

Watkins Alley



APPLICATION FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT
DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED MAP AMENDMENT

June 3, 2015

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

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LIST OF EXHIBITS

Description	Exhibit
Architectural Drawings, Elevations, Renderings, Sections, Streetscape Designs, Landscaping, Civil, Photos of Property and Surrounding Area, Site Plans, Maps, and Other Plans	A
Surveyor's Plat	B
Excerpts of Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and Generalized Policy Map	C
Certificate of Compliance with Chapter 24	D
Certificate of Notice and Notice of Intent to File	E
Property Owner List	F
Agent Authorization Letters and Application Forms	G

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PREFACE

This statement is submitted by Watkins Alley, LLC in support of an application for the consolidated review and approval of a Planned Unit Development and Map Amendment for the property known as 1309-1323(rear) E Street SE (Square 1043, Lots 142 & 849-851) and 516(rear) 13th Street SE (Square 1043, Lot 859) before the District of Columbia Zoning Commission. The property that is the subject of this application is in the southeast quadrant of the District of Columbia between E Street, 13th Street, 14th Street, and an alley system. The related Map Amendment proposes to rezone the site from the C-M-1 Zone District to the R-5-B Zone District.

The Applicant is requesting approval of this PUD in order to create an architecturally distinguished and contextual multifamily building and single family dwelling project on an underutilized industrial site, consistent with the goals of the D.C. Comprehensive Plan. In total, 45 residential units will be created as a result of this project. The project will contain an approximate FAR of 2.86 (approximately 85,980 gross square feet) and have heights ranging from 32.9 – 54.8 feet. Based upon feedback from members of the community and the ANC, the Applicant proposes to design a unit for “senior” specifications, to improve the Watkins Elementary vegetable gardens, to pay for a new Capital Bikeshare station, and to collaborate with other developers to make public space/recreation improvements in the neighborhood.

Submitted in support of this application are a completed PUD application forms, a notice of intent to file a PUD (with property owner list and certification of mailing), architectural drawings, and a map depicting the zoning districts for the property and the surrounding area. As set forth below, this statement and the attached documents meet the filing requirements for a PUD application under Chapter 24 of the District of Columbia Zoning Regulations.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Summary and Purposes of the Application*

Watkins Alley, LLC (the “**Applicant**”) hereby submits an application to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia (“**Commission**”) for consolidated review and approval of a Planned Unit Development (“**PUD**”) and related Zoning Map amendment to the R-5-B Zone District.

The project site consists of Lots 142 & 849-851 in Square 1043 (“**Property**”) and Lot 859 in Square 1043 (“**Alley Parcel**”). Collectively, the Property and the Alley Parcel comprise the property included in this PUD application (the “**PUD Site**”). The Property contains approximately 29,609 square feet of land area and is currently improved with an automobile repair shop, an automobile repair parking lot, and a warehouse. The Alley Parcel is across an alley from the Property and contains 458 square feet of land area; it is unimproved. In total, the PUD Site contains approximately 30,067 square feet of land area. The PUD Site is located within the boundaries of Advisory Neighborhood Commission (“**ANC**”) 6B. The Property is presently zoned C-M-1, and the Alley Parcel is presently zoned R-4.

The Applicant is seeking approval of the PUD and Zoning Map amendment in order to create an architecturally distinguished residential project containing a mixture of apartments and single-family townhouses oriented around open spaces with underground parking (the “**Project**”), as shown on the plans attached hereto as Exhibit A (the “**Plans**”). The Project will replace an automobile repair shop and parking lot and a warehouse, which are incompatible with the surrounding well-established residential neighborhood, with new high-quality construction that will harmonize with the neighborhood and will create a new residential community. The Project is designed to integrate into the neighborhood with contextual design elements – such as bay windows, dormers and gabled roofs – and with unit types, such as single-family townhouses.

In total, 45 residential units, a portion of which will be affordable consistent with Inclusionary Zoning, will be created as a result of the Project. The Project will contain a FAR of approximately 2.86, or approximately 85,980 gross square feet, and it will have heights ranging from 32.9 – 54.8 feet, including mechanical equipment. The Project will not have any additional mechanical penthouses.

The Applicant proposes amenities such as exemplary architecture, an innovative site plan that creates a residential place that will activate and will significantly improve the aesthetic of the alley, larger residential units than are usual for new multifamily construction in this neighborhood, a unit designed for seniors, and public facility improvements.

