

GOVERNMENT
OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

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SPECIAL MEETING

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MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 26, 2007

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The Special Meeting of the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened in Room 220 South, 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001, pursuant to notice, at 6:19 p.m., Carol J. Mitten, Chairperson, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

CAROL J. MITTEN	Chairperson
ANTHONY J. HOOD	Vice-Chairperson
GREGORY N. JEFFRIES	Commissioner
JOHN G. PARSONS	Commissioner (NPS)

OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

SHARON S. SCHELLIN	Secretary
DONNA HANOUSEK	Zoning Specialist

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

JENNIFER STEINGASSER
JOEL LAWSON
TRAVIS PARKER

D.C. OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL PRESENT:

ALAN BERGSTEIN, ESQ.

This transcript constitutes the
minutes from the Special Meeting held on
February 26, 2007.

I N D E X

Preliminary Matters (None)

ZC Case No. 06-27 (Boston Properties, et al. -
Consolidated PUD & Related Map Amendment
@ Square 54) 4

Adjourn 37

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

2 6:19 p.m.

3 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Good evening,
4 ladies and gentlemen. This is a special
5 public meeting of the Zoning Commission of the
6 District of Columbia for Monday, February 26,
7 2007.

8 My name is Carol Mitten and
9 joining me this evening are Vice Chairman
10 Anthony Hood and Commissioners Greg Jeffries
11 and John Parsons.

12 We have a very short meeting
13 agenda and it's available to you in the wall
14 bin by the door. I would just like to remind
15 folks that we don't take any testimony at our
16 meetings unless the Commission specifically
17 requests someone to come forward.

18 Please be advised that the
19 proceeding is being recorded by the court
20 reporter and is also being webcast live and
21 therefore we ask you to refrain from making
22 any disruptive noises in the hearing room

1 during our meeting. And I'd ask you to turn
2 off all beepers and cell phones for the same
3 reason.

4 Ms. Schellin, do we have any
5 preliminary matters?

6 All right, then we're ready to
7 start and the only item on our agenda for this
8 special public meeting is proposed action in
9 Case No. 06-27 and this is the PUD for Square
10 54.

11 So just to refresh everyone's
12 memory about what we have before us, in Square
13 54, we have a request for a PUD-related map
14 amendment from the existing R5D zoning of the
15 site to C3C. The total density proposed under
16 this PUD would be 7.5 FAR and that's divided
17 roughly between 3.9 FAR of office use; 3 FAR
18 residential use; and about a .5 FAR of retail,
19 including a grocery store.

20 And the amenities and benefits
21 that are being proffered is a project that is
22 designed to accommodate a grocery store that's

1 up to 42,000 square feet, but the Applicant
2 has committed to provide a grocery store of no
3 fewer than 25,000 square feet. The affordable
4 housing proffer is 13 percent of the total
5 project; residential area divided between 8
6 percent or 27 units for affordable housing at
7 the level of 80 percent of the AMI and
8 workforce housing of 5 percent of the total or
9 17 units at 100 percent of the AMI.

10 They've also proffered an
11 internal, below-grade loading facility and
12 interior courtyard and public garden available
13 to the surrounding community; that they will
14 achieve a minimum of 16 lead points, various
15 streetscape improvements above the norm; and
16 \$100,000 contribution toward the design and
17 engineering of a second entrance to the Foggy
18 Bottom Metro station.

19 In terms of mitigation, they've
20 proffered a funding of traffic signal at 22nd
21 and I Streets and a transportation management
22 plan that includes various components.

1 The opposition to the project --
2 I'll just hit the highlights of the issues
3 that have been raised. Height is an issue for
4 the opposition. They raised concerns about
5 whether or not the proposed height is in
6 violation of the Height Act. They've asserted
7 that the building is too high along Washington
8 Circle. The building is too high facing
9 adjacent buildings to the south and that light
10 and air to residential buildings surrounding
11 Washington Circle will be blocked by the
12 project.

