a surface
15 parking lot there, and create a student quadrangle that
16 provides areas for both the active and the contemplative.

17 The creation of this quadrangle terminates a
18 long diagonal axis through a variety of open spaces
19 proposed in the Master Plan, and preserves the view shed
20 for the basilica.

21 The small chapel that's part of the new
22 residence hall and quadrangle ensemble is given an
23 appropriate position, and the architectural character that
24 befits the both the architecture of the residence hall and
25 articulates the presence of the chapel within the complex.

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1 In terms of community outreach, we notified our
2 neighboring ANCs, and we met twice with ANC 5C. On the
3 dining hall they voiced their support, and we believe
4 their written letter is imminent.

5 That's all I have by way of introduction, and
6 Matt Bell, from Perkins Eastman, will provide the
7 narrative that goes along with the presentation that we
8 submitted.

9 MR. BELL: Very good, good afternoon. Could we
10 pop up the presentation we submitted? Oh, something is
11 happening, that's all good. Very good. I don't know if
12 you can go to full-screen mode.

13 Yes. So, this is an image of some of the older
14 buildings on Catholic U's campus, and some of what we've
15 been trying to do. It's really to add to that outstanding
16 architectural legacy that Catholic has with this new
17 residence hall.

18 If you go to the next slide, please.

19 As Debra pointed out, the residence hall is
20 part of -- the life of the residence hall began with the
21 Campus Plan, and you can see here on these two diagrams
22 the relationship of this series of open spaces on the
23 center slide that connect back to this corner.

24 And, those if you who know this part of the
25 world, know that Taylor Street, as McCormick, is really

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1 the far edges of this campus. And, what this building
2 does is, it marks the edge of the campus. It establishes
3 the Clifford interior, so the quadrangle space is defined.
4 Hopefully, provide for a safe environment in doing so,
5 continues to mark that edge along McCormick, and as Debra
6 mentioned, provides an access on the contemplative side,
7 divided by some public space in the building and the
8 chapel.

9 As you exit the space, of course, you will see
10 long-distance views of the shrine, and as the Campus Plan
11 is built up it will become more and more prominent. On
12 our end, terminating in the other direction is really
13 quadrangle space. It's not really any one building, it's
14 the space of the quadrangle that becomes the central
15 arrival at this edge of the Campus, and the definition of
16 this boundary.

17 Go to the next slide, please.

18 Okay. So, this is rotated a little bit, but
19 you can see McCormick on the bottom here, this is the
20 residence hall, the two wings here. You can see the sort
21 of contemplative space on the right-hand side labeled
22 Campus open space that relates to this gathering space
23 outside. There is a level change here between the two
24 spaces and an active space where, you know, college kids
25 will do things that college kids do, like throw frisbees

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1 and hang around and study, and do all sorts of informal
2 activities. So, the space is large enough to do that. It
3 defines the edge along McCormick, and it also provides a
4 definition along Taylor.

5 The principal entry will be from the quadrangle
6 cut. Security is very, very important, so people coming
7 and going there's one principal entry into this building
8 from the quadrangle that will enter into the chapel space
9 as well as, eventually, lead to the two different wings of
10 the residence hall. So, this is a very simple diagram of
11 defining open space, and we'll show you some of the views
12 as we go along.

13 Next.

14 This is a view as if coming from the main
15 campus, down one of the diagonal paths. You'll see the
16 articulation, roof line, and some of the architectural
17 elements that we have used to embellish those routes. As
18 you'll see, the informal open space, students doing things
19 in that space that are of a more informal nature. The
20 chapel defining the center, as Debra mentioned, opens to
21 all the most recent buildings on the left side, and you
22 can see a little of the challenges of the grade, which is
23 navigated by the chapel, which has a lower side and an
24 uphill side, and sits, approximately, between the two
25 wings of the different student populations will be housed.

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1 This is a view coming from there.

