

GOVERNMENT OF  
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

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PUBLIC HEARING

+ + + + +

-----:  
 IN THE MATTER OF: :  
 :  
 US Union Square, : Case No.  
 DC 899, LLC; : 21-09  
 US Union Square :  
 DC 901, LLC; :  
 and US Union Square :  
 DC 999, LLC. :  
 Design Review of :  
 Square 675, Lot 298, 899, :  
 and 999 North Capitol :  
 Street, N.E. :  
 -----:

MONDAY

SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

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The Public Hearing of Case No. 21-09 by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened via videoconference at 4:00 p.m. EDT, Anthony J. Hood, Chairperson, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

ANTHONY J. HOOD, Chairman  
ROBERT MILLER, Vice Chairperson  
PETER SHAPIRO, Commissioner

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OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

SHARON SCHELLIN, Secretary  
PAUL YOUNG, Zoning Data Specialist

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

STEPHEN COCHRAN

OFFICE OF DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

KELSEY BRIDGES

D.C. OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL PRESENT:

ALEXANDRA CAIN, ESQ.

The transcript constitutes the minutes from the Public Hearing held on September 13, 2021.

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OPENING STATEMENT:  
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PRESENTATION:  
 Case Number: 21-09 - US Union Square DC 899, LLC;  
 US Union Square DC 901, LLC; and US Union Square, DC and  
 999, LLC. Design review at Square 675, Lot 298, 899 and  
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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(4:00 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Good afternoon, ladies and  
4 gentlemen. Today's date is September the 13th, 2021. We are  
5 convening and broadcasting the public hearing by  
6 videoconferencing. My name is Anthony Hood and joining me are  
7 Vice Chair Miller and Commissioner Shapiro. We're also joined  
8 by Office of Zoning Staff Ms. Sharon Schellin, our Secretary, and  
9 Mr. Paul Young, who will be handling all of our virtual  
10 operations. Others will introduce themselves at the appropriate  
11 time.

12 Tonight's subject case is Zoning Commission Case No.  
13 21-09. This is US Union Square DC 899, LLC; US Union Square DC  
14 901, LLC; and US Union Square DC 999, LLC. This is a design  
15 review at Square 675, Lot 298, 899 and 999 North Capitol Street,  
16 N.E.

17 The virtual public hearing notice is available on the  
18 Office of Zoning's website. The proceeding is being recorded by  
19 a court reporter, and the platforms used are Webcast Live, Webex  
20 and YouTube Live. The video will be available on the Office of  
21 Zoning's website after the hearing.

22 All persons planning to testify should have signed up  
23 in advance. They will be called by name at the appropriate time.  
24 At the time of sign up, all participants will complete the oath  
25 or affirmation required by Subtitle Z 408.7. accordingly. All

1 of those listening on Webex or by phone will be muted during the  
2 hearing, and only those who have signed up to participate or  
3 testify will be unmuted at the appropriate time. When called,  
4 please state your name and home address before providing your  
5 testimony. When you are finished speaking, please mute your  
6 audio.

7 If you experience difficulty accessing Webex with your  
8 telephone call-in or have not signed up, then please call our OZ  
9 hotline number at 202-727-5471. If you wish to file written  
10 testimony or additional supporting documents during the hearing,  
11 then please be prepared to describe and discuss it at the time  
12 of your testimony.

13 The hearing will be conducted in accordance with  
14 provisions of 11 DCMR, Chapter 4 as follows: preliminary matters;  
15 applicant's case, the applicant has up to 60 minutes. I've read  
16 all of this information. I think the file is complete, and I'm  
17 sure my colleagues would agree. I don't think we need 60 minutes.  
18 We probably could do it in 15 or 20, at the most, unless we have  
19 questions, and I think that would be more advantageous for us to  
20 ask our questions. The report of the Office of Planning, the  
21 District Department of Transportation, report of other government  
22 agencies, and the report of the ANC. We have two, 6C and I think  
23 the other one was 6D. Forgive me, I'm off top of my head.  
24 Testimony of organizations, five minutes, and individuals, three  
25 minutes. And we will hear it in the following order for those

1 | who are in support, opposition and undeclared. Then we will have  
2 | rebuttal and closing by the applicant.

3 |           Again, the Office of Zoning hotline number is 727-5471  
4 | for any concerns during this proceeding.

5 |           At this time, the Commission will consider any  
6 | preliminary matters. Does that Staff have any preliminary  
7 | matters?

8 |           MS. SCHELLIN: Yes, sir. The first thing is that the  
9 | applicant has asked for a waiver of having to provide an affidavit  
10 | of maintenance and posting. They've provided -- have provided  
11 | both, but they are not notarized.

12 |           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Before we go ahead, the  
13 | correction is ANC 6E. I think I said D. It's ANC 6C and 6E. I  
14 | don't want to get in trouble in this case. All right.

15 |           Colleagues, you've heard the request from Ms. Schellin  
16 | asking for a waiver of the affidavit because they're not  
17 | notarized. Any objections? I don't believe there was prejudice  
18 | due to that, especially since we met the notice requirements and  
19 | everything.

20 |           Okay. Ms. Schellin, we will grant that waiver.  
21 | Anything else?

22 |           MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. The next thing is the proffered  
23 | expert witnesses. We have four total, two who have been  
24 | previously accepted and two who have not. So the two who have  
25 | previously been accepted was -- are rather Richard Conrath, in

1 architecture and Daniel Solomon in planning -- I'm sorry, in  
2 transportation. So those two, if the Commission would just accept  
3 them in this case also, that would be great.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I think -- any objections? We've  
5 already previously accepted them. And I think Mr. Conrath is  
6 landscape architecture, I believe. I think that's what he's  
7 being proffered as. But either way, whatever we grant, I the  
8 person that --

9 MS. SCHELLIN: Mr. Utz can --

10 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yeah. Whatever --

11 MS. SCHELLIN: Mr. Utz can clarify that.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yeah. Let me just say, whatever -

13 -

14 MS. SCHELLIN: Because I got somebody else --

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me just say --

16 MS. SCHELLIN: I have somebody else on land --

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me just say, whatever we gave  
18 him previously, that's what we are -- Ms. Schellin, whatever we  
19 have done, we will continue our previous status. So I just want  
20 to make -- because when I read it, it said landscape, so I believe  
21 that's what it is.

22 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. Because I had somebody else listed  
23 as landscape architecture, but I have Brandon Robinson as  
24 architecture. His resume is at Exhibit 12-D, page 2, and then  
25 Dan Avrit in landscape architecture. His resume is also at

1 Exhibit 12-D, pages 3 through 5, if those two could be considered.

2 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. I may have that backwards,  
3 but Mr. Utz will correct me. When you read it, sometimes it all  
4 runs together.

5 So any objections, Commissioners, to any of the two  
6 previous expert witnesses? No objection. So we will do all --  
7 and Mr. Utz will correct me if I'm incorrect or Mr. Conrath.

8 All right. Anything else, Ms. Schellin?

9 MS. SCHELLIN: No, sir.

10 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Vice Chair did you have -- okay. I  
11 thought maybe you had said something. All right.

12 MS. SCHELLIN: Other than -- I'm sorry. Just to advise  
13 that Jeff Utz and Lawrence Ferris are the attorneys for the  
14 applicant. Kelsey Bridges will be representing DDOT, and the  
15 Office of Planning representative -- oh, boy. It has left my  
16 brain. It is --

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Mr. Cochran.

18 MS. SCHELLIN: Mr. Cochran. Yes. Steve Cochran.

19 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Okay. All right. So  
20 everybody be ready.

21 Mr. Young, if you can bring everybody back up. And  
22 while we bring people up, we are going to do the presentation,  
23 let me welcome everybody back. Sometimes we get out of the  
24 rhythm. I hope you all enjoyed your 30 days off and some of you  
25 might have been a little less than 30 because I think we did have

1 to continue with a BZA hearing, some of us in the month of August.  
2 But let me welcome everyone back, and hopefully, you had a restful  
3 and safe few days off from the Zoning, so we'll leave it at that.

4 Okay. Mr. Utz.

5 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I was hoping the same for you  
6 Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: All right. Thank you.

8 Mr. Utz, you want to correct anything that we may have  
9 gotten incorrect? And you may begin. Don't join us, Mr. Utz.  
10 You're on mute. All right.

11 (Pause.)

12 CHAIRMAN HOOD: Mr. Ferris, you might have to step up  
13 to the plate. Let's give him a moment to get himself set.

14 (Pause.)

15 MR. UTZ: Can you all hear me now?

16 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes, I can hear you now. Yes.

17 MR. UTZ: Thank you. Thank you. Sorry about that. I  
18 had to completely switch my hardware but thank you for having us.  
19 We are excited to be here. It is good to be before for you for  
20 this application. I am Jeff Utz with Goulston & Storrs, and I'm  
21 here with Lawrence Ferris. As Ms. Schellin said, we are with  
22 the law firm of Goulston & Storrs, and we are here on behalf of  
23 the applicant for Case 21-09.

24 We really do appreciate the opportunity to present to  
25 you this evening. And we will work to expedite our presentation

1 and hopefully, keep it on the shorter side and address the open  
2 items from the record and things that just need to be tied up.  
3 But we're happy to answer any questions of those things that we  
4 might not touch on during the presentation. And we -- you all  
5 did just talk about this. In large part, there are five witnesses  
6 today. although we will again try to expedite their  
7 participation.

8           The five folks are Sam Hollman with Network Realty  
9 Partners, who is here on behalf of the applicant team. Rick  
10 Conrath with GTM Architects who is testifying as the architect  
11 for 899 and 999 North Capitol. And Brandon Robinson with HCM  
12 Architects, who will testify as the project architect for 901  
13 North Capitol. And both Rick and Brandon are being proffered as  
14 experts in architecture, and they were both previously confirmed  
15 as experts on prior cases. Dan Avrit is with us from Parker  
16 Rodriguez, and he'll testify as an expert in landscape  
17 architecture. He had not yet been confirmed prior to today as  
18 an expert witness. And then Daniel Solomon with Gorove Slade  
19 will testify as the project's transportation consultant. And he  
20 has previously been deemed to be an expert in transportation in  
21 related fields.

22           Can we show the presentation please, and we can use  
23 that to kind of run through our kind of open items? So just --  
24 I'll speak generally about the application first. The property  
25 is -- it's about 138,000 square feet. It's a lot that's at the

1 corner of North Capitol Street and K Streets. It's very  
2 prominent. And it currently contains two office buildings, 899  
3 and 999 North Capitol with a large plaza in between them. It is  
4 zoned D-5 and it's within the North Capitol Street corridor sub-  
5 area. Due to that location, it's subject to design review under  
6 Subtitle I, Section 617.7 and 701, so therefore, that is why we  
7 are here today.

8 It's a two-phase project. The first phase entails the  
9 construction of the ground floor office and retail additions to  
10 the existing office buildings, 899 and 999. And the second phase  
11 is the construction of the new lodging and retail building in  
12 that plaza that's going to be known as 901 North Capitol. So  
13 the result will be a highly articulated context sensitive  
14 structure, and this will be within the height and density allowed  
15 in the D-5 area. It will be additive to and appropriate for we  
16 believe the monumental view of the Capitol, up and down North  
17 Capitol and such.

18 Next slide please. Actually, a couple of slides, that  
19 would be great.

20 Next slide. Quickly, it just shows the context. I  
21 don't want to surprise anybody.

22 Next slide, please. Quickly, we just wanted to touch  
23 on the ANCs. We have been meeting with both ANCs. Our ANC where  
24 the property is located is ANC 6C. They voted to support the  
25 project, and their letter of support is Exhibit 19 in the record.