13 The opposition has raised issues
14 regarding inconsistency with the Comprehensive
15 Plan, most notably that the commercial zoning
16 that's being proffered as the PUD map
17 amendment is inconsistent with the site's
18 institutional generalized land use
19 designation; that the use of the PUD process
20 and the rezoning in this case circumvents the
21 zone plan because Square 54 is within the
22 boundaries of the current G.W. Campus Plan,

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1 and that rezoning to a commercial zone which
2 would permit a voidance of the aggregation
3 rule is contrary to the zone plan that Section
4 210 which is the Campus Plan regulation is
5 effectively being repealed and that the
6 University is not using Square 54 for any of
7 its core functions.

8 There's issues related to traffic,
9 various issues related to traffic, most
10 notably volume and intersection levels of
11 service and that the amenities being proffered
12 are inadequate; that the financial value of
13 the amenity does not equal the value of the
14 increased density and the reliability of some
15 of the proffers most notably in that regard
16 retail uses.

17 So with that summary, I'll open it
18 up to discussion by the Commission.

19 Mr. Parsons. I knew you were
20 getting ready to talk. You were arranging all
21 your photos.

22 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Yes. I was

1 arranging all my photos. I think, in general,
2 this is a very good project. I've expressed
3 concern and I continue to feel the same way
4 that the architecture, as it faces Washington
5 Circle is overwhelming. That isn't a term
6 I've used before, but I'll use it tonight.

7 That is, this circle, this place
8 is dedicated to George Washington. And most
9 of the buildings around it respect that in one
10 way or another. They do not dominate that
11 space and this design, to me, using glass
12 overwhelms the purpose of the circle. And I
13 guess I pleaded with the architect to come
14 back with something different, and of course,
15 they did not.

16 They came back with different
17 renderings to show what they meant by the use
18 of stone and glass, but I still feel the same
19 way about it, that it overwhelms it
20 architecturally. and then although a 90-foot
21 height has been shown at the edge of sidewalk,
22 it very quickly rises to 120 and then on to

1 130. And I think that's too high. I think 90
2 to 110 feels more comfortable to me.

3 The other issue is what happens at
4 the corner of 22nd and I when you take the
5 height of the building at 130 and extend it
6 back. And the trouble we've had and there's
7 numerous iterations of it here before us of
8 how do we step that down and have a more
9 reasonable height at that corner and one of
10 these -- the alternative design which they do
11 not favor, they were badgered into it, I
12 guess, begins to do that. It steps the
13 building down. The brick comes down. The
14 glass comes down and I think it's simply
15 described as alternate design which has just
16 come into the record. It doesn't have the
17 architectural embellishments, if you will,
18 around the swimming pool and so forth.

19 So in general, that's where I'm
20 coming from. To me, it's a design issue on
21 both ends.

22 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Thank you.

1 Anyone else?

2 Okay. Mr. Hood.

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I was
4 going to my other colleague a chance, but I'll
5 go ahead. I concur with the height. I think
6 the hearings will reflect that I had an issue
7 about the 90 feet height. I would like
8 possibly for the Applicant to revisit that,
9 depending on which way we move.

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Just to be
11 clear. Do you share Mr. Parsons' concern
12 about the north end and the south side of the
13 project?

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Height,
15 overall, the whole project is wrong and I'll
16 tell you why. If you look across on I Street,
17 I mentioned about the 35 feet which was right
18 across. There's something there that's 35
19 feet. I don't recall exactly what it was. I
20 know there are different proposals that are
21 planning to raise some of the buildings I
22 guess in the future, I'm going with what we

1 have existing, at least the way I understand
2 it.

3 And I think that this 130 and 120,
4 I think are just -- we need to probably bring
5 it down, tone it down to I'm thinking in terms
6 of 90 feet. I'm not even going as far as what
7 Mr. Parsons said about 110. I think 90 feet
8 is suitable for the site.

9 And more than that, Madam Chair,
10 the unit mix, I'm questioning why and I forgot
11 exactly who brought that to our attention, why
12 the residential is not around on the circle,
13 as opposed to on the backside. I think the
14 office space is on the circle side. I'm not
15 sure if my colleagues agree with me, but I
16 think the residential should be on that circle
17 side and I think that was mentioned.