2 Next.

3 If you go all the way down the quadrangle, and
4 turn around and face back, the back is to the street, this
5 is the view that you would have of the chapel sitting in
6 the center. You can see the two piers that mark the main
7 entry, the informal space on the left side of that, and
8 then the small contemplative will be exterior to the
9 chapel on the side, so it provides a little bit more
10 privacy, and the University student population can use
11 that for a variety of activities, not the least of which
12 might be outdoor religious services. But, this is the
13 uphill side of the quadrangle. And, you can see the
14 character of the architecture as it articulates around the
15 building.

16 Next.

17 And then a little bit closer what some of those
18 activities might be into this outdoor space. This is the
19 language of the chapel, and it's distinctly different in
20 scale from the language of the residence hall.

21 Next.

22 And this area gives you a sense of the complete
23 enclosure of the quadrangle space. It's really important,
24 and I want to underscore this, the University has a
25 building that defines the precincts of the University in

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1 this part of the world. McCormick is not a heavily
2 traveled street. Eyes on the street down here will surely
3 improve security, but in a way it's also equally important
4 to the University that this building acts like an edge,
5 and very clearly the domain of the University, and at the
6 same time defines this sort of open space, which is really
7 one of the key benefits of the Campus Plan, as it has been
8 shown by this design, with the chapel in the middle there,
9 and the grade change.

10 Next slide.

11 This gives you a sense of what the next slides
12 show, the two residential wings, the residence hall rooms
13 on either side. One of the principle reasons why we
14 located the chapel and some of the public features of this
15 building is that it is equally accessible to the two
16 different populations of the building, the male and the
17 female population. So, now you come to the center of the
18 building, and you have equal access to the community
19 spaces as well as to the chapel space. And, the benefit
20 of that as well is that it defines the total definitely of
21 the kinds of outdoor spaces that you have at the
22 quadrangle space. So, it sits in the center of the site
23 for that reason.

24 Next.

25 So, I just wanted to give you a sense about

1 what it's like approaching from the other side. There was
2 some -- a lot of discussion about the location of the
3 chapel. We believe its distinctive features of the
4 skyline and some of the elements of the building will do a
5 very fine job of helping to key the sense that there's an
6 open space beyond, and it's very important for the
7 building.

8 We did have a video, but it doesn't play in
9 PDF, so we made screen shots here so we can just sort of
10 click through these. So, as if you are walking down the
11 path it's framed by two existing buildings. You can
12 closer, the building starts to unfold and you can see more
13 of the gable end, and more of that space opening up.

14 Next.

15 You get a little bit closer, you start to see
16 the break in the building, and the other half of the
17 residence hall. And then, as you move closer, you begin to
18 see the chapel unfolding, and the different kinds of
19 public spaces that are outside.

20 Next.

21 All right, and then you can see, this is a
22 similar view that we had before. We've taken the trees
23 out so you can understand the masting, but really the big
24 idea here is that it's defined space, and you are able to
25 follow the roof line all the way around and get the sense

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1 of the expansive this new quadrangle space. It will be a
2 big benefit to the students and to the University.

3 One more slide, please.

4 I also wanted to show, we do have an expansive
5 plan of the scheme here, and we played very careful
6 attention to elements of the roof line to give the eye
7 some interest, to give a sense of the viable depth down
8 there, because a lot of the trees will be such that you
9 wouldn't see it, but now we see the elements and the roof
10 along the residence hall, and you'll be able to see them.
11 And, it starts to indicate the space, and the important
12 building in the distance.

13 And, that's what we have.

14 MS. PRINCE: I think my mic is on again, it's
15 Allison Prince. That completes our presentation. If you
16 have any questions, please go ahead and ask.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay, thank you all for your
18 presentation. Let me have one quick one to start off with
19 Ms. Nauta-Rodriguez.

20 You mentioned, I think you said 5C -- did I
21 hear you right, you said 5C or 5A, ANC, you said ANC 5C I
22 think.

23 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: I think I meant to say
24 5A. I may have said 5C. I'm sorry.