1 We have summarized their comments on this slide, and the applicant  
2 agrees to all of their -- all of these comments.

3           Similarly, we had met with ANC 6E which is actually the  
4 ANC immediately to the west across North Capitol Street of the  
5 property. We also have a letter of support from ANC 6E in the  
6 record, it is is Exhibit 16, and we have agreed to their comments  
7 as well.

8           Next slide, please. The team has also been meeting  
9 with the District agencies, and we greatly appreciate the time  
10 and ideas for the project. Regarding the Office of Planning  
11 specifically, as shown in the OP report that's in the record, OP  
12 supports the project with four conditions. As shown on this  
13 slide, the applicant agrees to all four of those conditions. So  
14 just briefly, these relate to updating the 999 North Capitol  
15 materials and coloration to match the 899 North Capitol materials  
16 and coloration, which we have slides that indicate this now in  
17 the presentation and in the record. The second is providing  
18 public east-west access between 899 and 901. There's currently  
19 a pedestrian access way that runs east-west there and that will  
20 be maintained from at least -- open to the public 7:00 a.m. to  
21 7:00 p.m. with proper signage installed.

22           Number three is that the applicant has agreed to  
23 specific signage limitation above and below 20-feet above the  
24 sidewalk. And that's shown -- reiterated in the record as well  
25 within in the presentation as well.

1           And number four is committing to LEED Silver and  
2 certification of that level for the hotel component. And there's  
3 also a LEED scorecard associated with that commitment.

4           Next slide, please. The OP Report also requested that  
5 the applicant submits additional information today at the  
6 hearing, and the applicant has done that. It's part of the  
7 materials that comprise this package for the presentation itself.  
8 Specifically, the four items are summarized on this slide. I  
9 won't go through each one of these, but we will show you these  
10 as we present our expedited presentation and kind of highlight  
11 each of these items where they're inserted into the presentation.

12           Next slide, please. Thank you. The OP report also  
13 requests additional considerations that the applicant team has  
14 reviewed. And as with the prior slide, we will point out where  
15 that relevant subject matter is nested within our expedited  
16 presentation and talk a bit about those further considerations  
17 that have occurred.

18           Next slide, please. Similar to the OP report, DDOT  
19 submitted a report, that's Exhibit 14 in the record, that  
20 indicated it had no objection to the approval of the application,  
21 which -- with three conditions, and the applicant has agreed to  
22 all three of those. Those conditions are summarized on this  
23 slide and relate to the enhancement of the TDM plan for the  
24 project, and Gorove Slade can go into a bit more detail about  
25 that in a few minutes. But in summary, the applicant greatly

1 appreciates the time and ideas of OP, DDOT, DOEE, and the ANCs  
2 to help refine and improve this project.

3           Next slide, please. Thank you. The record includes a  
4 full analysis of the project satisfaction and the design review  
5 standards, so I won't go into them now or belabor them now. This  
6 slide shows those standards in a kind of detailed summary fashion  
7 from 701.2 A and B itself. And then the next slide shows the  
8 standards that precipitate out of the special exception review  
9 that is also referenced within Section 701.

10           So the application statement and the OP report and then  
11 some of the presentation today can fill the record as to the  
12 project satisfaction of these standards, although we are happy  
13 to drill into any one of them if you have any questions about  
14 them or would like us to provide more information. With that, I  
15 think we can just hand it directly to Rick Conrath, and we will  
16 talk about 899 and 999 in short order.

17           Next slide, please. Could you advance a few more? We  
18 can skip to -- so we can skip to slide 15. Perfect. Thank you.

19           And Rick, over to you. Is Rick actually available  
20 right now? I know he had some technical issues logging in, so  
21 I'm not sure if we have him on the line right now. It doesn't  
22 sound like it.

23           MS. SCHELLIN: He is on.

24           MR. UTZ: Okay. Rick, if you're speaking, we can't  
25 hear you.

1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I actually don't see Rick.  
2 MR. UTZ: He's not on. I can --  
3 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I see him. Richard Conrath. Yeah.  
4 MR. UTZ: Yep.  
5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: He's on.  
6 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah. He's on.  
7 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let's give him a moment. If not,  
8 Mr. Utz, we can move on and come back.  
9 MR. UTZ: Sure.  
10 MR. HOLLMAN: Hey, are you on?  
11 MS. SCHELLIN: I think he has to unmute or maybe he has  
12 then --  
13 MR. HOLLMAN: Is there a number that Rick -- I'm on the  
14 phone with Rick right now. Is there a number that he might be  
15 able to call on his phone?  
16 MR. FERRIS: Hey, Sam. I actually sent him the login  
17 -- the phone number to dial in just a minute ago, so if he'll  
18 check his email. You're on with him.  
19 Mr. HOLLMAN: Okay. You have an email link coming from  
20 Lawrence. They should have the dial in.  
21 MR. UTZ: But in the meantime, we go to Phase II and  
22 kind of take things out of order. So I can pass it over to  
23 Brandon Robinson, although to do that, we will need to go to  
24 slide 36 of the PDF itself. It's also known as slide 80 -- 801.  
25 It's coming up here in a few slides. One or two more. Yep.

1 Perfect.

2 MR. ROBINSON: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name  
3 is Brandon Robinson, architect with Hord Coplan Macht  
4 representing Phase II of the other project that's in front of  
5 you, which is basically the placement of the new hotel on the  
6 existing plaza between the 899 and 999 buildings.

7 We can go the next slide really quickly. That's just  
8 the cover. This is a site plan indicating the existing 899 and  
9 999 buildings with the North Capitol Street on the bottom of the  
10 page and with K Street on the left side of the page with the  
11 hotel placed in that plaza in between the two buildings. Not a  
12 lot here to speak to beyond where the hotel is placed and some  
13 of the effort that we've made to the hotel, which I will speak  
14 to voluntarily in order to maintaining connectivity on the ground  
15 plane with the plazas and various outdoor rooms surrounding the  
16 hotel. As well as what's labeled on this site of this drawing  
17 is the pedestrian path access to 1st Street, which is the space  
18 between 899 and the 901 building. That is sort of historically  
19 I Street, and we wanted to and play up that connection. It is  
20 used today as a pretty significant pedestrian connection between  
21 North Capitol Street and 1st Street. It's a much faster way to  
22 the Union Station Metro. That's basically how the project  
23 decided.

24 We can go to the next slide. This slide really quickly,  
25 is identifying three of a handful -- these are the three most

1 prominent -- but a handful of historic buildings in the general  
2 vicinity. And one thing that this 901 building wanted to do in  
3 Phase II of this project is introduce a little bit more of this  
4 red brick sort of more historic friendly -- historically  
5 contextually friendly architecture into the east side of the  
6 Union or I'm sorry, to the North Capitol Street viewshed to draw  
7 some visual interest to that side of the street, and to sort of  
8 (audio interference) as something different visually between the  
9 two more gray in glass, mid-century modern buildings that are 899  
10 and 999.

11 Of note, the building in the center here is the Gonzaga  
12 Church that is literally across the street from our project. So  
13 there is some interest in playing nice with that building with  
14 what we place on the plaza site between 899 and 999.

15 Next slide, please. And so with that said, this is  
16 essentially a shot from North Capitol Street looking back towards  
17 the 901 Hotel, with the 899 building in the background, and the  
18 999 building, which is on north sides of the site on the left  
19 side of this image. What's of particular note here is the use  
20 of the outdoor plazas to create basically these outdoor rooms so  
21 that people can be pulled off of what is otherwise a fairly busy  
22 thruway and create more comfortable pedestrian spaces both to  
23 navigate the site, but also to spend time in the site. And to  
24 sort of further enforce that, we've made some very strategic  
25 moves like introducing this glass box that you see there with the

1 901 and see signage above it, which is the hotel's main entry.  
2 And by pulling the hotel back into the plaza, again, the interest  
3 there is to pull people into the outdoor spaces around the  
4 building and draw people into the site and around the site. The  
5 retail space that you see in the foreground is envisioned as a  
6 restaurant that will serve as an amenity space to the hotel of  
7 sorts as is typical, but also serve the general vicinity of the  
8 site where there's definitely some interesting retail and  
9 especially restaurant uses in here. Obviously, the building is  
10 nodding towards a more historic base middle top architecture.  
11 And we're introducing this rusticated base and brick detailing  
12 throughout in order to sort of play off that connection with some  
13 of the other red brick historic buildings along the street  
14 frontage.

15           Next slide, please. This we can just sort of go by  
16 really quickly. Another example of all of the stuff I just said,  
17 the focus of the shot is on the historic I Street and the interest  
18 in maintaining that connection east-west through the site and  
19 there's more addressing that later.

20           We can go to the next slide. We have two slides in  
21 here. This slide is really just demonstrating the 901 building's  
22 impact on the viewshed of North Capitol Street. As you can see,  
23 it's minimal to no negative impact. If anything, it's our opinion  
24 positive impact as that red brick architecture kind of breaks up  
25 what is otherwise an awful lot of gray and white on the east side

1 of North Capitol Street.

2           Next slide, please. This is a shot of the 899 building  
3 there in the foreground with the 999 building in the background.  
4 Looking north on North Capitol again, more of a viewshed view of  
5 the site showing how the hotel runs there on North Capitol Street.

6           We can go the next slide. Here, we start getting into  
7 a little bit more of the outdoor spaces. But this is essentially  
8 a shot that you've seen before.

9           We can go to the next slide. And we can always come  
10 back to any of these if you guys have questions. Another viewshed  
11 shot of the hotel.

12           Go to the next slide. Another viewshed. This viewshed  
13 really, in my opinion, sort of helps sell why we thought it was  
14 important to have the red brick building there as opposed to  
15 anything else. You can see Gonzaga's Church directly across the  
16 street. You also see the church up on K Street in the background.  
17 And there is this nice pattern of historic buildings kind of  
18 popping up on North Capitol Street in a nice rhythm, and I felt  
19 like there was this spot on the east side of the street in that  
20 rhythm that was missing. We felt like it was the perfect thing  
21 to fill that in.

22           Next slide, please. So look here we start getting into  
23 the plans of the building. Just to orient you and as an aside,  
24 when Rick does come on to talk about 899 and 999, they orient  
25 slightly differently. So in our plans here for the 901 building

1 on North Capitol Street, and on the left side of the plan, and  
2 the top of the page is the north of the site. So what you're  
3 looking at here is our basement level, which is actually mostly  
4 the garage of the 999 building to the north of us, which extends  
5 underneath the plaza that is there today. And part of why DDOT  
6 is very happy with the 901 building, quite frankly, is we are  
7 using the 999 building's loading and parking of -- or access to  
8 the 901 building, so we're not introducing any new curb cuts or  
9 anything like that. And what you're seeing here on this plan is  
10 the elevator that we're drilling down to the basement levels and  
11 some connections and renovations we're making to that lower level  
12 in order to facilitate that connection.

13           Next slide, please. Here is really the ground floor  
14 of the building. And the big thing to talk about on this, again  
15 as I mentioned before, the use of outdoor spaces in the plazas.  
16 Introducing a wider plaza north of the site or north of our  
17 building between the 901 building and the 999 building in order  
18 to create some real usable outdoor space and play up some of the  
19 retail uses that are being introduced in the 901 building.  
20 Obviously, with all the red there fronting on North Capitol  
21 Street, but also, there's retail being introduced in Phase I in  
22 the 999 building just north of it, so those plazas are really  
23 important to the success of those retail spaces. And we're also  
24 using plaza space to create outdoor uses to support office and  
25 conference center uses.