18 I'm not exactly sure, but one of
19 the opponents mentioned about the residential
20 being on this backside as opposed to on the
21 circle side.

22 I think for the best interest of

1 the city, and not creating -- I think she
2 called it a dead zone, I think it was the
3 young lady -- but anyway, I think that it
4 would be more credible for that circle.

5 And also, the traffic. The level
6 of service, I appreciate the Applicant's
7 expert, but the level of service, anybody that
8 lives in the city knows the level of service
9 is F. I mean I'm not -- I'm not trained for
10 that, but I can just tell you. I know how
11 level of service, I know it's about counts.
12 But anybody who is down in that area knows the
13 level of service is F. But on the same token,
14 when I look at what smart growth, the folks
15 who study this, they study this much more than
16 I do, they said this site is suitable. It's
17 good for transit-oriented development and I
18 don't know if I necessarily agree with them on
19 this. Most of the time they pretty much are
20 on target. This particular time I would have
21 to part ways with as far as agreeing with
22 their recommendation to us about moving

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1 forward with what's proposed in front of us.

2 That's pretty much all I have on
3 that.

4 Another thing is the -- for some
5 reason the traffic light. I need to know is
6 the Applicant and maybe you guys can help me,
7 is the Applicant paying for the full funding
8 of the traffic light or is it a partial
9 finding?

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Full funding.

11 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Full
12 funding. And that's \$100,000?

13 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: I don't
14 remember what the value of it is although I
15 might have it here.

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. And
17 I realize that the grocery store is -- the
18 square feet on the grocery store is being
19 proposed or they're proffering 25,000 square
20 feet. And I don't know if market drive that
21 or what the case is, but maybe that needs to
22 be relooked at. Those are my concerns on the

1 project. thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Thank you,
3 Mr. Hood.

4 Mr. Jeffries?

5 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay, wow.
6 I'm such a lover of housing and to hear Vice
7 Chair Hood express interest in having housing
8 on the circle really does sound pretty
9 attractive to me. I've not really quite
10 considered that.

11 I think at this point, however, I
12 would probably in the interest of just having
13 a true mixed use, 24-hour overall development
14 and compound, I would probably intend to go
15 with the Applicant around the whole notion of
16 the building that's facing the circle to
17 remain office.

18 I also would part with my
19 colleagues on the height of the building. I
20 might be in the minority here, on the circle
21 as well. I think the 90 feet is a clear
22 gesture to sort of adjust to the scale as

1 relates at the circle. It seems to me the 120
2 is an appropriate height given that you have
3 a huge field in front of you.

4 You want this building to have
5 some verticality. So I do have some concerns
6 about the 130 feet that's along 22nd Street.
7 I do think that perhaps that could come down
8 to perhaps 110. I think 190 looks like it's
9 too major of surgery, given what I have heard
10 that the University is trying to achieve here
11 at Square 54.

12 And I think that as relates to
13 architecture, I think the design is
14 considerably more successful at the
15 intersection of 23rd and I. I think it's
16 quite handsome and I like sort of the glass
17 and brick combination. I think it's very
18 graceful and I think it was appropriate to
19 sort of have a different feel for the office
20 building along the circle.

21 But that's, Madam Chair, pretty
22 much my comments. I'm fine with the height

1 along the circle. I think 22nd Street, the
2 130 feet is probably too high. I'd like to
3 take that down probably to 110 in which case
4 probably the piece that is at the corner of
5 22nd and I that's currently 110 should
6 probably adjust itself as well, just to keep
7 the same sort of proportionality.

8 Outside of that, those are my
9 comments.

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Thank you,
11 Commissioner Jeffries.

12 I would like to deal a little bit
13 more expansively with some of the issues
14 because I think that issues that were raised
15 by the opposition because I think they lead to
16 some of the positions that we're expressing.
17 First is the issue about the Comprehensive
18 Plan inconsistency. And there was a lot of
19 testimony about the institutional land use
20 designation and during the hearing, I
21 expressed my frustration with the fact that
22 that still exists as a land use designation

1 because it provides no guidance in terms of --
2 you know, institutional uses are permitted in
3 every zone. And it provides no guidance about
4 which zones, which type of zone or density and
5 so forth.