Over the past few months, the Applicant has met with many stakeholders in the Project. The Applicant met with the Office of Planning to discuss its proposed Project. Additionally, the Applicant met with the ANC Single Member District representative, the Applicant presented the project to the Planning and Zoning Committee (“**PZC**”) of ANC 6B, and the Applicant participated in several community meetings about the Project. The Applicant will continue its outreach to other neighbors, stakeholders, and community groups to ensure the Project achieves the goals of the District of Columbia and of the community.

B. Applicant

The Applicant is a subsidiary of OPaL, LLC. OPaL is a visionary residential developer founded more than 15 years ago with an emphasis on unique single-family houses. OPaL develops projects in DC, Maryland, and Delaware and has won multiple awards, including for its project on Naylor Court in northwest Washington. OPaL’s philosophy is to re-envision the way homes are built to accommodate “quality over quantity” and “substance over size.” Whenever possible, OPaL builds on previously developed land (infill) to reduce the impact of growth and to preserve open spaces. OPaL finds close-in locations to conserve on commuting costs, includes

high-efficiency materials and systems, and designs houses (where possible) to take advantage of southern-facing exposures. Their designs emphasize fine craftsmanship, casual family spaces, and the special touches that warm homes with light and life.

C. Architect

GPS Designs is a residential architecture firm based in Pasadena, Maryland. GPS Designs designed most of OPaL's projects, and it continues to collaborate closely with OPaL on many projects. GPS Designs' approach to architecture demonstrates the full experience of human relationships to space. From a distance, one's home needs to relate to its surroundings and strengthen the community around it. Up close, one wants to see quality in materials and thoughtfulness of proportion carried through the details. When living in a home, one should feel the order of spaces in a familiar manner. This comes from limiting circulation spaces and maximizing the potential of the areas that a family spends the most time in. The houses that GPS Designs designs for OPaL are true to the OPaL style and vision throughout. Each new project starts from scratch to meet OPaL's high standards, and this close collaboration results in unique houses, unquestionably designed to higher standards.

II. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION AND ZONING

A. Location and Current Use

The PUD Site is located in the southeast quadrant of the District of Columbia. It is bounded by E Street to the north, a public alley to the south, an industrial building and alley to the east, and row dwellings/flats and an alley to the west. The public alley is 16 feet wide along the east side, 30 feet wide along the south side, and 25 feet wide along the west side. The Alley Parcel is directly to the west across the alley from the Property. The Property has an odd configuration in two "parts": one large rectangular portion fronts on E Street and the second

large rectangular portion is surrounded by the alley and off the street further south into the square. The two portions are connected by a narrower strip of land. This condition makes the development of the Property a particularly unique opportunity for new type of residential development in the neighborhood.

The PUD Site is in Single Member District 6B06 of ANC 6B in Ward 6. The neighborhood is generally in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, but Hill East and Lincoln Park are nearby. The Potomac Avenue Metrorail station is approximately two blocks to the southeast. The Property is currently improved with an automobile repair garage, an automobile repair lot, and a warehouse. The repair garage and lot are currently accessed via a large three-bay curb cut off of E Street. These uses are incompatible with a nearby burgeoning residential neighborhood, and particularly with the residences to the west.

B. Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is a mix of residential uses, industrial uses, parking lots, commercial/retail uses, and institutional uses. Across the street to the north is the International Graduate University site (slated for residential redevelopment), a hardware store is directly adjacent to the Property, a small commercial/residential building is adjacent to the Property to the west, townhouses/flats are directly to the west across the alley, and an industrial building is to the south across the alley. A garbage truck parking lot is directly to the east across the alley, but that site is slated for redevelopment. To the southeast across the alley is a DDOT facility that fabricates signs. Along the same block of E Street are a small commercial building, an automotive repair shop, and townhouses/flats. To the northwest across E Street is the Watkins Recreation Center and Elementary School. To the northeast across E Street is a Safeway supermarket.

The immediately surrounding blocks contain a mix of primarily residential buildings with some retail/commercial uses also nearby. The surrounding residential uses consist mostly of two- and three-story townhouses and flats, but various apartment buildings, with a range of heights and densities, are also in the surrounding blocks. The commercial uses are primarily within the same square, and they are primarily automobile related (repair and parking lots). Small retail uses, such as a drugstore and restaurants, are scattered throughout neighboring blocks, particularly to the west. Larger-format retail, such as gas stations and supermarkets, are within two blocks of the PUD Site. The Jenkins Row PUD, containing ground floor retail (including a Harris Teeter supermarket) and apartments above, is approximately two blocks to the south.

The architectural style of the neighborhood is eclectic. Most of the townhouses and flats are designed in the Federal style and constructed in the first part of the 20th Century, but some new townhouses are contemporary in style. Having been built at various times over the last 100 years, the commercial and industrial buildings have a variety of styles.