1           The other big thing that I've already mentioned is the  
2 east-west connection south of our building, which is that  
3 historic I Street, which will continue towards the east of our  
4 project to 1st Street sort of informally and through an alley.  
5 And then the other big thing that we introduced in the 901  
6 building, because we were really keen on maintaining kind of a  
7 pedestrian flow on the site that is similar to what is seen today,  
8 is we introduced this covered plaza connection which is that zone  
9 basically between the blue and the gray, which is an outdoor  
10 covered space. The building extends above it, which allows us  
11 to make pedestrian connections with the plazas on the north of  
12 our building and the plazas on the south of our building, create  
13 some shaded outdoor uses as well and generally contributes to the  
14 pedestrian experience on the site.

15           Next slide, please. Here, we jump all the way up to  
16 the roof of the building. And the only thing here really to note  
17 is that -- and again, this is in response to some of OP's concerns  
18 -- we are looking at providing green roof and/or solar panels up  
19 there and that's just something that we're working on, and we can  
20 come back and talk about that further, but this is showing those  
21 proposed locations.

22           Next slide, please. Here, we're getting into some of  
23 the elevations. Again, most of this is repetitive, easily  
24 indicated already in the renderings you've seen, but the big  
25 thing here is, again, there's a base, middle and top architecture

1 that we're trying to achieve, a nod towards sort of a more  
2 historic contextual building, and then using metal and glass down  
3 on the lower two levels of the building to add some contemporary  
4 elements and to create some visual interest and transparency into  
5 the lobby spaces and retail spaces of the building.

6           Next slide, please. This is the rear of the building.  
7 This faces east. This was one of the comments that OP had for  
8 us which was that looks flat, and they were a little worried that  
9 it would be a little too plain. So I believe it's the next slide,  
10 if you could go to the next slide. Yes. We wanted to introduce  
11 this rendering to just give you an idea of how committed we were  
12 to making sure that that façade, even though it's unfenestrated,  
13 would, in fact, still be a pleasure to look at and visually  
14 interesting. And so it's -- just like the rest of the building,  
15 it's broken up into a base, middle, and top, and it respects a  
16 lot of the same geometry of the other aspects of the building.  
17 We hope that you would agree that it's a fairly successful facade  
18 even if it is unfenestrated.

19           Next slide, please. Again, wrapping the building.  
20 Here, we're looking at the north side of the building, so the  
21 east side of this elevation is the North Capitol Street with the  
22 street frontage immediately followed as we head left. The retail  
23 that we hope will be restaurant. One of the interesting things  
24 about that retail space is it is two stories, so there is this  
25 component of the restaurant space that will be up in that second

1 floor looking down at the plazas. Again, trying to create  
2 activity close to the street to draw interest and help liven up  
3 activity there. Left of that is the hotel entry itself, which  
4 is the glass box. And then to the left of that, you can see the  
5 cut through the building that is that covered plaza that we've  
6 showed earlier on the ground floor that's connecting the north  
7 plaza to the south plaza. And Dan Avrit has some fun stuff to  
8 show for that space.

9           But next slide, please. This is really quickly just  
10 talking about the materials that we're proposing for the  
11 building. Again, it's a mostly red brick building. We're using  
12 red cast stone and also some prefinished metal that matches those  
13 reds, again, to create this predominantly red brick architecture.  
14 And then we're accentuating that with strategically located  
15 murals and other things of that nature with wood ceilings that's  
16 prominently in the covered plaza. And pretty much all of the  
17 other materials on the building whether they be windows,  
18 storefronts, fiber cement, are all falling into that dark  
19 charcoal gray to keep the palette on the building very simple.

20           Next slide, please. This is just a real quick section  
21 up from west to east with North Capitol on the left side. Again,  
22 here, you can see the red which are the restaurant, which is this  
23 two-story piece inside the building. And you can also see the  
24 covered plaza connection as it cuts underneath the building  
25 between the north plaza and south plaza. Other than that, it's

1 pretty straightforward.

2           Next slide. This section is sort of telling the  
3 complexity of locating the hotel on this portion of the site. We  
4 have the 899 building to the left and the 999 building to the  
5 right. You can see the parking levels for the 999 building  
6 extending underneath -- well, it's the existing plaza between  
7 those two buildings. And the 901 building hotel -- hotel building  
8 is sitting almost a third of it, quarter of it is sitting on the  
9 top of that existing garage, so that's been one of our biggest  
10 challenges quite frankly. But this gives you a clean  
11 understanding of how we make that connection to the 999 building  
12 for loading and parking and whatnot.

13           Next slide, please. This was another requested  
14 addition to the record set by OP showing the 901 building elevated  
15 of -- for the full block of the full property along North Capitol  
16 Street with the 999 building and 899 building as well. Of  
17 particular note here is just how in scale with those two existing  
18 buildings the 901 building is, and our commitment to keeping that  
19 street wall consistent and to scale with what's there today.

20           Next slide, please. This is the LEED scorecard for the  
21 901 building for the hotel. As has been previously discussed,  
22 we've moved some points around and moved this comfortably into a  
23 Silver certification, which we are committing to, but we can talk  
24 about that if we need to and come back to it.

25           Next slide, please. And this is where landscape takes

1 us over and where Dan Avrit can chime in.

2 MR. AVRIT: Good afternoon, Commissioners. I can walk  
3 through our site plan.

4 This site plan has been updated as per ANC comments  
5 where they requested some more green in our plaza; we've added  
6 that. North Capitol Street is on the south of the page here.  
7 And the 901 building sits in the middle, 899 and 999 to each  
8 side. So what we're doing is we are -- I think the biggest change  
9 for this is -- currently on the site, there's two notes that  
10 define kind of the site and a dropped plaza. And really with  
11 the two buildings extending out, we're able to kind of create a  
12 new landscape. Right now, the landscape is very much barrier,  
13 so we're opening that up. And then the plaza is much more of a  
14 gentle slope through instead of this large drop that occurs today.

15 So on the left side, you can see the new outdoor cafe  
16 that's proposed with the retail at 999. The hotel access is  
17 between 899 and 901, and we have a sloped sidewalk that drops  
18 down with some small steps. And then as you go past the existing  
19 office building entrance, you go under the passageway which is  
20 kind of that very behind the 901 main block of the hotel, and  
21 you can transition over to 899 underneath that cover. And then  
22 you're to -- what Brandon was describing as I Street extended  
23 through the site and that is a primary connection to 1st Street  
24 and Metro and Union Station. So that's a very strong -- very  
25 important connection for us, so we've tried to maintain that. We

1 also wanted to maintain the connection between the two existing  
2 buildings underneath that plaza.

3           Next. Here's a view. So instead of the large drop in  
4 the plaza, now we have a nice gently sloping plaza. The new cafe  
5 on the left and 999, and the new retail for the 901 building on  
6 the right side. And then you can see the lobby as this little  
7 jewel box in the plaza as you transition into the site.

8           Next. There's that view of the hotel lobby, the jewel  
9 box, and then the existing office entry today. And you can see  
10 the connection between those; we tried to pay attention so that  
11 there's a dialogue between all of these buildings. Along with  
12 some new plantings as well as seeding this, that's defined as  
13 part of that -- of those planters.

14           Next. There is some -- here is that connection kind  
15 of that goes underneath the 901 building, and you can see the  
16 landscape that's introduced. This is actually on top of the  
17 garage, so this is all new planting that's added. We added more  
18 at ANC's request.

19           Next. Here's that covered plaza, and you see how it's  
20 connected. It's going to have a dialogue with the existing hotel  
21 building. Also provide a shade and kind of weather protection  
22 from the roof, a nice little covered space that lots of eyes on  
23 that from the buildings around it. And we think it would actually  
24 be a great lunch spot for the office workers.

25           Next. This is from the 899 building, looking through

1 that passageway. So we have a nice gradual step up with seeding  
2 opportunities that are incorporated into that.

3 Next. This is the view from North Capitol with 899 on  
4 the right and 901 on the left. And you can see the connection  
5 to 1st Street in the background there. We are introducing ADA  
6 connections on this side as well. We also have a cafe on the  
7 left that'll be part of the 901 Building. And with the important  
8 thing here is you can really see into the new glasses being  
9 introduced on these two buildings allows you to see into it and  
10 really engage with the street and really activate North Capitol  
11 for this entire project.

12 Next.

13 MR. UTZ: Okay. So I think with that, we can turn it  
14 over to Daniel Solomon to just say a few quick words about the  
15 transportation review of the project and the DDOT conditions.

16 MR. SOLOMON: Okay. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

17 For the record, I'm Daniel Solomon, Transportation  
18 Planner with Gorove Slade. We've been working -- Partners and  
19 Project Team and DDOT.

20 MR. FERRIS: You got to be louder.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yeah. I'm unable to hear him. I  
22 don't know if everybody else is having -- okay.

23 MR. SOLOMON: It's much louder if I step closer to the  
24 microphone.

25 Good afternoon, Commissioners. For the record. I'm

1 Daniel Solomon, the Transportation Planner and Director of  
2 Planning with Gorove Slade. We've been working with --

3 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: You're still -- I know you're using  
4 the earphones, but we still can't really hear you.

5 MR. SOLOMON: Right. I'll be right back. I'm going  
6 to get another set. My apologies.

7 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yeah. Remember a lot of us are over  
8 50.

9 MR. UTZ: In the meantime, is there any chance that  
10 Rick Conrath is connected and can hear us and can talk to us?

11 MR. CONRATH: Yeah, I can. Can you hear me?

12 MR. UTZ: We can. Yep.

13 MR. CONRATH: Okay. Fantastic.

14 MR. UTZ: Okay. So --

15 MR. CONRATH: Do you want me to continue and not press  
16 my luck, or do we want Dan to continue?

17 MR. SOLOMON: Is this better? Are you able to hear me  
18 now?

19 MR. UTZ: Yeah. We can, Dan.

20 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: That's better. You're looking good  
21 now. So let's just let Daniel Solomon go first.

22 MR. SOLOMON: I appreciate it. Thank you, Commissioner  
23 Hood.

24 Good afternoon, Commissioners. For the record. I'm  
25 Daniel Solomon, the Transportation Planner and Director of

1 Planning with Gorove Slade. We've been working with Network  
2 Realty Partners, the Project Team and DDOT related to the  
3 transportation aspects of the Union Square project. I'm going  
4 to briefly touch on the highlights of our view in coordination  
5 with DDOT.

6 If you could move ahead about four slides. Next. Next.  
7 Next. Perfect. Thank you. All right. Here, I've listed the  
8 highlights of the TDM plan. It includes many of the typical  
9 components expected of such a package. We believe this TDM  
10 package is appropriate for this type of project to help encourage  
11 non-single occupancy vehicles and non-auto trips. The applicant  
12 has agreed to a few additional TDM measures in response to DDOT's  
13 conditions and those are being added to an updated TDM plan,  
14 which was submitted to the record as Exhibit 18 after receiving  
15 DDOT's concurrence.

16 Next. For the project, we performed a comprehensive  
17 transportation review which was scoped with DDOT. Our study  
18 concluded that the development of the site will enhance the  
19 surrounding area and non-auto mobility through the reconstruction  
20 of sidewalks and landscaping and the addition of non-auto  
21 amenities. We have coordinated extensively with DDOT during  
22 their review. We're pleased to have their support in the form  
23 of a no objection staff report. DDOT's report did have some  
24 conditions which we believe we have worked through with them.  
25 I'll go over them quickly.

1           The applicant has agreed to install a missing curb ramp  
2 on the west side of North Capitol Street on the northern side of  
3 the intersection with I Street Northwest subject to DDOT  
4 approval.

5           The applicant has agreed to add to the TDM plan that  
6 the future employees of 901 North Capitol Street, Northeast  
7 Building, will be permitted and encouraged to use shared shower  
8 and locker facilities located at 899 and the 999 buildings.