6 And so then we go to context which
7 I think is what we're all doing. And as we're
8 reacting to this project, and particularly
9 when we're reacting regarding height, if you
10 look at the buildings that set the context
11 around the subject property, you have the --
12 I guess it's the World Bank or the IMF
13 building that is on Pennsylvania Avenue on the
14 north side.

15 And you have this 130-foot
16 building that's on Pennsylvania Avenue which
17 is a very wide street and then on the back
18 side of that building is K Street which is
19 also a very wide street. So you have 130-foot
20 building that works where it is. Then you
21 have other buildings on the east side of 22nd
22 Street that are 130 feet that really the

1 dominant sections of that are along
2 Pennsylvania Avenue, maybe wrap the corner of
3 22nd a little bit, but those are clearly
4 Pennsylvania Avenue buildings.

5 So then we come to the subject
6 property and what's being proposed and I
7 agree, there's just this narrow -- I agree
8 with the comments about the 130 feet along
9 22nd Street because it's really that section
10 of the building, that's a 22nd Street building
11 and so there's just this little tip that
12 really touches the circle or Pennsylvania
13 Avenue, I guess more clearly Pennsylvania
14 Avenue, so that's not really -- that should be
15 treated as a 22nd Street building and I agree
16 with the comments about the height all along
17 22nd Street that it's too high.

18 I think I'm somewhere in between
19 Commissioner Parsons and Commissioner Jeffries
20 in terms of the building on the circle. It's
21 just a very abrupt change from 90 to 120 that
22 tends not to be satisfying to me. It's sort

1 of like, oh yeah we did it, but it doesn't
2 really -- it's too abrupt to be -- to
3 accomplish to me what's intended.

4 I don't have the same concern
5 about the kind of building the facade of the
6 building on Washington Circle, although I
7 understand Commissioner Parsons' concerns
8 about how this is going to -- this is going to
9 stand out on the circle. It will stand out
10 compared to what's there and so it will -- in
11 a way, it may dominate the circle and that's
12 clearly what's being -- I think that's what's
13 being sought.

14 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: You don't
15 like overwhelming. You're having trouble
16 getting that word out.

17 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: I wanted to
18 be sure I quoted you correctly and I wrote
19 dominate and then I had overlooked
20 overwhelmed.

21 May I agree that it will dominate
22 and I can't quite go to overwhelm.

1 So then I wanted to just spend a
2 little time commenting on the traffic because
3 I've just become, as people who have observed
4 over time, may have sensed, increasingly
5 frustrated with DDOT and part of it is that
6 the
7 -- I don't know if it was in this case or
8 another case. The transportation policy as it
9 relates to traffic volumes is until traffic is
10 stopped in place, there's no such thing as too
11 much.

12 We're never going to get any kind
13 of guidance from the professionals in the city
14 that more traffic being generated, unless it's
15 unsafe, they're very good about focusing on
16 safety. Unless it's unsafe, they will not
17 give us a recommendation against a project.

18 So unless this Commission -- so in
19 terms of something that's unacceptable,
20 they're never going to give us that guidance.
21 Neighbors find it unacceptable and so who do
22 we weigh -- the custodians of the policy of

1 the city or the community folks. And I guess
2 I'm just not quite comfortable rewriting the
3 transportation policy up here, but I'm
4 frustrated by it.

5 So and it's the same thing with
6 the level of service on the intersections.
7 Until people -- until it's complete and utter
8 gridlock, F is sort of like well -- F is F and
9 that's what you're supposed to expect in urban
10 environment. It's very difficult to have a
11 case be denied for issues related to traffic
12 and I understand the frustration and I share
13 it. I just don't know how we're supposed to
14 cope with that, given that DDOT doesn't seem
15 to want to own the problem.