25 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. All right, it's all

1 right. I just wanted to make sure the record was clear.

2 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: I'm sorry, thank you for
3 correcting me.

4 CHAIRMAN HOOD: No problem, because I'm in 5C,
5 and I said okay. So, thank you.

6 Let's open it up for questions or comments. I
7 will -- let's go in our regular order.

8 Commissioner May?

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. Just a quick comment
10 or question. There were embedded in the end of the Office
11 of Planning's report were some comments that had come from
12 DoEE, some of which are, you know, kind of boilerplate
13 comments that we see frequently come up.

14 But, there were specific suggestions about
15 including a green roof on the low section of the roof. Do
16 you have a response to that?

17 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: Currently, the project
18 hasn't looked at that. We have -- we have a strong
19 commitment to solar and green roofs throughout the campus.
20 Some of residence halls already are part of the strategy
21 of green roofs and solar.

22 So, we are trying to work with a campus-wide
23 strategy, rather than incorporate things building by
24 building, and we are still developing that campus-wide
25 strategy. So, we have not looked at the green roof

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1 suggestion for the residence hall here.

2 COMMISSIONER MAY: Okay. Well, I mean, that
3 was one of the things that really struck me just looking
4 at the design, and then I read the Office of Planning
5 report, and it said that you've got this big chunk of flat
6 roof that's fairly low, and between buildings.

7 And so, it's likely to become an unattractive
8 part of the building, and something that many of the
9 students are going to see on a regular basis, because
10 their windows look out over it.

11 And, putting a green roof there would,
12 certainly, be -- make the building more attractive, in
13 addition to doing all the other good things that green
14 roofs do.

15 So, this seems to be a really sensible
16 suggestion, not a really hard decision to make. I
17 understand that you are trying to do a city-wide -- I mean
18 a campus-wide strategy, and I understand that, you know,
19 there are issues that go with this, you know, how you'll
20 maintain it and things like that.

21 But, I think it's important to be thinking
22 about something like this as you are designing the
23 building and preparing for construction, rather than, you
24 know, waiting another six months or a year until you
25 figure out what your strategy is.

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1 So, I would just encourage you to do something
2 about this particular section of roof more immediately, so
3 that the design team can incorporate it to the design.

4 And then, there was another comment about
5 encouraging solar, and looking at a roof there aren't a
6 lot of easy opportunities, unless you want to put the
7 solar panels atop on the beautiful new slate roofs or
8 whatever, you know, great looking roofs that you are going
9 to build.

10 So, I mean, have you thought about how you can
11 put solar on to this building?

12 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: It looks like Matt wants
13 to say something. Go ahead.

14 MR. BELL: Well, no. I was just going to say,
15 we haven't looked at it for these roof pitches for a lot
16 of the reasons you cited there. A flat roof is a better
17 candidate, but they are very prominent right now, those
18 pitches.

19 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, but it's such a key
20 part of the design. And, you also don't really have a
21 great exposure, except in the one wing, the northern-most
22 wing. You can put solar on the south side of that
23 northern-most wing, but it seems -- it wouldn't be a great
24 location. Plus, it would really be a loss for the look
25 from the room.

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1 It's a bit unfortunate. I do see, you know,
2 having a look at the campus from all sorts of angles,
3 including, you know, looking at it in Google today, I see
4 you are putting a lot of solar on a number of other flat
5 roofs around the campus, but not everywhere that you
6 could. So, I expect that you'll be doing more of that
7 over time.

8 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: Well, we can certainly
9 ask our design team to look at the green roof suggestion.
10 That might be a little bit easier to incorporate the solar
11 for the reasons already mentioned.

12 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. Okay.

13 Okay. I don't have any other questions or
14 comments, Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right, thank you,
16 Commissioner May.

17 Commissioner Shapiro?

18 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I don't have any further
19 questions or comments at this point, Mr. Chair.

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Commissioner Turnbull?