9           Finally, the applicant agreed to implement a pickup,  
10 drop-off plan in the 999 parking garage for the future 901 North  
11 Capitol Street Northeast Hotel if curbside signage regarding a  
12 pickup, drop-off, loading or similar zone on North Capitol Street  
13 is not approved by DDOT. At this time, we believe we have  
14 addressed all of DDOT's concerns. That concludes my testimony.  
15 And I'll be available for any questions. Thank you.

16           MR. UTZ: Thanks, Daniel.

17           So I think we can go to page 22 of the presentation,  
18 please. And we can go back to Rick to speak about 899 and 999  
19 quickly and in the open items there.

20           MR. CONRATH: Absolutely. Good afternoon. This is  
21 Rick Conrath with GTM Architect.

22           Okay. So as we're looking at - are we on slide 22?  
23 There we go. Okay. I want to quickly just go through a couple  
24 numbers just for reference. On 899, we're talking about an  
25 additional 25,162 -- 63 square feet of bump out, but the net

1 basically is 1,167 square feet. So obviously, you're looking at  
2 this corner here. The net add to this building is 1,167 square  
3 feet. We're dealing -- with this 999, we're dealing with a bump  
4 out of 4,417 square feet from the two pieces. The net is really  
5 only 507 square feet on 999 because we're removing over 3,900  
6 square feet of internal space that's currently occupied by floor.

7           On the 899 building -- you can go ahead and scroll to  
8 the next one. 23. In that particular instance, we're talking  
9 about a net of 1,167 square feet on a nine-story building, both  
10 buildings are nine floors. And what you're looking at here is  
11 roughly about 17-feet of building above the adjacent grade. On  
12 these particular buildings, one of the things that we wanted to  
13 do was to complement the red brick on the -- what's the proposed  
14 hotel, so we went with the gray brick that we were looking to  
15 complement the existing building, the simplicity of the existing  
16 building. And sort of in earlier schemes, we had gone with more  
17 of an accented red brick color, but we felt that this was actually  
18 -- and then in talking with OP, the decision was made to go and  
19 go with the gray brick.

20           On these particular instances -- if you could go to the  
21 next slide. So here again, this is looking back at 999, the gray  
22 brick, the existing building in the background.

23           Next slide. And then here's 899. And this is the  
24 corner looking back towards the Capitol. And what we're trying  
25 to show in this is basically the connection of the existing

1 building to the existing sidewalk. And in the current  
2 configuration, there's what we want to call a moat, that basically  
3 there's an impediment between the existing sidewalk and existing  
4 building. And what's our attempt -- what we're attempting to do  
5 here is to create a connection, filling in this void and making  
6 a better streetscape for what's happening here.

7 Next slide. And you can kind of see this on a -- you  
8 can see this as the other corner of 899 where we've basically  
9 reengaged the sidewalk area with the existing building, reduced  
10 the scale, you can see the brick.

11 Next slide. One of the things that during our  
12 submissions with OP is that they want us to show the existing  
13 roof plan, and I'd like to talk a little bit about this. One of  
14 the constraints -- there's been some talk about green roof, et  
15 cetera, and then there are also constraints based on the existing  
16 build. And hopefully, this will demonstrate sort of what we're  
17 talking about. On the existing building, the -- we are sort of  
18 limited with the existing structure. And specifically in the  
19 area of the yellow where we're adding the building expansion,  
20 that's sitting over the existing parking garage that's below. So  
21 we're limited in terms of the additional weight from the addition.  
22 We're also, based on the existing building, limited in terms of  
23 the existing structure and stability to carry the additional  
24 weight of a potential for a green roof. So this is one of the  
25 items that OP ask as for us to show.

1           Next slide. In our conversations with the ANC, one of  
2 the high points of that -- with meeting with the ANC was that  
3 there was a request for additional transparency. And then what  
4 we're trying to show here is how we've opened up that street  
5 level elevation. And you can notice that we have the building  
6 in the background, we have the gray brick, and then we'd like to  
7 think that this sort of gives you a very much more transparent  
8 look off of the sidewalk back into the existing building. There  
9 were some concerns from the folks at the ANC that we'd be  
10 obscuring the view and then sort of preventing folks living and  
11 walking and pedestrians being able to see into the existing  
12 building.

13           Next slide. Same thing on 899 is that we've tried to  
14 continue that light and airy transparent feeling at the base with  
15 the simplicity of the brick and the detailing.

16           Next slide. And this is a blow up of what we're  
17 considering the gray brick, the sort of wood-look black metal  
18 paneling. These are some of the materials we're considering for  
19 use at 899 and 999.

20           Next slide. Again, this is more of a detail showing  
21 sort of the thoughts related to metal canopies, detailing what  
22 accents the gray brick, gray metal panel, and the darker gray  
23 metal panel as well.

24           Next slide. Before I get into this, I also want to  
25 mention that we've -- we're looking at this building for LEED

1 Silver. We're looking at LEED for existing buildings, O&M,  
2 Operations and Maintenance. As I mentioned before on the previous  
3 slide about the ability of the existing roof to support green  
4 roof or additional solar panels, these are things that we've been  
5 considering, but given sort of the existing constraints of the  
6 building, we are looking at this as something down the road.  
7 We've implemented some sustainability measures. We're looking  
8 at full glazing replacement for both buildings, for better  
9 natural lighting, energy modeling to provide an energy efficient  
10 shell, full LED exterior lighting and lighting replacement of a  
11 two level garages for both buildings, replacement of the existing  
12 constant volume garage ventilation with variable ventilation,  
13 refurbishing the existing chillers and cooling towers, full  
14 building management system upgrade to a more efficiently managed  
15 the building HVAC, complete restroom improvement initiatives with  
16 touchless fixtures, automatic toilet flushes, et cetera.

17 On this particular slide, we're showing the intent as  
18 it relates to signage. And we are -- our intent is to go with  
19 signage that would be in compliance with the construction code.  
20 We're sensitive to the location and the viewshed, especially on  
21 the 999, we're looking at -- go ahead to the next slide. At 999,  
22 we're proposing high signage just in that one location indicated  
23 on the rectangle. And on 899, we already have existing signage  
24 in place which we're -- it's our intention to keep that and not  
25 replace it.

1           Next slide.       As far as parking and loading  
2 considerations, we are going to use 999. We're going to use the  
3 loading on 999 to help support what's happening at 901. We're  
4 maintaining the entrances for 999. There's an entrance off of K  
5 Street at the back of the building. On 999, we're maintaining  
6 the entrance for 999 as it currently exists. And so we're  
7 effectively keeping -- existing loading areas are to remain.  
8 We're adding, as I mentioned before, the new entrances into the  
9 proposed bump outs at the sidewalk level on both 899 and 999.  
10 And as I've mentioned before, we are sort of in-filling that moat  
11 area with on grade access, handicapped access, and we sort of  
12 feel that that will be a huge improvement to the overall project  
13 in scale. I think that's it.

14           MR. UTZ:    Okay. Great. Thank you, Rick. So with  
15 that, slightly out of order, but that is everybody that we have  
16 on our panel today. So hopefully, that we conveyed our responses  
17 to the open items from the Agency reports and some of the open  
18 items generally from the ANC's. But as you can see, the theme  
19 is that we agreed to everything. So the early slides kind of  
20 captured and summarized the conditions in the request for  
21 information. And we're happy to page through those more and  
22 provide any other details, but we are happy to answer any  
23 questions as well. Thank you so much for letting us present.  
24 Sorry for the technical difficulties.

25           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: No problem. Thank you, Mr. Utz to

1 | you and your team. A very well-presented discussion. I  
2 | appreciate you giving us a condensed version.

3 |           It sounds like -- I think it was well (audio  
4 | interference), even though I believe we did a little more than  
5 | condensed version. But I think that it was very helpful,  
6 | especially when I tried to understand the red brick, and also  
7 | understand the 901 in the middle of 999 and 899.

8 |           I do have a few questions. I'm going to start first.  
9 | Typically, I don't do it. Now we have -- we're making some  
10 | changes with our Commission. I got to figure out the new pattern.  
11 | So if Commissioner Shapiro and Vice Chair Miller don't mind, I'll  
12 | start first, and then I'll go to Vice Chair Miller and then I go  
13 | to Commissioner Shapiro. But that's not the way we're going to  
14 | always do it from the time I'm here. I think I'm going to do it  
15 | whoever the new person is, but we'll figure that out. We'll work  
16 | it out any way.

17 |           Can we put back up, I think it was A05, Mr. Young? And  
18 | I'm not sure, this may be for Mr. Robinson. I believe that he  
19 | spoke on this one. I'm just trying to really understand -- yeah.  
20 | I'm really trying to understand the significance.

21 |           While I think the hotel and the color of the brick next  
22 | to those existing structures on 999 and 899, I think are the  
23 | addresses, I think that was brilliant because I was trying to -  
24 | - when I was looking at them, I'm like wait a minute, this doesn't  
25 | -- but I think when I look at it after you explained it, Mr.

1 Robinson, I think was very helpful for me. I think that was a  
2 brilliant idea. So whoever came up with that, Office of Planning  
3 or whomever, Mr. Robinson and his team, whoever it was, I think  
4 that was brilliant.

5 I did like -- when I saw the -- like under the area  
6 where the employees can go and have lunch. And it also looked -  
7 - one of the renderings on the back, it still looks like that  
8 you are still having the outside area. It looks like it just  
9 basically shifted to the back because of the building of the  
10 hotel. Is that a correct assessment? There's still an outside  
11 area behind the hotel; is that correct?

12 MR. ROBINSON: There is still a rear yard on the site,  
13 and so we are respecting that rear yard requirement. We are  
14 using that space behind the hotel pretty much exclusively for  
15 planting and also potentially for bioretention for stormwater  
16 management purposes. But it's not a public space per se in the  
17 sense that it's not hardscaped. It's mostly used for planting.

18 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So the way it exists now, with the  
19 open area that we have now between 899 and 999, it looks like as  
20 you -- I think you mentioned in your presentation, Mr. Robinson,  
21 that those open areas now moved to both sides of 901. Is that a  
22 correct assessment? I see it more on the side of 999 when I look  
23 at this one, but is there also --

24 MR. ROBINSON: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: -- a different area -- so it's on

1 both sides?

2 MR. ROBINSON: That's correct. They're -- basically  
3 we've split what was once a very large plaza between 899 and 999  
4 into essentially two linear plazas, one on the north side of the  
5 building and one on the south side of the building. And the  
6 covered plaza connection that connects the two, that is  
7 underneath proportion of the 901 building. But even beyond that,  
8 the plaza on the north side of 901 is really visually and  
9 physically broken up into kind of upfront more public for outdoor  
10 dining and other retail-oriented uses space. A space that  
11 respects the 999 building's entry, which is also roughly where  
12 the hotel's entry is, it's kind of a mid-zone. And then there's  
13 a quieter more garden-like space beyond that at the backside or  
14 the farthest east point of the plaza that serves as a spill out  
15 outdoor space for the conference center that's at the back of the  
16 999 building.

17 MR. HOLLMAN: Mr. -- if I might opine. My name is Sam  
18 Hollman. I'm with Network Realty Partners, the owner of Union  
19 Square. And I think the intent here was to turn what is a bit  
20 of a vast uncomfortable large scale split space and split it up  
21 to these kind of more intimate usable outdoor spaces for both  
22 pedestrians and building users alike.

23 MR. ROBINSON: That's spot-on, Sam.

24 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Thank you for that, Mr. Hollman. I  
25 would say, yeah, I think you accomplished it from my perspective.