16 I also just wanted to commend on
17 this because it was something else that I
18 found frustrating, but we heard a lot of
19 testimony about it and that is that somehow
20 the use of a PUD on a parcel of land and we
21 heard the same thing in the Campus Plan and we
22 heard it in other cases, but as it relates to

1 Square 54, the use of a PUD in the context of
2 a Campus Plan or a property that's within the
3 Campus Plan is somehow undermining Section 210
4 as if Section 210 exists in a vacuum.

5 Section 210 exists to guide us
6 when residential zoning is the underlying
7 zone. But if it hadn't been for the long-
8 standing presence of G.W. on this site, this
9 site wouldn't be zoned R-5-D. This would be
10 at least the northern portion of the site
11 would be zoned commercial in some way. And so
12 to me, the -- if we look contextually again,
13 the height bothers me, but the density does
14 not bother me.

15 And the mix doesn't bother me and
16 I understand Mr. Hood's point about the fact
17 that it would be very attractive to have
18 residences on Washington Circle, but I think
19 the thing that will maximize the value of this
20 site and will not really detract from the
21 quality of the residential would have the
22 office use on Washington Circle.

1 So -- and then finally, we had
2 some comments about the fact that the
3 amenities are insufficient. And I think that
4 we were in the collective I think there is
5 actually a lot to recommend this project in
6 terms of the amenities and benefits. I think
7 it's got good environmental -- good
8 environmental proffers. I think the public
9 space is good, both as something that's
10 individual to this project which is the
11 interior portion, but also the way that it
12 will work together with the streetscape
13 improvements along I Street that are part of
14 the Campus Plan and that the affordable
15 housing is I think more than adequate and what
16 we've been saying and it's nice to see some
17 workforce housing in the mix as well. And
18 that the commitment to provide a grocery store
19 is not inconsequential.

20 So -- but I think I would like to
21 suggest that we ask the Applicant to revisit
22 the issues related specifically to height on

1 Washington Circle and that transition and the
2 height along 22nd Street and I think the
3 general guidance that I heard was that it
4 shouldn't be higher than 110 feet along 22nd
5 Street, if that. Is that accurate?

6 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, I'm
7 pretty sure they made the 110 with this
8 alternative design. Is that what it says
9 there?

10 So are you talking about the
11 entire
12 --

13 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Block
14 front.

15 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: The entire
16 block front of 22nd Street?

17 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: That would
19 go into Pennsylvania Avenue. You would have
20 them take it down from 130 there as well.

21 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Yes. Because
22 all that reads as very clearly 22nd Street and

1 that's not what the guidance is from the
2 context, given that it's not really a
3 Pennsylvania Avenue building and I don't think
4 it's fair to use the corner even though the
5 corner from the zoning height perspective is
6 123 feet.

7 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Could the
8 Applicant perhaps look at some setback along
9 22nd?

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Yes, that
11 probably would work, as long as it's not the
12 same sort of abrupt transition.

13 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Although I
15 don't know. It's pretty skinny.

16 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: They could do
17 that, okay.

18 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So what
19 we're asking the Applicant to do is pretty
20 much the same they did around the circle, that
21 abrupt piece you're talking about?

22 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: We are not

1 asking for that. We're not asking for that
2 kind of --

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I'm just
4 trying to make sure I'm clear because the way
5 I heard it, I think to come back with the same
6 kind of approach.

7 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: No, I mean
8 that's not an approach I would recommend. I
9 would recommend that that would be 110 foot
10 building. Unless there's some way of doing it
11 more gradually than has been done on the
12 circle. I find that too abrupt.

13 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: From the
14 90 to 120, so you would say 90 to maybe
15 roughly 110 to 115?

16 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Right, with
17 hopefully -- well, I don't know -- we'd have
18 to see how it would look if they did that.
19 But I don't know that that can be done given
20 that there's not a whole lot of depth relative
21 to 22nd Street for doing that, but you know,
22 that's for them to examine.

1 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, in
2 order to do this, to keep the same density,
3 seems to me the alternative is to start to in-
4 fill the courtyard. I just bring that up
5 because I have no difficulty with that. To
6 me, that's a private amenity.