The immediate neighborhood has a mixture of zones. Industrial properties to the east and south of the Property are zoned C-M-1. To the north, west, and further to the east, along 14th Street, properties are zoned R-4. To the northeast and further to the south along Pennsylvania Avenue, properties are zoned C-2-A.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Project will be an attractive and harmonious residential community that will replace an undesirable industrial use. The Project will include a mixture of 45 apartments and townhouses. On the Property, the Project will have three components, but all structures will be connected so that they will be one building for zoning purposes. The north portion of the

Property closest to E Street will contain a block of approximately ten four-story townhouses with recessed fourth floors. Seven of these townhouses will front on E Street, and three will be along the western side of the property perpendicular to the other seven townhouses. These townhouses will be oriented around a large courtyard that will open to the south onto the alley. These townhouses will have heights of approximately 44.8 feet, including mechanical equipment, so they will not have mechanical penthouses.

The south portion of the Property, surrounded by the alley system, will contain another block of approximately 20 townhouses. These townhouses also will be four stories with a recessed fourth story and will have heights of approximately 42.8 feet, including mechanical equipment; they will not have mechanical penthouses. These townhouses will be oriented in two parallel rows facing each other with a large central pedestrian lane (mews). Linking the two townhouse blocks will be a five-story apartment “bar” containing approximately 15 apartments of different styles.

The Alley Parcel, a small lot across the alley to the west and south of the Property, will contain a small three-story (32.9 feet tall) single-family townhouse. Parking for the townhouse will be provided across the alley in the rest of the Project.

The Project will provide one level of underground parking with 45 spaces below the south block of townhouses. It will also provide 48 bicycle spaces in a secure room in the underground garage.

The Project will create an innovative urban residential community that will integrate well into the neighborhood while creating unique housing options and open spaces that are not otherwise available in the neighborhood. The north block of townhouses and part of the apartment building will surround a large courtyard that will open onto the alley. This site plan

will allow the townhouses to complete the gap in the streetscape along E Street while providing open passive recreation space in the court as an amenity for residents. The courtyard will contain landscaping and design elements to create an open and inviting space. It will measure approximately 24.4 – 32.6 feet wide and approximately 77 feet long.

Similarly, the south block of townhouses will activate the alley with new residents, attractive design, and a unique sense of an urban place. The central lane, oriented east-west, will measure 21 - 28.5 feet wide and 188.2 feet long, and it will open to the alleys on both ends. This central lane will create a unique outdoor amenity for residents of the townhouses. All of the townhouses in the south block will “front” on the central lane to engender a strong sense of place among residents. This site plan will create a sense of visual openness for the neighborhood, but residents and pedestrians will feel a defined residential character when they are within the central lane. The central lane will have landscaping, hardscaping, and other design elements to create a unique sense of place unlike any other in Capitol Hill. The townhouses will be constructed to the property lines at their rears so that the open space will be concentrated at their fronts, in the central lane.

Furthermore, the addition of residences into the interior of the square will activate and enhance the existing alley network. There has been a recent trend toward more development in alleys, which are largely underutilized in the District, and the Project will create a model for the type of development that can activate and preserve the many alley networks in the city.

The Applicant designed the Project to meet a growing desire for larger residences in an urban setting. The Applicant created a project that draws on neighboring architectural styles and is designed to maintain a pedestrian scale at the street while terracing back to allow for more density within the site. The base architecture utilizes Federal, Victorian, and Post-Industrial

styles found in close proximity to the PUD Site. While the three styles are fairly distinct, the Project maintains a cohesive material and color palette throughout. The “post industrial” apartment units serve to tie the Project together, breaking up the scale of the building with similar proportions in a different composition. The identity of the Project is maintained through the overall materials palette. The building has been designed to create optimal neighbor interaction and activity both within the Project as well as in the neighboring alleys. Buildings along the more narrow courtyard have been designed to read as 2½ story structures to allow for light and creating a more charming, unique sense of place.

The Project will have a maximum gross floor area of approximately 85,980 square feet (“GSF”), for an effective FAR of 2.86. All of the gross square feet will be dedicated to residential use. The lot occupancy will be 76%, and the maximum height of the Project will be 54.8 feet for the apartment building, but the townhouses, as described above will have lesser heights ranging from 42.8 feet to 44.8 feet.

The Project will improve the traffic conditions in the square and neighborhood. The Project will eliminate the existing three-bay curb cut on E Street, which will reduce automobile-pedestrian conflicts in the neighborhood, and it will remove a use that is disruptive and largely undesirable to the surrounding residential uses. Parking access will be via a ramp from the alley at the western side of the south townhouse block. Access to the ramp will be controlled by a garage door. The underground parking garage will serve all of the Project’s residents. The ratio of parking spaces provided will be one per unit. In addition, the Project will provide underground secure bicycle parking at the ratio of more than one space per unit.