1 And I'm not going to necessarily use architectural terms, but the  
2 pop outs, the area I think is very pedestrian friendly. I do  
3 like what is being created, and you said it. I was thinking the  
4 way it exists now, it is a dull space, but I think with this  
5 design will help open that up and make it more active down there.  
6 I do know that -- I think the D.C. government is still in both  
7 of those buildings or utilize at least one of the buildings, I  
8 thought. But either way, I think this is going to be more active.  
9 I really appreciate the detail.

10 The only other question I would have -- and also will  
11 say this, Mr. Utz and others, that I appreciate all of you  
12 considering working with all the ANC's, OP's report, DDOT, DOEE,  
13 I think -- I don't think there are any issues that are  
14 outstanding, at least the way I understand the way it's been  
15 presented and what I have here in my notes and what I've read,  
16 there's nothing outstanding. The only thing I will ask is to  
17 make sure -- for the sake of our former Commissioner to make sure  
18 that the signage is not that real flashy that keeps everybody  
19 awake at night. I'm sure that we're not going to do that,  
20 especially with the hotel being right there.

21 But let me let me just ask this, Mr. Hollman. How did  
22 you all come up with the idea of putting a hotel right there?  
23 I'm just curious. What class are you trying to reach and how  
24 did you come up with that idea?

25 MR. HOLLMAN: Absolutely. So when we first bought the

1 | asset back in 2019, you're absolutely right, the government  
2 | occupied 899. That's D.C. DOH and GSA. The federal government  
3 | occupied 999, in large part. And so both tenants were rolling.  
4 | They were going -- they were set to vacate the building. And so  
5 | what we wanted to do was to attract a variety of associations  
6 | and nonprofits that would hold events in this space and utilize  
7 | its proximity to Union Station. That's -- we saw that as one of  
8 | our major competitive advantages, our proximity to Union Station.  
9 | So those companies, law firms, associations, nonprofits, that  
10 | might be holding events in either building would probably benefit  
11 | from having a place for their guests and visitors to stay on  
12 | site.

13 |           We also think that having a hotel drives a lot of  
14 | activities, specifically to our site, and then to the broader  
15 | neighbor. So really creating that daily energy and activity on  
16 | site that turns what is kind of a 8 to 5 environment today,  
17 | because the government employees commonly they leave at 5 or 6,  
18 | into a really -- into an 18-hour environment that people can  
19 | enjoy and feel safe and comfortable in.

20 |           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I really think this is a good example  
21 | of repurposing a building and making it alive, and so I commend  
22 | everybody who worked on this. And I really appreciate the  
23 | explanation as they help me get to what I was trying to set --  
24 | the questions that I did have so. That's all I have.

25 |           Let me go to Vice Chair Miller.

1           VICE CHAIR MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank  
2 you for your questions which covered a few of my questions. And  
3 thank you to the applicant for the presentation tonight -- this  
4 afternoon, I guess. I'm used to saying tonight, even though we  
5 haven't met at night for a while, except for those long hearings  
6 that go into the night.

7           Thank you for your responsiveness to the Office of  
8 Planning and the ANC, DDOT for addressing all of the conditions  
9 and requests that they made. The design, the scale, the colors,  
10 the material -- the brick -- red brick material I think all are  
11 very -- and the gray brick for the other is I think complementary.  
12 And the whole activation of the streetscape in that area is --  
13 will be a definite improvement. And the red brick will complement  
14 the former church site across the street and Gonzaga and  
15 government printing office, the building nearby, so that's all  
16 great.

17           The question is really about -- I understand -- I think  
18 you've given an explanation as to why solar and green roof on  
19 top of the existing buildings to be renovated might create some  
20 challenges, which was recommended by DOEE and OP. But I don't  
21 understand why that can't be accomplished and LEED Gold -- and  
22 so you're maintaining LEED Silver or you're upgrading to the new  
23 definition of LEED Silver for those two office buildings that are  
24 there. But I don't understand why LEED Gold and solar and green  
25 roof can't be committed to for the new hotel building being

1 constructed on that plaza.

2 MR. HOLLMAN: So Mr. Miller, thank you very much for  
3 your question. I really appreciate it.

4 We have a goal here at the site to increase the  
5 sustainability and environmental friendliness of our project,  
6 especially in 901. You're absolutely right. There are existing  
7 limitations on 899 and 999. But on 901, we're building a new  
8 building, so those limitations shouldn't exist. So we're  
9 planning to commit to 4,000 square feet of solar and/or green  
10 roof. We need to further study the loads on top of 901 or  
11 elsewhere on the site, and so we'll continue to provide that.

12 When we first started the exploration of sustainability  
13 measures at 901, we started out by saying it's LEED certified.  
14 And again, please remember that 901 sits halfway on top of the  
15 existing 999 garage, which stretches out into the plaza. And so  
16 we've since upgraded our building to design to accommodate LEED  
17 Silver. And that includes a full electric cooling system limiting  
18 the amount of gas into our building. And we're taking other  
19 measures similar to that in order -- electric heating system --  
20 not cooling system. But we're taking other measures similar to  
21 that to be able to achieve that LEED Silver, and I'm willing to  
22 promise today that we can achieve LEED Silver on that 901 parcel.  
23 I'm also willing to promise that we will continue looking into  
24 these maybe points that we can achieve a LEED Gold. But until  
25 we study the building further, I can't promise LEED Gold. I can

1 only promise LEED Silver.

2 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Well, I don't know if it's  
3 okay but -- because we -- as a Commission have -- at least for  
4 the projects we review for design review and PUD, LEED Silver,  
5 even though there's separate environmental requirements that the  
6 LEED certified meets, LEED certified. But we haven't accepted  
7 anything -- what we think that LEED Silver is a minimum and LEED  
8 Gold is what should be striven for and committed to really for a  
9 new building, so I'll just leave it at that. So I appreciate  
10 that you're looking into it, but it'd be great if that commitment  
11 could be made for LEED Gold and for the solar and green roof  
12 that's being recommended by OP and DOEE.

13 MR. HOLLMAN: We are committing to the solar and green  
14 roof, just to be very clear, we're committing to that.

15 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Do you have a -- not that  
16 this is related to our design review necessarily, but do you have  
17 a hotel operator already identified or that you can share with  
18 us, or the restaurant operator identified or the café -- I saw  
19 the Starbucks rendering in one of the renderings you showed us  
20 tonight. Do you have any of those -- any letters of intent or  
21 that you can share with us or vague commitments just so we can -  
22 -

23 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah.

24 VICE CHAIR MILLER: And then the fact that you're  
25 activating this stretch of North Capitol that needs activation

1 is great, but I just was curious if you have any of those  
2 identified operators.

3 MR. HOLLMAN: We've spoken with a variety of operators  
4 from a variety of different brands. Unfortunately, we have not  
5 committed to one at the moment. Our hope is that we will get an  
6 operator that can serve both the hotel and retail use as well to  
7 really create that energy and activity, and there are a few groups  
8 in there. Unfortunately, I am not able to say which operator  
9 that is at the moment.

10 VICE CHAIR MILLER: I'm sorry. And Mr. Chairman, I  
11 should have been muting when my -- I got out of the habit of the  
12 unmuting and muting. I'll start doing that in question and answer  
13 because I know that created a problem when Mr. Hollman was  
14 answering that question.

15 So my last question, I guess -- this is my last  
16 question. What was my last question? God. How many hotel -- I  
17 should know this from the amount of square feet and everything.  
18 How many -- approximately, how many hotel rooms are you  
19 anticipating in this new building?

20 MR. HOLLMAN: Approximately a hundred.

21 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay. And there are two -- those  
22 two buildings are, as the Chairman alluded earlier, are currently  
23 occupied - well, one was occupied by the District government. I  
24 think it still is, to the extent that people are going to work  
25 again.

1 MR. HOLLMAN: Yes.

2 VICE CHAIR MILLER: You're saying the leases are coming  
3 up and they're not -- the D.C. and federal side on the other one  
4 are being vacated and is that --

5 MR. HOLLMAN: That was the plan for the asset, so I  
6 believe we were very fortunate. D.C. has elected to renew in  
7 that building at 899. Just for a little context, throughout the  
8 pandemic, D.C. was operating a 24/7 mission critical facility for  
9 their COVID response out of 899 with the Capitol. We were super  
10 grateful to have them there. I think they did a tremendous job  
11 managing the District's COVID crisis. Muriel Bowser was there  
12 daily. It was a really good thing for both our buildings and  
13 for D.C. as a whole, so we're grateful to have them as a tenant.  
14 In 999, a variety of GSA agencies currently occupy that building.  
15 You have IRS, FERC, CIS, and some smaller private sector tenants  
16 including nonprofits. The majority of those tenants are -- will  
17 be leaving in 2022 and 2023, and we're looking to backfill those  
18 spaces.

19 VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay. Well, thank you for that  
20 information. I'm a little confused by the addresses, because I  
21 think you're rebranding some of these addresses, or maybe you're  
22 not. And so --

23 MR. HOLLMAN: 899 is the building on the south.

24 VICE CHAIR MILLER: The addresses and the old  
25 addresses. But I think -- but I know which buildings you're

1 talking about when you refer to them. But maybe we can get  
2 something in the record that just says 801 -- I don't know. 899  
3 -- and 9 -- 89 -- and 901 was becoming 999. I don't know. It  
4 was a little confusing. But I think I understand the three  
5 buildings and what's being done there, so thank you very much for  
6 all your work on this.

7 MR. HOLLMAN: I appreciate it, Mr. Miller. Thank you  
8 very much for your questions.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I agree with you, Vice Chair. I  
10 thought one was 825, but I just left that alone. I know what  
11 the two buildings were, so anyway.

12 Okay. Commissioner Shapiro.

13 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 Yeah. I have few questions. I think one a bit tongue-  
15 in-cheek, but if you have a few extra hundred bucks lying around,  
16 Mr. Hollman, have you considered just re-skinning these two gray  
17 buildings?

18 MR. HOLLMAN: I need more than 200 bucks.

19 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I guess not. Just a lick of  
20 paint, it will be fine.

21 So a few things. One, I agree with Vice Chair Miller  
22 around this issue around solar and green roof and the weight  
23 limits and the LEED Gold, and I think we're all going to be  
24 aligned around that for you to find a way to make that happen.  
25 And to the weight limitations -- or the weight limit -- I mean

1 the weight limitations are more an issue around a green roof, not  
2 solar, I imagine because solar just doesn't --

3 MR. HOLLMAN: They're both. The solar wind loads act  
4 in a very strange way that can end up causing a significant strain  
5 on building structural systems. So again, we are very open to  
6 exploring solar. In fact, we've explored it on 899 and 999 as  
7 well. We will commit to 4,000 square feet of solar and/or green  
8 roof across the site. 899 and 999, unfortunately, needs full  
9 roof replacements to accommodate green roof or solar, so  
10 unfortunately, that is - it has been difficult for us.

11 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: And why is 4,000 square feet the  
12 magic number? Why not 6, why not 2?

13 MR. HOLLMAN: If we can pull up a diagram to show you  
14 what 4,000 square feet looks like on our roof, but because of  
15 the existing mechanical system that will be located on 901, 4,000  
16 is most of the remaining roof area out there.

17 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Okay. Understood. Thank you.  
18 Thanks for that.

19 The other question I have is about the -- I was confused  
20 around the garage and the connectivity underneath the plaza and  
21 access through all that. If you can just talk about that for a  
22 bit so I understand it.

23 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah. It's quite a challenge. And I  
24 think it would be helpful to show a diagram maybe of where the  
25 existing garage is. Does anyone on my team know what that diagram

1 is labeled that shows the existing -- the extent of the existing  
2 garage?