7 Yes, it's open to the public and
8 so forth, but as opposed to the impact on
9 Washington Circle --

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Well, there's
11 two sections to it to keep in mind. There's
12 two sections to the interior courtyard, one of
13 which is open to the public and one of which
14 is private.

15 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: It's about
16 half and half.

17 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, maybe
19 it's -- whatever.

20 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: So --

21 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Forty 60.

22 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: But I think

1 your point is to the extent that it's a
2 private amenity, it's worth sacrificing to the
3 extent that it's a public amenity that would
4 be less worthy to sacrifice. Is that fair to
5 say?

6 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, for
7 me it is. I mean, of course, I'm here to
8 protect the public space on Washington Circle.

9 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Yes.

10 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: But to say
11 then knock 20 feet off here, 10 feet off here,
12 100 feet off there, whatever, and then --

13 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Something has
14 got to give.

15 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: And then
16 say you like the density, I mean --

17 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: I'm
18 comfortable with it. I don't -- if it went
19 down, I wouldn't cry.

20 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Well, I
21 think that inner court makes for the site plan
22 to be pretty dynamic and nice. I think I

1 would hate to see that courtyard go away too
2 much. That's why I was trying to figure out
3 if there was some way in which we could
4 somehow bring the scale down on 22nd Street
5 without having them remove the entire top
6 floor, but again, let's see what they come
7 back with.

8 Because I do see half of the
9 court, if it's half of the court, I do see
10 that as a public thoroughfare and an amenity,
11 not just for the actual building, but perhaps
12 some of the neighbors, depending on how --
13 it's nicely landscaped.

14 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: It's very
15 attractive.

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Madam
17 Chair, I also noted basically the predominant
18 conversation has been height, but I don't know
19 if anybody else agrees with the unit mix and
20 I actually found it in the Office of Planning
21 report and also by the West End Citizens
22 Association were the ones who actually

1 mentioned that. I don't know if my colleagues
2 with that or maybe we can put that back to the
3 Applicant and see what they come back with.

4 Silence is golden. If they come
5 back not saying anything, I understand that
6 they're not even considering it, but I would
7 like that also to be on the table.

8 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Just to be
9 clear, when you say unit mix in this context,
10 do you mean where the residential is located?

11 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Right.

12 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Vis-a-vis the
13 office.

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Revisit
15 that and maybe put that back into the circle.

16 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Okay.

17 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And
18 whether you agree with it or not, I'm just
19 asking them to do it. If I don't hear
20 anything, they obviously agree with the rest
21 of us, well, some of you.

22 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I think we

1 -- have we all commented on that?

2 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: I did. I
3 heard you.

4 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I know you
5 heard me, but I'm wondering if the rest of our
6 colleagues, did they comment?

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes,
8 everybody commented.

9 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: And
10 Commissioner Parsons, did you comment on the
11 --

12 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: On the mix?

13 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Where the
15 residential is located.

16 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I'd love to
17 live in an apartment overlooking Washington
18 Circle, but that's my bias. But I'm not
19 concerned about it being office. I'm more
20 concerned about its appearance.

21 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I just
22 wanted to make certain it's on the record from

1 each of the Commissioners, that's all.

2 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And I
3 think we all commented on that. We also all
4 commented on height. That's just something
5 I'm pushing.

6 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: What do you
7 feel about the glass? I mean that, to me, is
8 similarly a foreign object here. I realize
9 we're going through our glass period now. The
10 glass industry has come up with all new types
11 of glass, but to me, it's equally a foreign
12 object with the hospital across the street,
13 the Michael Graves Building up the street. It
14 just doesn't feel right to me and I'm not
15 suggesting that the residential brick be
16 carried around the corner, but more stone in
17 this facade, or precast stone, whatever it is
18 would be helpful. I mean they did that a
19 little bit on the circle, but the rest of the
20 building doesn't carry it through. It's like
21 two different buildings, if you will. I don't
22 know how you feel about that.