21 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 I would agree with Commissioner May's comments.
23 I mean, part of the problem with administering gothic
24 revival, I see Mr. Bell is smiling, it's difficult to work
25 with in trying to do some of the environmental facets that

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1 we'd like to see in a campus plan, like solar.

2 And, I guess what my concern is, that when we
3 look at point buildings, and if you are coming to --
4 before the Commission, the Zoning Commission, looking at
5 point buildings to get approval, we would hope that
6 somewhere along the run we are fitting into understanding
7 the Master Plan.

8 Now, I understand that your Master Plan is
9 changing, but it's still -- I think Commissioner May was
10 getting at, if we look at point buildings without knowing
11 exactly what you are doing, and you suddenly wait until
12 the very end and say, well, this is how we are going to do
13 it. Or, we'd like to get, we are going to have to revise
14 the Master Plan, because we can't do all of the things
15 that we think you'd like us to do.

16 So, I think I'd like you to think about, when
17 you proceed with these buildings, and coming before us
18 with these buildings, that you've already, you've got the
19 Master Plan in hand, you've looked at it, and you are
20 going to address that in your presentation, as to somebody
21 like the DOE comments. I think that's very helpful, and I
22 think Commissioner May hit a very good point.

23 The number of beds, 350 beds, how does that now
24 fit in with your Master Plan's FTE's, or your upgrade,
25 where are you on the limits, and the max, or are you right

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1 at your goal?

2 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: We are, significantly,
3 below it. Allison, did you have the count in the
4 application?

5 MS. PRINCE: I'm back. We are way, way below
6 our maximum enrollment. This is really an effort to
7 accommodate as much housing on campus as possible, but we
8 are not -- we don't have a percentage housing requirement
9 for our students, not a certain percentage of students to
10 be housed on campus, but this will go a long way toward
11 accommodating as many students as possible. But again, we
12 are way -- we are not like some of the other universities
13 that you see, where we are butting up against our
14 enrollment cap in any way.

15 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Well, I didn't think
16 so, but I just wondered.

17 I guess, Ms. Prince, you've had some comments,
18 you've had some ongoing discussions with OAG, with Mr.
19 Alessandro. And, the question came up of the height.

20 MS. PRINCE: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Your interpretation, he
22 doesn't feel you've got the same interpretation as he
23 does, and OP hasn't really weighed in one way or another.

24 Do you want to touch on your viewpoint on where
25 you sit with the height requirement?

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1 MS. PRINCE: Sure, and I talked to Max as
2 recently as 3:00 today, so I'm not sure -- it may not be
3 totally correct, but the Zoning Regulations were changed
4 in 2016, to increase the height limits in the R, RF, and
5 RA zones for campuses from 40 to 50 feet. So, that would
6 be the height limit if there's no setback.

7 The question is, in increasing that height
8 limit, was there an intention by this Commission to
9 eliminate the potential to take advantage of the section
10 of the Regulations that allows a 90-foot height with
11 setbacks. That section of the Regulations has been in
12 effect since 1958. It was carried over to 2016. And, to
13 read the Regulations as saying that we can no longer take
14 advantage of that 90 foot height with setback would render
15 non-conforming buildings all over college campuses in D.C.

16 So, I, certainly, did not have the impression
17 that it was the Commission's intent, in giving us a little
18 more height for residentially zoned campuses, but it was
19 the intention to eliminate the ability to exceed that
20 height.

21 In fact, this Commission in two recent cases
22 has approved buildings that exceeded 50 foot height in a
23 residential zone. One is the hospital for Georgetown
24 University, the hospital admission. Another is the
25 Science Building at AU.

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1 So, unless there was an intention by this
2 Commission to fundamentally change the Regulations, I
3 would urge you to keep interpreting them the way they've
4 been interpreted since I started practicing in 1986
5 anyway.

6 COMMISSIONER TURNBULL: Okay, well, thank you
7 for that.

8 Mr. Chair, that's all I have.

9 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay, thank you.