3 MR. ROBINSON: I know that it's a plan in Gorove Slade's  
4 documents. They do have a plan that diagrams where the existing  
5 building is and where the proposed new retail connection for 999  
6 and the new 901 building are. I don't remember exactly what  
7 slide it is.

8 MR. HOLLMAN: Dan Solomon, can you help just guide us?

9 MR. SOLOMON: Sure. Absolutely. Yeah. It's a -- we  
10 only have a few slides, so it's not many. It should be -- keep  
11 on going. Slide number - like right --

12 MR. UTZ: Slide 68 right of the PDF.

13 MR. SOLOMON: Yep, 67 or 68. I think 68 probably does,  
14 if we're discussing loading.

15 MR. HOLLMAN: Thank you, Jeff.

16 Okay. So I think this slide is very helpful. We can  
17 even zoom in a little bit. You can see the extent of 999, North  
18 Capitol, which is denoted by that black line, blacked dotted line  
19 on the north and so that's where a plan north. And that's where  
20 the existing facade lands on the site at Union Square. The garage  
21 actually extends out into the 901 plaza and about halfway -- and  
22 actually overlaps with the hotel building that we will be building  
23 on that plaza.

24 Now that's great because we don't have to build any  
25 more parking for 901. And I think it's a really good thing for

1 the transportation system and not clogging the existing  
2 infrastructure at -- in NoMa and D.C. as a whole. Because of  
3 this, we can use the yellow -- the -- where the yellow lines are,  
4 we can use that as loading and unloading for both 999 North  
5 Capitol and 901 North Capitol. The loading for 901 North Capitol  
6 can occur by bringing any materials unloaded from those trucks  
7 across from where that purple diagram is. We will be dropping  
8 an elevator down into the existing 999 garage. So 901 will have  
9 an elevator that drops down through the building and into the  
10 garage, and we can use that for loading and parking and guests,  
11 and thus limit the amount of new parking or new loading facilities  
12 that are required on the site. Hopefully, that's helpful.

13 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Yeah. So how -- so there's a  
14 pedestrian connection as well, as well as the loading --

15 MR. HOLLMAN: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: -- for through -- all three  
17 buildings? So essentially, as you drive in, you're going to  
18 experience this as one garage underneath all three buildings,  
19 right?

20 MR. HOLLMAN: 899 has a separate garage, but 999 and  
21 901 will share a garage.

22 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: That's what I didn't understand.  
23 Okay. So then -- so for -- so how are you handling -- like what's  
24 the material of -- what kind of membrane do you put? What kind  
25 of material are you putting on the new plaza? Because you're

1 putting in -- you're essentially either heavily refurbishing or  
2 for part of it, you're putting in a new plaza, right?

3 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah. It's quite complicated. I mean  
4 there is a lot of jacketing and structural reinforcement going  
5 on below grade to accommodate the new plaza. Dan Avrit talked a  
6 little bit about the planting and concrete pavers that we'll be  
7 using to finish them as well.

8 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: If I can, Mr. Hollman, I mean  
9 my questions are around trying to understand the structural  
10 integrity on the wall, because in my experience, the enemy of  
11 garages is water.

12 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah.

13 MR. ROBINSON: Yeah. I can speak to that a little bit,  
14 Sam, if you don't mind.

15 MR. HOLLMAN: Perfect.

16 MR. ROBINSON: So that existing garage is -- if you've  
17 ever been in that garage, it's actually kind of funny. It has  
18 some crazy slopes in there because there is an old kind of  
19 underground stream that cuts through the existing plaza today and  
20 so that garage, it's very close to that stream. So anyway, there  
21 is existing water issues for that garage today just from typical  
22 age and also exacerbated by the fact that there is this  
23 underground water flow happening so close to it.

24 So part of the expense that Network Realty is incurring  
25 is exposing a good portion of that existing garage. Obviously,

1 | we have to do some of that anyway to build the 901 building over  
2 | it. But going back and re-waterproofing a lot of that existing  
3 | garage below there, there's also -- that foundation for that  
4 | garage is really only meant to support the two-stories of parking  
5 | deck, and the minimal amount of planting in plaza that is above  
6 | it today. So another big expense and complication just  
7 | engineering wise that we've had to face is figuring out how to  
8 | support the portion of the 901 building that's coming down on top  
9 | of that existing garage, and we're essentially drilling new  
10 | concrete structure through that garage, and this is constantly  
11 | changing, so please don't quote me on any of this.

12 |           But we're also beefing up the foundation of that  
13 | garage. It's a mat slab foundation, which benefits us because  
14 | we can keep it up by just thickening it. But is -- in its current  
15 | state, it's too thin to really support the load of the 901  
16 | building. So we're doing some selective re-engineering of how  
17 | that slab works on the lowest parking level and tying in new  
18 | structure to it. So it's a pretty complicated ordeal to get what  
19 | portion of the 901 building is sitting on top of it to work  
20 | structurally.

21 |           COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: All right. And I mean I  
22 | appreciate that. It's helpful to have you articulate it that  
23 | way, and I guess that's my concern. I want to echo, by the way,  
24 | what my colleagues said. I think there's all sorts of wonderful  
25 | elements to the design and activating this plaza in this way is

1 a wonderful thing. It really is a signature project in lots of  
2 ways. It feels like, at the risk of being pessimistic, like we  
3 may have you back before us, when you -- if when you find out  
4 that it's actually just not feasible to put that building on that  
5 garage.

6 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah. We've done a lot of diligence, Mr.  
7 Shapiro, to that effort. And we've tried to minimize the overlap  
8 that's occurring on that garage. And on the parts that have  
9 overlapped, we budgeted for a substantial amount of micropiles  
10 going down through the garage --

11 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: There we go.

12 MR. HOLLMAN: -- to shore up and support.

13 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Right. I mean I hear that. But  
14 I was also, and maybe I just made this up because I desired it  
15 sometimes, but I thought there was something in the OP report at  
16 some point that talked about how they felt that it was essentially  
17 over parked anyhow. Did I misremember them?

18 MR. HOLLMAN: I would like Dan Solomon to answer that,  
19 but yes. As it currently stands, both buildings are over parked.

20 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Yeah. Because I was wondering  
21 if like -- I mean I don't have to do your work for you. But  
22 like, could you just like kill some of the parking to make the  
23 whole thing more structurally sound?

24 MR. ROBINSON: We're already doing that to a certain  
25 extent.

1 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: You are.

2 MR. HOLLMAN: Yes. Correct. We are losing (audio  
3 interference) --

4 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: All right. I'll let it go. I  
5 just was -- I flagged it as something that concerned me, so I  
6 felt like I said, so --

7 MR. HOLLMAN: It's a good question. If you were in my  
8 shoes, you would have dealt with that an awful lot for the last  
9 six months, so you know what you're talking about.

10 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: So the last one, and Mr. Chair,  
11 I apologize for going on so long. But as much as I love the  
12 design in so many ways, I have to say that the bump outs, you  
13 know, respect -- I'll say this respectfully. They feel like they  
14 were kind of designed by committee. I can't get my hand around  
15 what the -- what does the retail bump out want to be?

16 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah.

17 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: And to be blunt, I don't  
18 particularly like it. I see -- there's that one corner -- it  
19 was on slide 25. And maybe it's just because it was the softer  
20 materials, and it felt like -- I don't even know.

21 Paul, if you could pull up 25, slide 25. You probably  
22 know the one I'm talking about. It was just softer materials.  
23 I don't think it was wood. It was some kind of metal product or  
24 something that was under the eaves of the -- yeah. Right. I  
25 looked at that. And I thought, oh, that's fabulous. And then I

1 | was like, yeah, but that doesn't speak to anything else. And so  
2 | if you could just -- I mean I understand compromise, I understand  
3 | that competing interests and you're working with something that's  
4 | like a bad version of brutalist architecture to begin with. So,  
5 | you know. There's not a lot of options, but I just feel like  
6 | where you landed -- yeah. I'll leave it at that. I mean thoughts,  
7 | response.

8 |           MR. HOLLMAN: Mr. Shapiro, I wish I had you in all of  
9 | the meetings leading up to this one. But I do appreciate your  
10 | concern. I actually really liked this eyebrow with the wood  
11 | underpinning. I think it's really nice. I think it draws --  
12 | because the lobby for 899 is located on the plaza, it's important  
13 | to have that visual connection to draw users of that office  
14 | building back into that plaza. I think -- one of the comments  
15 | we got from OP was try to do as little as you can to take away  
16 | from the Capitol view, and that comment was heeded in order to  
17 | obtain approval and their support. Again, I get where you're  
18 | coming from. It was a little bit of a design by committee  
19 | process, but we still believe this will be effective especially  
20 | when the signage is added, and it will add a little bit of  
21 | additional flair to kind of -- without a ton of lighting and  
22 | massive "look at me" signs. It'll add enough flair to kind of  
23 | bring the site together as a whole.

24 |           COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Okay. I'll leave it at that.  
25 | I appreciate all your answers. And again, overall, I'm really

1 just excited about the project. And Mr. Chair, I'll turn it back  
2 to you.

3 MR. HOLLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Shapiro. Appreciate your  
4 questions.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Thank you. And that last part,  
6 Commissioner Shapiro, I kind of like that last part, so it could  
7 be on that committee. So I will say -- we're in architecture,  
8 we need them. But anyway, I'm just curious what they would have  
9 to say on that. But I do want my colleagues to remember, there's  
10 a request about seven years. That's something that we can discuss  
11 as we get through the rest of the hearing at that time.

12 Ms. Schellin, do we have anyone from ANC 6, I think  
13 it's 6E. That is the -- well, I guess both of them could cross.  
14 Do we have anyone who wants to cross from ANC 6C or 6E?

15 MS. SCHELLIN: I'm looking. I know that we had Mark  
16 Eckenwiler and Karen Wirt from 6C.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I just want to make sure that they  
18 --

19 MS. SCHELLIN: Let me see who was on for 6E. Let me  
20 check and see.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Can we found out if they want to  
22 cross-examine?

23 MS. SCHELLIN: My computer just went -- my connection  
24 to the -- oh, goodness. My VPN connection just went down.

25 MR. YOUNG: I don't see either of them (audio

1 | interference).

2 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I don't see either one either.

3 | MS. SCHELLIN: Yeah. What about four 6E. Who is the  
4 | -- do you have a name for 6E?

5 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I think it was -- is it Rachelle  
6 | Nigro.

7 | MR. YOUNG: It is.

8 | MS. SCHELLIN: No.

9 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: You don't see her.

10 | MS. SCHELLIN: She was not on. But there was a Rachelle  
11 | --

12 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay.

13 | COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: That was her in the letter.

14 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yeah. I remember it was Rachelle  
15 | Nigro. One of those (audio interference) --

16 | MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. No. She was not on there.

17 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. All right. So we have called  
18 | for the Commissioners, neither of them are on but we do have the  
19 | letters for the record.

20 | Let's go to the Office of Planning, Mr. Cochran and  
21 | then I think DDOT, we have Ms. Bridges. If we can bring them  
22 | up.

23 | Mr. Cochran, when you're ready, you may begin.

24 | MR. COCHRAN: There we go. Okay. You can hear me?

25 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes, I can Mr. Cochran. Now, you've

1 | heard us have an hour-and-a-half discussion, and I know your  
2 | report is -- if you could just hit the highlights, that would be  
3 | very helpful.

4 |           MR. COCHRAN: As always, my report will be brief.

5 |           Good afternoon. Steve Cochran representing this case  
6 | for the Office of Planning.