1 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: There is
2 one -- sometimes I think the problem with some
3 of -- the renderings that we get is really
4 just the quality of them. I think one of the
5 drawings showing the office building on
6 Washington Square was probably a little bit
7 better than the other one. I don't know. You
8 can't obviously see this, but I don't have a
9 problem with the glass. My suspicion is that
10 this going to look very graceful, very light.
11 It will be a nice sort of relief for so much
12 of masonry that we see in and around
13 Washington.

14 And again, I think that as it sits
15 along Washington Circle, I think it will serve
16 as like modern architecture of sorts. I think
17 it will be very graceful.

18 It does have a monolithic kind of
19 look to it. I wish it could be broken down a
20 little bit more, but as relates to the glass
21 part of it, I mean I don't really have any
22 concerns about that.

1 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: So you
2 don't think using the stone, as they did on
3 the 90-foot structure and carrying that
4 through to the other would be helpful and make
5 it look like one project, if you will?

6 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: See, if
7 we're slicing a story off the top and then
8 you're putting these horizontal elements,
9 masonry elements, it's going to look like a
10 terribly horizontal building and I think you
11 want to have some prominence around
12 verticality in this thing in some way.

13 You know, I leave it up to the
14 architects. I'm not looking to design from
15 the dais here, but I understand your concern.

16 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I find that
17 persuasive. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I
20 understand what you're talking about. Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: I'll just
22 make one comment about the class. And I

1 remember when I was on the Dupont Circle ANC,
2 we had the Institute for International
3 Economics which is in the 1700 block of
4 Massachusetts Avenue, proposed this glass box
5 in this very traditional row of buildings on
6 Massachusetts Avenue. And I remember being
7 very disturbed and now I really like that
8 building. So I find myself much more open to
9 glass because of that experience. It might be
10 an isolated case, but I found that building to
11 be -- I really enjoy looking at it and it's
12 not jarring in the context. So that's my
13 comment on the material.

14 VICE CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me
15 comment also on the material. There's another
16 case that I always talk about which I will not
17 name, but this Commission, we voted on it, and
18 it's glass. And actually it looks very well,
19 even though the height and some of density may
20 be a little off. It actually looks very well
21 and I think that from looking at it, I would
22 have to associate myself with Commissioner

1 Jeffries and think that -- I don't necessarily
2 have a problem with it. I've been wrong in
3 the past though, but from looking at it here
4 now, I don't have a problem with it.

5 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: All right, I
6 think we've given as much guidance as we can
7 to the Applicant and we'll just ask them to
8 address our concerns and when they bring back
9 some revised plans and we'll have the
10 opportunity for the Office of Planning to
11 comment on those, then I guess we'll take it
12 up again. It's up to them.

13 Mr. Feola, as long as it's just a
14 procedural question.

15 MR. FEOLA: For the record, Phil
16 Feola for the Applicant. We've heard the
17 comments clearly and there seems like there's
18 going to be some major changes to this project
19 that the Commission is requesting. I wonder
20 if it were possible to turn this into the
21 first stage approval and give us the
22 appropriate amount of time because these are

1 not small changes, I don't think, that the
2 Commission has asked for, to look at all these
3 things and set a parameter for us, height,
4 density, use mix, whatever you think is
5 appropriate and give us a reasonable amount of
6 time to actually do the redesign, because it
7 sounds like it's going to be more than --
8 we're going to be more than a couple of weeks,
9 I guess is my point.

10 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Right. I
11 think that's fair for you to ask and I think
12 we can do that, but not tonight because we'd
13 have to have some specific parameters around
14 what we're approving and I don't think we're
15 prepared to do that, but we can get to that
16 point.

17 So we will address that concern
18 and set something for decision making.

19 MR. FEOLA: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON MITTEN: Okay, thank
21 you. Thanks for bringing that up.

22 Okay, thank you very much for your

1 attention and we have a hearing that was
2 scheduled to start at 6:30 so I apologize
3 about that, but we'll be back at 7 o'clock to
4 begin the hearing.

5 We're adjourned.

6 (Whereupon, at 6:55 p.m., the
7 special meeting was concluded.)
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