10 Vice Chair Miller?

11 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 I don't really have any additional questions,
13 but appreciate the commentary between my colleagues and
14 the Applicant's representatives. I support this Campus
15 Plan amendment and further processing. I think it's an
16 attractive design. It fits in with the character of both
17 the existing surrounding buildings on campus, and no
18 adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

19 And, I agree with Ms. Prince's interpretation
20 of the Regulations in terms of the height, and maybe
21 number of stories as well. And, maybe we need to just
22 codify that, as I think our Counsel has advised, in a
23 future text amendment so that there's no question that
24 that additional height would be permitted, and there's no
25 adverse impact.

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1 Well, I guess I have one question. So you've
2 eliminated surface parking, existing surface parking,
3 that's not very attractive and not very environmentally
4 friendly usually. How many spaces, though, are being
5 eliminated by the use of that vacant surface parking?

6 MS. PRINCE: It's my understanding there are 47
7 spaces, and they will all be removed. Two of the spaces
8 on that property will be shifted slightly to a nearby
9 location to start adding spaces. So, we are, basically,
10 eliminating all the spaces on the site.

11 VICE CHAIR MILLER: And, you have existing
12 capacity I assume for parking under the TDM plans just to
13 reduce the need for 45 or 40 some parking spaces?

14 MS. PRINCE: Yes. The University's approach,
15 for those of you who were around in 2012, there was a
16 tremendous focus on parking in the neighborhood around the
17 campus. The University has taken that very, very
18 seriously. They've really made fairly dramatic progress
19 without, you know, adverse impact on the community. We
20 heard, absolutely, nothing about surface parking, and
21 really with a support of the campus in a very profound
22 way.

23 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay, thank you for that
24 response, and thank you for your presentation.

25 And, that's it, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you, Vice Chair
2 Miller.

3 I just have a few questions. Mr. Bell, you
4 mentioned in your presentation that most of the traffic --
5 well, no, you didn't say traffic, I guess you were saying
6 student pedestrian traffic. But, John McCormick Drive is
7 on the other side, the north side of where this project
8 is, I believe, is headed towards Fort Totten Trash
9 Transfer Station.

10 And, this may, I'm not sure who it goes to, Ms.
11 Prince, so maybe it's not appropriate for Mr. Bell. But,
12 through all of this analysis that has been on this site,
13 was that taken into consideration as well? I probably can
14 answer the question myself.

15 MR. BELL: I'm not quite sure. You know, there
16 is a street frontage there, but the principal issue for us
17 is to make a building that addresses the street frontage
18 in a nice way, because it will be very visible both from
19 John McCormick, and also from the Metro line that runs
20 along there.

21 So, the building has a very important face that
22 way, but the principal entry is on the quadrangle side.

23 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. So, most of the
24 interaction dealing with that building will be on the
25 other side, it won't be on the John McCormack side, on the

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1 quadrangle side.

2 MR. BELL: Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

4 MR. BELL: Thankfully so it's not a neighbor
5 issue.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right, let me ask you this.
7 The DuFour Center, if I'm going down to this Center,
8 wouldn't I walk across, wouldn't I go down John McCormick?

9 MR. BELL: Sure. You could go out to the
10 sidewalk and walk down John McCormick. Sure.

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Right. So, that will be --

12 MR. BELL: Absolutely.

13 CHAIRMAN HOOD: And, you know, that circular
14 entrance added, I was just curious, not making a big deal,
15 I think it's all doable, and I think it will work. But, I
16 just want to make sure those things are taken into
17 consideration, because I've seen them coming and going to
18 the Fort Totten Transfer Station, sometimes I think they
19 are trying to hurry up getting there before they close.
20 So, we just want to make sure the students are safe.

21 MR. BELL: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: That's why I just want to make
23 sure all that's put into it, and I'm sure Catholic
24 University is going to do that. If not, in our
25 proceedings I'm sure at some point they will do that.

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1 Ms. Prince, can I just ask --

2 MR. BELL: Well, one quick point. I was just
3 going to say that with people there it will make it more
4 active and, hopefully, safer.