7 |           OP's recommending the Commission approve application  
8 | 21-09 for review of the project in the North Capitol Street  
9 | corridor sub-area of the downtown zones. Our recommendation is  
10 | subject to the four conditions on the first page of our report,  
11 | which the applicant noted in its testimony and to which the  
12 | applicant has agreed. As the applicant also noted, the additional  
13 | information OP's report asked for has been submitted.

14 |           With those conditions and the supplementary  
15 | information, the application meets the criteria in Subtitle I,  
16 | Section 617.7 and Chapter 17 -- Chapter 7 of Subtitle I. and the  
17 | special exception criteria of Subtitle X Chapter 9. It includes  
18 | illustrations demonstrated in the project would preserve the  
19 | North Capitol Street vista and the view of the Capitol Dome. The  
20 | proposed uses are all by-right in the D-5 Zone. The buildings  
21 | would meet the build-to requirements and the Phase I additions  
22 | would significantly reinforce the building line on North Capitol  
23 | Street.

24 |           There wouldn't be any intrusion into the mandated  
25 | upper-level setbacks. Both the additions in that Phase II hotel

1 | would be in context with the neighborhood and with street  
2 | patterns. There would be no new conflicts between vehicles and  
3 | pedestrians introduced. There wouldn't be any blank walls facing  
4 | public spaces. The Phase I renovations would improve the  
5 | environmental performance of the existing buildings at a LEED  
6 | Silver level, and Phase II would meet LEED Silver certified.  
7 | With the revisions additions -- with the materials and revisions  
8 | -- let me try that again.

9 |           With the revision to the materials in the additions,  
10 | the project would enhance North Capitol Street as a monumental  
11 | civic boulevard. And that's one of the reasons why the only new  
12 | upper-level sign would be visible only if somebody were facing  
13 | north away from the Capitol. That's also one of the reasons that  
14 | we pushed for more unity among the materials and the colors on  
15 | those bump out additions. The buildings wouldn't impact  
16 | residential uses in NoMa. And finally, on the criteria, the  
17 | project would be in harmony with the zoning regulations and maps,  
18 | and it wouldn't tend to have any adverse effect on neighboring  
19 | properties.

20 |           OP is very comfortable recommending you approve the  
21 | application. But as the applicant noted, OP and DOEE will  
22 | continue to encourage the applicant to design at least Phase II's  
23 | hotel to LEED Gold standards, possibly including rooftop solar  
24 | panels.

25 |           With respect to other comments, DDOT is here, and

1 they'll represent themselves today.

2 DOEE's staff provided extensive comments that we  
3 attached to our report, and ANC 6E voted to support the project  
4 and included the comments on design bicycle facilities and public  
5 realm comments.

6 That concludes our, as always, brief report, and I'm  
7 certainly open to any questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Thank you, Mr. Cochran.

9 Before Ms. Bridges, I will say, Mr. Cochran is because  
10 of the work that you do up front is why are you able to give us  
11 brief reports. So I want you to know we appreciate all the work,  
12 and I know you've done a lot of work with OP, and you all have  
13 done a lot of work, so that's how you're able to give us those  
14 very brief reports, so thank you.

15 Let's go to Ms. Bridges and then will have questions  
16 for both. The same applies to you, Ms. Bridges and DDOT as well.

17 MS. BRIDGES: Hello. Good evening, Chairman Hood and  
18 members of the Commission. For the record, I'm Kelsey Bridges  
19 with the District Department of Transportation.

20 DDOT is supportive of the applicant's proposal. As you  
21 heard in the presentation, the applicant has coordinated with  
22 DDOT on the transportation impacts and has come to an agreement  
23 with the applicant on a robust transportation demand management  
24 plan to mitigate the project's impacts to the transportation  
25 system. The applicant has agreed to the additional TDM elements

1 DDOT requested in their report as noted in the transportation  
2 supplemental memo. The updated TDM plan is documented in the  
3 September 8th, 2021, transportation supplemental memo, which is  
4 Exhibit 18 on the record.

5 With the agreed to TDM plan included in a final zoning  
6 order and continued coordination with DDOT through public space  
7 permitting, DDOT has no objection to approval of this  
8 application. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Thank you both, Mr. Cochran  
10 and Ms. Bridges.

11 Commissioner, let's see if we have any questions of  
12 either from the Office of Planning or DDOT. Vice Chair Miller.

13 VICE CHAIR MILLER: No questions. Thank you both for  
14 your report and recommendations and work on this case.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Commissioner Shapiro.

16 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a  
17 quick question for Mr. Cochran, and again, thank you both for  
18 your work on this.

19 I'm having the same issue around the design of the bump  
20 outs and I'm wondering if I could hear a little bit more of that  
21 from you, Mr. Cochran. I mean I really liked that corner feature  
22 that they had with just a little bit more warmth to it and a  
23 little bit more of a bump out. And I guess the position of OP  
24 is it would be too much to take that design and carry it -- carry  
25 something more like that throughout because of the potential

1 visual intrusion.

2 MR. COCHRAN: No. That's not OP's position. We also  
3 very much like that pavilion. Even with the wood, which if you  
4 know, the Southwest Library, the wood actually works pretty well  
5 on those kinds of cantilevers.

6 What we focused on with the applicant was simplifying,  
7 unifying the design. There used to be different shades of brick  
8 on one building versus the other. There were more changes in  
9 the details of the facades in the earlier designs than you see  
10 now.

11 There were two things that we had to keep in mind. One  
12 is existing buildings aren't going to win any design contests.  
13 So what do you do with that? But we want to bring the bump outs  
14 out to the street, so that they refine -- you know, help define  
15 the building wall. But the other thing is that, North Capitol  
16 Street is supposed to be a monumental boulevard, which means  
17 something about scale and deference to the Capitol. So that's  
18 one reason that we didn't want to call too much attention to the  
19 different colors of brick because that just made -- honestly that  
20 made the old buildings look even worse, if that's possible.

21 And getting a little bit of uniformity to the design  
22 and especially the color was supposed to give two buildings  
23 flanking sort of a punctuation point in the middle with the hotel.  
24 And it gave enough of the same scale, color, rhythm, materials,  
25 et cetera, to pull it all together as one composition, which

1 | seemed appropriate for North Capitol Street as it moves towards  
2 | the Capitol. I hope that's helpful.

3 |           COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Right. I understand where  
4 | you're coming from. I think -- I mean maybe (audio interference),  
5 | but I'm not sure I agree that it was accomplished. But I've --  
6 | maybe being overly empowered because the two architects are no  
7 | longer on the panel. I don't know. It could be happening at a  
8 | less conscious level, I have to say.

9 |           But I think, Mr. Cochran, the problem is my experience  
10 | of it was -- it was very jumbled, that it didn't read as one  
11 | design, and the design on ones that I liked the most are the  
12 | least represented, which was that softer either wood or metal  
13 | piece that kind of -- sort of -- it didn't feel like it -- like  
14 | it didn't feel like it was attacking the building behind it. It  
15 | just kind of felt like it was ignoring the building behind it a  
16 | little bit. And that -- it felt okay. The rest of it looked -  
17 | - I know, I don't need to argue with you, Mr. Cochran, and your  
18 | design sentiment is just it's -- isn't the issue because you're  
19 | pretty good about that. So Mr. Chair, I think I'll just leave  
20 | it at that, and we can talk about it when we come back. That's  
21 | all I have.

22 |           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Thank you. And where is  
23 | Commissioner May when you need him. No, I'm just kidding.

24 |           So let me see, any other questions Vice Chair Miller,  
25 | Commissioner Shapiro. Okay.

1           Let me thank both the Office of Planning and DDOT. But  
2 first, let me see does the applicant -- Mr. Utz, do you have any  
3 questions of anybody, to either one of them?

4           MR. UTZ: We do not. Thank you.

5           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. All right. Well, thank you  
6 both for your reports, and we appreciate all the work you both  
7 have done. Thank you.

8           Do we have any other government reports? I think we've  
9 expounded on the other government reports. We mentioned the  
10 comments from DOEE. Any others that we have or may be leaving  
11 out?

12           Okay. Also, we did have -- I think we talked  
13 extensively on the reports of ANC 6C and 6E. And Mr. Utz has  
14 already verified that they have worked to satisfy their concerns  
15 in both letters. I think it was a total of four different  
16 conditions the way I read it. But anyway, whatever their concerns  
17 were, have been addressed.

18           Let me see. Ms. Schellin, do we have anyone who would  
19 like to testify either in support, opposition or undeclared in  
20 the audience or in the queue?

21           MS. SCHELLIN: There was no one to testify other than  
22 the applicant's team.

23           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Unless my colleagues have  
24 anything else, we will have rebuttal, Mr. Utz, if you have any,  
25 which I don't think you do, and then we will have your closing.

1           MR. UTZ: That's great. Thank you, Chairman Hood. And  
2 again, thank you to -- for all the comments and for the discussion  
3 of the project. And thank you to the Agencies for their input  
4 on this. They have been very helpful and very kind of responsive  
5 and thoughtful throughout the process, so hopefully, it shows in  
6 kind of the product that's before you today.

7           But we are excited to have this in its current form.  
8 We think that the project does meet all the specific standards  
9 of the design review case for the North Capitol streetscape. We  
10 kind of very purposely -- we, being the architect's team and the  
11 ownership, very purposely decided to go in the direction that  
12 they want architecturally on the bump outs for 899 and 999.

13           And there is some information in the record and some  
14 of its included in the presentation that kind of walks through  
15 how they came to the decisions they came through with the  
16 different precedent that they analyzed over the kind of crafting  
17 of the design.

18           We'd be happy to put a little bit more detail and focus  
19 on that in any post-hearing submission that you might like us to  
20 detail. And similarly, we'd be happy to talk about the  
21 sustainability concepts that we talked about a bit today in any  
22 sort of post-hearing submission, but all in all, we believe that  
23 this project meets the standards of the design review case. And  
24 we appreciate the opportunity to present to you today, and the  
25 time you spent with us. Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Utz and also  
2 to the team. Mr. Hollman and his team. We appreciate the  
3 presentation.

4 I know that my colleagues have -- we had some "asks"  
5 -- I know Commissioner Shapiro would need to see some stuff. And  
6 I think this is a one vote case, so I don't -- we won't be taking  
7 a vote tonight. If you could supply us with some of those needs,  
8 some of the things that we've asked for.

9 Commissioner Shapiro, I know that you've asked them to  
10 relook at even the bump out and some other things if they choose  
11 to. And I'm not sure what the Vice Chair asked for. And I also  
12 note, Commissioner Shapiro, you talked about the green and the  
13 Gold and some of those things with the hotel, and I think Mr.  
14 Utz has already committed to supplying more information on some  
15 of those topics. Commissioner Shapiro.

16 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I guess -- I mean my question  
17 on the design is -- does the -- my read on this is that the  
18 applicant may agree that this was a bit of a compromise and not  
19 exactly where they would have wanted to be, but they want to move  
20 the project forward. And so -- I mean that's my sense of it,  
21 but I don't really know. I mean I guess that -- my question is,  
22 is there some value and do you all agree, because maybe it's just  
23 me, and then it's kind of moot. But is there some value in having  
24 them go back with a little bit more of an assertive design for  
25 us to be able to have that before us?

1           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Vice Chair -- let me hear. Maybe -  
2 - I have my opinion on it. But Vice Chair, you want to respond?  
3 Do you have anything, any comments on that?

4           VICE CHAIR MILLER: On Commissioner Shapiro's concerns  
5 or questions about the design of that particular (audio  
6 interference) --

7           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: (Audio interference).

8           VICE CHAIR MILLER: Is that what you're asking about?

9           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes.

10          VICE CHAIR MILLER: I always like wood under -- I always  
11 like wood on -- or wood appearing like material on commercial or  
12 residential buildings in the city. It's refreshing. It's warm.  
13 So I did not have the problem with the cohesion or unification,  
14 but if they want to respond more on that. The only thing I  
15 wanted, Mr. Chairman in a post-hearing submission was more of a  
16 commitment to LEED Gold and solar on the new hotel building.

17          CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. I would agree, Vice Chair.  
18 I would ask to look at that. I don't want to take away -- also  
19 back to Commissioner Shapiro's point, and I would agree with Vice  
20 Chair on more information on Gold and Silver to see what we can  
21 do, but Commissioner Shapiro, my only thing is, if I understand  
22 -- I like what's there now. I just don't want it to be messed -  
23 - I don't want to go in the opposite direction. That's just kind  
24 of where I am. If we could enhance it, then I'm all for it. But  
25 the go -- and I think I heard Mr. Cochran say they didn't want

1 | to take away from -- distract from the Capitol or anything else  
2 | in those views, so that's kind of where I am.

3 |           So to me, I'm fine right there where it is. But if  
4 | they want to just do a little more discovery on that. I mean  
5 | they're perfectly well do it. We're going to give them some more  
6 | time. They'll have until the 6th of October -- well, I think  
7 | we're going to decide this on the 6th of October if everything  
8 | else falls into place. So I don't know where you are Commissioner  
9 | Shapiro on that, where you are.

10 |           COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I mean it feels a little tricky,  
11 | right? Because are we -- we're asking them to do a redesign in  
12 | some degree, and if so, then we'll want OP to comment on that.  
13 | And there's a sort of a back and forth around it, which could  
14 | extend it, which isn't the end of the world because this really  
15 | is a signature project in a very important location, and we want  
16 | to get it right. But I'm just -- I'm kind of curious where the  
17 | applicant is about what we're talking about.

18 |           CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So I just don't want to -- like I  
19 | said, I don't want to take away from what's there. I like what's  
20 | there. They're asking for seven years, so little more time won't  
21 | hurt, if we need to get there, and maybe we ask -- get input from  
22 | Commissioner May at some point. I would be interested. This is  
23 | one of those cases where -- this is one time I'll be interested  
24 | to hear what he has to say. And I'm hoping he doesn't hear I  
25 | said that, but anyway. Actually, I said that so he would because

1 I'm not sure where we are.

2 VICE CHAIR MILLER: He's going to replay that quote  
3 over and over.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: All right. So I don't know. I  
5 don't know where we are. So I'm leaving it up to the Vice Chair  
6 and Commissioner Shapiro. I don't know where we are. But you  
7 are --

8 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I'd like to spend a little bit  
9 more time on this bump out design. I think it would be worth  
10 it. I think it's an important enough project. I am committed  
11 to this project. I think it's an exciting project in an important  
12 location. And I think there is some value in bringing a little  
13 bit more work into that bump out design.

14 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Let me ask my colleagues  
15 this. Does anybody have a problem with the seven years they're  
16 asking for? Okay. So I want to make sure we got that out of  
17 the way. No. Nobody has a problem with the seven years, I think.  
18 And I agree with Commissioner Shapiro, they may come back, and  
19 we may have to do some refining of some things anyway, so that's  
20 kind of where we are.

21 MR. HOLLMAN: Chairman Hood.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes.

23 MR. HOLLMAN: Just to be very clear. The seven years  
24 ask is only for the center parcel. D.C. will be shifting Agencies  
25 that occupy the current 899 building. So we're hopeful that

1 | those improvements will happen at the beginning of 2023, so just  
2 | to be clear.

3 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So seven years is only for 901?

4 | MR. HOLLMAN: Correct.

5 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. Okay. I got you now.

6 | COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Mr. Chair.

7 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Commissioner Shapiro.

8 | COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Mr. Hollman, at the risk of  
9 | asking you to speak around your attorney, which is always a bad  
10 | thing to do.

11 | MR. HOLLMAN: But I (audio interference) with it?

12 | COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: I mean can you take on this  
13 | retail bump out design again or the bump out design again? Is  
14 | there something -- I mean I'm asking a -- you know, a pretty  
15 | honest question and dialogue. Is there some value in revisiting  
16 | that design, or is that -- you've already gone through this and  
17 | you've kind of ended up where you ended up and that's the  
18 | compromise?

19 | MR. HOLLMAN: I'm very worried about the Office of  
20 | Planning's response to any redesign and re-engaging with that  
21 | process given where we've ended up today. I feel like we feel  
22 | pretty comfortable with it. We would like to spice it up a little  
23 | bit by adding some metal accents that don't take away from the  
24 | Capitol view. So if that's something you'd like us to explore,  
25 | I think we can do that easily. With that being said, I wouldn't

1 want to do a wholesale design change and then have to go through  
2 this whole process again. And so one of the things that I'm  
3 grappling with is every time I make a design change, it costs  
4 thousands of dollars in producing all of these different  
5 materials. Maybe I could modify one image slightly to kind of  
6 do what I was saying and add a few metal accents that don't take  
7 away from the whole design.

8 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Yeah. And Mr. Chair, I'm  
9 comfortable with that. I'm comfortable with a version of it,  
10 which at least softens it a bit and gives it a little bit more  
11 sort of coherence and builds off that sort of corner element that  
12 I think this is the strongest element of it anyhow. That's good  
13 enough for me, Mr. Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. So let's see --

15 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: It's look like minor -- you can  
16 do some minor work to the elevations that you're giving us to  
17 get a better sense of -- I think we're asking for -- what you  
18 said was add more of the softer materials.

19 MR. HOLLMAN: Yeah. I don't think we're going to add  
20 any wood particularly. But I think there are good some good  
21 metal accents that we could potentially experiment with that  
22 might enhance the design like you're speaking of.

23 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: Okay. That's all I have, Mr.  
24 Chair.

25 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. All right. I think we have

1 a plan going forward for us to still possibly have the discussion  
2 on the 6th.

3 Does anybody have any other questions or comments?  
4 Vice Chair or Commissioner Shapiro?

5 Okay. Ms. Schellin -- Mr. Utz, you've already given  
6 us your closing, I believe.

7 MR. UTZ: Yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Ms. Schellin, can we come up with  
9 some dates. If we can still meet the 6th, because it sounds like  
10 what they're doing isn't going to be that impactful.

11 MS. SCHELLIN: October -- is it the 6th or October 5th?

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Oh, the 5th.

13 MS. SCHELLIN: That's our next meeting. Do you want  
14 me to just --

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: That's my BZA day.

16 MS. SCHELLIN: I did jot down a few things. Do you  
17 want me to go over the list very quickly just to make sure those  
18 things are still wanted?

19 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Right. If we could, to see if it's  
20 still needed, yes.

21 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. Let me see what I got. Make sure  
22 the signage is not flashy. I don't know if you actually want  
23 them to show you the signage or not. That was Chairman Hood.

24 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I think that can just be an order,  
25 and I think everybody knows what I'm talking about. I think that

1 | could just be an order. I don't think it's anything I need to  
2 | see.

3 | MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. So we don't need to see that.  
4 | Okay.

5 | Seven years. Everyone agreed. That's okay for the  
6 | center building only.

7 | Are you asking Chairman -- I mean Commissioner May to  
8 | review the record and participate because he doesn't get back  
9 | until pretty late this month?

10 | CHAIRPERSON HOOD: No, no. Because when he comes back  
11 | that -- no, no, I'm not. I was just trying -- if we were going  
12 | to go extensively on what Commissioner Shapiro was asking for,  
13 | but I think now, we've come to an agreement what he's asking for,  
14 | so we -- the four of us can decide that.

15 | MS. SCHELLIN: Are you -- Commissioner Miller brought  
16 | this up. You'd like for them to commit to LEED Gold? They did  
17 | say they committed to the solar roof and the green roof.

18 | Commissioner Miller, are you asking them to do that?

19 | VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes. I mean our response to that,  
20 | why they can't.

21 | MS. SCHELLIN: The response. Okay.

22 | Commissioner Miller asked for something in the record  
23 | indicating the current address and (audio interference).

24 | VICE CHAIR MILLER: That's unnecessary.

25 | MS. SCHELLIN: It's not now.

1 VICE CHAIR MILLER: I figured it out.

2 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. Shapiro, slide 25. "While it  
3 looks great, it doesn't seem to speak to anything else. Spend  
4 some more time on that bump out area, some minor work on the  
5 elevations that doesn't take away from the Capitol view. Some  
6 softer materials could be added." Is that all --

7 COMMISSIONER SHAPIRO: So we are asking for that. So  
8 a new take on -- within reason, some enhancements to the bump  
9 outs.

10 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. Some enhancements. Okay.

11 And that's all I have other than, of course, a draft  
12 order, and so in order to make that October the 5th meeting.  
13 Sorry. Let me get back to my other screen. So looking at October  
14 5th. Would you guys be able to provide that -- say by -- giving  
15 you the most time possible, September 24th? Jeff.

16 MR. UTZ: Yeah. Yeah. I think we can do that. Sam's  
17 coming from a design point of view.

18 MR. HOLLMAN: To be complete by September 24th?

19 MR. UTZ: Yes. The items we talked about. I know it's  
20 tight but otherwise --

21 MS. SCHELLIN: I mean our next meeting is the 14th of  
22 October.

23 MR. HOLLMAN: We can do the 14th of October.

24 MS. SCHELLIN: Will give you another week. Would you  
25 prefer to go there?

1 MR. HOLLMAN: I'm out of town for a wedding on the  
2 24th, unfortunately.

3 MS. SCHELLIN: No, 14th.

4 MR. HOLLMAN: The 14th would be ideal, if that's  
5 possible.

6 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. Sure. We can give you then,  
7 until the 30th of September. Does that work better?

8 MR. HOLLMAN: That's perfect. Thank you so much.

9 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. And then the ANC's, Mr. Utz if  
10 you would reach out to them and let them know that they would  
11 have until October 7th to provide a response if they choose to  
12 do so.

13 MR. UTZ: Sure.

14 MS. SCHELLIN: And then we can put this on for 4 o'clock  
15 p.m. on October 14th.

16 MR. UTZ: Great. Thank you. That's ideal.

17 MS. SCHELLIN: If we could also have your draft order  
18 by the 30th.

19 MR. UTZ: Sure.

20 MS. SCHELLIN: Okay. That's it.

21 MR. UTZ: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. So it sounds like we're all  
23 on the same page. I'm trying to see the next meeting. The Zoning  
24 Commission does not meet Thursday. Okay. All right.

25 So let me thank everyone one for their presentation

1 tonight, this applicant. We appreciate it. I think the things  
2 that we've asked for in this case, the record will be closed  
3 except for the things that we've asked for, and we will be making  
4 a decision on this case on October 14th. So thank you for all  
5 the work that's been involved and that's goes out to everyone.

6 The Zoning Commission will meet again on September the  
7 20th on Zoning Commission Case No. 21-08, and we will be meeting  
8 4 in the afternoon on these same platforms. And this is a  
9 petition to amend a text amendment in the zoning regulations.  
10 And that will be the case here in the Zoning Commission Case  
11 21-08.

12 So with that, Ms. Schellin, do we everything else?

13 MS. SCHELLIN: No, sir.

14 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. I want to thank everyone for  
15 participation tonight and thanks again for everything and have a  
16 good evening and stay safe.

17 MR. UTZ: Thank you.

18 MR. HOLLMAN: Thank you everyone for your time.

19 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Goodnight.

20 MR. UTZ: Goodnight.

21 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the  
22 record at 5:58 p.m.)  
23  
24  
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Public Hearing

Before: DCZC

Date: 09-13-21

Place: Teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my  
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