5 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I know we have a lot of
6 bicycle traffic. I mean, I'm not saying it's unsafe now,
7 but I just want to make sure that we thought about this as
8 we go along.

9 And, Ms. Nauta-Rodriguez, who is the DuFour
10 Center named after?

11 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: Raven A. DuFour. I
12 couldn't tell you who he was, I'm sorry. I don't have a
13 lot of historical memory yet of the nature of the places
14 on campus.

15 CHAIRMAN HOOD: I was just trying to see if it
16 was the same family that's in Delaware. But anyway, maybe
17 somebody can just let me know that. I've been trying to
18 figure that out for a while. I was told the family was
19 out of Delaware. I don't know.

20 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: I can find out for you.
21 I will do that.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: That would be nice. That would
23 be nice.

24 So, that's really all the questions I have. I
25 will say that we did not get a 5A report, but we'll take

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1 the testimony provided. I'm sure somebody may have had a
2 problem. I do know the chairman, I know most of the
3 Commissioners. We would have gotten something.

4 And, I didn't see, unless I overlooked it, Ms.
5 Prince, I didn't see a DDOT report. I guess they did
6 that, maybe they did that when we did the full Campus
7 Plan, I'm not sure.

8 MS. PRINCE: Right. There was no DDOT report,
9 because the traffic impacts are as noted, there's no new
10 parking on the side. We are taking it away.

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

12 MS. PRINCE: So, DDOT is not getting involved.

13 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right. So, I think
14 we are all ready. Let me see if there's any other follow
15 up. Any second round, Commissioners? Okay, not seeing
16 any.

17 Again, I don't believe we have any, Chairman
18 Edwards from ANC 5A on the line or anyone from the ANC.
19 So, let's go to the Office of Planning report. I believe
20 it's Mr. Jesick.

21 MR. JESICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is
22 Matt Jesick. My camera should be coming up any moment
23 now.

24 Can you hear me Okay at least?

25 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes, we can hear you.

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1 MR. JESICK: Well again, thank you, Mr.
2 Chairman and Members of the Commission. My name is Matt
3 Jesick, and I'll be presenting the Office of Planning's
4 testimony for Case 12-01C.

5 OP's analysis showed that the application meets
6 the criteria for approval of Subtitle X, Section 101. So,
7 we are recommending approval of the Campus Plan
8 Amendments, as well as the further processing.

9 OP is also supportive of the design direction
10 for the building.

11 The rest of my testimony, I'll rest on the
12 record. But, I'll be happy to take any questions.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you, Mr. Jesick.

15 Commissioners, any questions? Commissioner
16 May?

17 Commissioner Shapiro?

18 Commission Turnbull?

19 And, Vice Chair Miller?

20 And, I don't have any questions either. Thank
21 you very much for your report, Mr. Jesick.

22 Other Government agencies, I think Commissioner
23 May or one of my colleagues hit on the DoEE, so I think
24 that's been thoroughly discussed.

25 Are there any other Government reports that I

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1 may have missed, Commissioners? Okay.

2 Let's go to -- well, we don't have a report of
3 the ANC, but we'll take the word of Ms. Rodriguez and Ms.
4 Prince about what was discussed I think at the meeting.
5 And, like I said earlier, I believe if there was a problem
6 we would have heard from the Commission, they are very
7 active and very good. So, we'll take their testimony on
8 that behalf.

9 Do we know what the vote was? Just curious.
10 Can't give it great weight until I have it.

11 MS. PRINCE: There was one abstention.

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right.

13 Do we have anybody on the line, or anybody on
14 WebEx who would like to testify in support? I will take
15 everybody, support, opposition or undeclared, and that's
16 any organizations or persons, either in support,
17 opposition, or undeclared.

18 Ms. Schellin?

19 MS. SCHELLIN: We had no one to sign up to
20 testify in any category.

21 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. So, with that, I'll just
22 use this time to say we are glad to have Ms. Schellin back
23 with us. Hope she's doing well, or feeling better. I'll
24 just leave it at that.

25 All right. Let's go to -- Ms. Prince, let's go

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1 to rebuttal and closing. Do you have any rebuttal? I
2 don't think you have any rebuttal. Do you have any
3 closing?

4 MS. PRINCE: I don't have any rebutting, and
5 just in closing I think it's a straightforward
6 application, and I think a lot of the direction that we
7 got from the Commission back in 2012 has really been
8 extremely helpful as we move forward. I think the
9 University has made great progress.

10 I do have to say thank you so much for going
11 through all the time and energy. This is really directed
12 at the staff as much as to you, in allowing for virtual
13 hearings. There are many jurisdictions that do not have
14 virtual hearings yet. It's too daunting. And, no one
15 likes to learn anything new, and, especially, me, and
16 you've done a phenomenal job, phenomenal job, making it
17 easy for the public to present, making it easy for
18 applicants, making it easy to download the plans. I mean,
19 I'm just really in awe of the job that the jurisdiction
20 has done in allowing hearings to go forward, and I had to
21 let you know that.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you, Ms. Prince, and I'm
23 sure that our staff and all those who helped, they worked
24 very hard and diligently, especially, in getting us
25 Commissioners ready. We really appreciate what they've

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1 done to make this really work, so we are trying to knock
2 off our backlog, and we have one now because I think we
3 are meeting three days a week to try to continue them for
4 the City. But, I think our staff did an excellent job. I
5 think both Sharon and Counsel, I think they did an
6 excellent job of putting these together. I think this
7 shows.

8 And then, my colleagues also I think, for both
9 the BZA and myself, and Commission, we had to learn
10 something new, too. The main thing we had to learn was
11 when to unmute our mics and when to mute them. So, we are
12 still learning that.

13 So, we appreciate your nice comments. Thank
14 you.

15 Was that your closing?

16 MS. PRINCE: That's my closing.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: What a way to close, what a way
18 to close.

19 Ms. Schellin, is this a one vote? Oh, Okay.

20 MS. SCHELLIN: It is. It is.

21 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right.

22 MS. SCHELLIN: And, our next meeting is on
23 Monday.

24 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Well, I don't know. Ms.
25 Schellin, can you give us a schedule?

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1 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Mr. Chairman?

2 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Hold on a second.

3 Vice Chair Miller, I'm sorry.

4 VICE CHAIR MILLER: I just had one unrelated
5 question, but since this is the first university college
6 that's appeared before us since this pandemic has
7 occurred, and I appreciate Ms. Prince's comments about our
8 virtual hearings. I agree. Paul Young and the entire
9 staff has done a phenomenal job.

10 I think it's been so successful that if we ever
11 get to a post pandemic period we may continue doing it
12 this way, because it's very focused and very convenient
13 for all involved.

14 But, my unrelated question, if we are expecting
15 something from the Office of Planning for colleges and
16 universities to get flexibility because of existing campus
17 plan requirements for uses, or on-site housing, is
18 Catholic among those that needs -- just a general
19 question, I don't want to get into it at all -- but is
20 Catholic among those that need some flexibility from
21 existing Campus Plan requirements, use requirements?

22 I think you said you don't have any on-site
23 housing requirements, I thought you mentioned that in your
24 testimony today.

25 But, do you need some flexibility? Are you

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1 among those who need flexibility during this period where
2 you only have one student per room or that kind of thing?

3 MS. PRINCE: Debra, would you like to address
4 that or should I?

5 MS. NAUTA-RODRIGUEZ: I believe we don't need
6 that flexibility, but you can go ahead, Allison, and
7 answer.

8 MS. PRINCE: Great. Because we don't have a
9 percentage on campus housing requirement, we are fine on
10 the residence hall issues. And, we did go the board, and
11 we think, surprisingly, we fully comply with all our
12 existing conditions, despite or the incredible work that
13 COVID has created on all the universities.

14 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Right. Okay, thank you. I
15 appreciate you, I was just curious and good luck with your
16 reopening plan, that sounds challenging.

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

18 Ms. Schellin, do you want to give us some
19 dates?

20 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes. So, our next meeting after
21 Monday is going to be September 14th. So, if we could --
22 if the Commission wants to put this off until then,
23 because we need to get a draft order, then we can -- I
24 don't think we are expecting anything else, right?

25 CHAIRMAN HOOD: No, I don't think.

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1 MS. SCHELLIN: No one asked for anything.

2 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me go to Commissioner May.
3 Commissioner May?

4 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes. I was just going to
5 say, ordinarily, if not for the fact that we'll doing
6 virtual hearings, we would be likely taking a vote on this
7 right now, right?

8 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER MAY: So, why can't we just vote
10 on it on Monday? I know you want to have a draft order,
11 but why?

12 MS. SCHELLIN: It's up to you guys. It's not
13 my decision, it's your decision. If you want to put it on
14 for Monday, I'll put it on for Monday.

15 COMMISSIONER MAY: Well, I mean, other than the
16 fact that I'm going to be on vacation, yes, sure.

17 (Simultaneous speaking.)

18 COMMISSIONER MAY: What's that?

19 MS. SCHELLIN: So, he'll log in in his swimsuit
20 and his umbrella drink under the umbrella with it.

21 COMMISSIONER MAY: That's right.

22 CHAIRMAN HOOD: So --

23 VICE CHAIR MILLER: As long as I can be six
24 feet apart, six feet apart.

25 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Ms. Prince, could you have an

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1 order done by Monday? Just asking.

2 COMMISSIONER MAY: You are muted.

3 MS. PRINCE: Okay, sure, that's no problem.

4 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. So, Ms. Schellin, let's
5 put this on for Monday, and we would like for Commissioner
6 May to call in from wherever he's going.

7 COMMISSIONER MAY: Yes, I'm planning on calling
8 it in, yes.

9 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER MAY: It may not --

11 CHAIRMAN HOOD: What did you say, Commissioner
12 -- Ms. Schellin, what did you say?

13 MS. SCHELLIN: We'll put it on for Monday then,
14 and I mean, like Commissioner May said, if you guys were
15 to do a bench decision the order wouldn't be such a big
16 deal anyway. So --

17 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, okay. So --

18 MS. SCHELLIN: -- if it's Monday or if it's in
19 two weeks, yes.

20 CHAIRMAN HOOD: So, let me -- we are going to
21 spend more time on this. Commissioner May, let's go ahead
22 and vote. We can do -- I don't want to say we can do what
23 we want to do.

24 COMMISSIONER MAY: Well, right. I mean, the
25 only reason we can't vote today is to make sure that if

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1 anybody had a problem calling in today that they are taken
2 care of.

3 So, by Monday that would be clear, and, you
4 know, I am planning on calling in, so I will -- I'll be
5 able to vote on Monday.

6 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. All right.

7 So, with all that, I think that will work.
8 Does anybody else have anything else? Are we all on the
9 same page?

10 Ms. Schellin, anything final?

11 MS. SCHELLIN: So, if we could just have an
12 order two weeks from today?

13 MS. PRINCE: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. So, does anybody
15 have anything else? All right. So, with that, I want to
16 thank everyone for their participation tonight at this
17 hearing.

18 But, let me just announce, the Zoning
19 Commission will meet again tomorrow night on Zoning
20 Commission Case No. 20-10, Office of Planning Text
21 Amendment to Subtitle U, use permission to reduce
22 restrictions on fast food establishments and prepared food
23 shops.

24 So, I would ask that you call the Office of
25 Zoning office if you'd like to sign up, and that way

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1 you'll be prepared to be able to -- and also, be prepared
2 to be able to participate tomorrow night.

3 So, anybody have anything else?

4 So, with that I want to thank everyone for
5 their participation. This hearing is adjourned.

6 Good night.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter was
8 concluded at 4:49 p.m.)

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Date: 07-20-20

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