The Project will contain a mix of unit types. The townhouses all will contain at least three bedrooms. Some of the townhouses will be three bedrooms plus den, and others will be

four bedrooms. The apartment building will contain units ranging from one to three bedrooms, but some of the apartments will be “loft style” with open floor plans. Also, some of the apartments will be two stories. The carriage house will contain two bedrooms. The unit types, locations of unit types, and number of unit types are described on pages A.14 and A.20 of the Plans. Affordable housing consistent with the requirements of Inclusionary Zoning will be provided, and a preliminary layout of the affordable units is shown on page A.16 of the Plans.

The materials utilized for the Project’s exterior will be a mixture depending on the location and program. The Applicant will use a darker red brick with a tan grout and marquee limestone with a matching grout on the “masonry” facades. The Victorian townhouses at the alley will receive painted lap siding with a four-inch exposure, and fenestration will be cased with a two piece trim. The roofing at the limestone and sided units will be a black standing seam roof to provide high contrast. The federal, brick units will receive a dark grey diamond pattern metal tile roof adding a level of texture to the space. The “post-industrial” apartments will receive a mix of the brick and limestone finishes. All windows and doors will be clad black. The upper level siding will be painted hardi panel with battens in a color that will allow the terraced spaces to recede further.

A. Zoning Overview

The Zoning Tabulations Sheet included as page A.14 of the Plans provides a detailed overview of the proposed building and the requirements and restrictions of the R-5-B zone. The following table illustrates the zoning parameters of the proposed Project:

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Allowed/Required by R-5-B Matter-of-Right</u>	<u>Allowed/Required by R-5-B PUD</u>
<u>Height</u>	54.8'	50'	60'
<u>Number of units</u>	45	No maximum	
<u>FAR</u>	2.86	2.16 ¹	3.0
<u>Square footage</u>	85,980	64,069	88,986
<u>Lot occupancy</u>	76%	60%	
<u>GAR</u>	0.42	0.4 required	
<u>Parking</u>	45 spaces	1 for each 2 dwelling units (23 spaces) required	
<u>Loading</u>	None	Required only for 50 or more residential units	
<u>Affordable housing</u>	10% of residential GFA	10% of residential GFA	10% of residential GFA

B. Development Parameters Under Existing Zoning

The C-M-1 Zone District, as a matter-of-right, permits a maximum height of 40 feet and a maximum FAR of 3.0. Residential use is not permitted.

C. Project Goals and Objectives and Benefits of Using PUD Process

The PUD process is the appropriate means for realizing this development because it will provide the community and the District the tools to ensure that the Project is well-designed and best meets the needs of the community. It also will allow the public to provide input on whether the proposed uses, density, height, and design are complementary to the existing community. The Property is an important site for providing more high-quality housing in a desirable residential neighborhood and for replacing incompatible and undesirable industrial uses. The

¹ Includes Inclusionary Zoning bonus density.

PUD process will provide the framework for realizing the potential of this site capturing the benefits and amenities that will enhance the surrounding community.

D. Zoning Flexibility Requested

In addition to the rezoning of the Property from C-M-1 to R-5-B and the application of the PUD standards in Chapter 24 of the Zoning Regulations, the Applicant requests the following relief from strict application of the relevant provisions of the Zoning Regulations through the flexibility allowed by the PUD process:

1. Waiver of minimum area requirement for a PUD under § 2401.1(b). The minimum area required for a PUD in the R-5-B zone is one acre (43,560 square feet). The PUD Site has an area of 30,067 square feet, which is 69% of the minimum required. Because of the exceptional architecture, innovative site plan, and large residential units, the Project is of exceptional merit and in the best interest of the city. In addition, the Project will be entirely residential. The Commission may waive up to 50% of the site area requirement pursuant § 2401.2.
2. The lot occupancy limit in § 403.2. The lot occupancy limit is 60%, but the proposed lot occupancy is 76%. Because the Project is designed primarily as a series of 3+ bedroom townhouses, each unit must have a core and circulation necessary for single-family dwelling. Accommodating these functions in each unit causes the overall lot occupancy to increase. The large lot occupancy makes for better and more desirable family-oriented units in an urban setting. In addition, the Applicant has incorporated significant green space – in the courtyards and on the roof – to minimize runoff. Further, the Applicant designed the Project to minimize the appearance of bulk.

3. The rear yard requirement in § 404.1. The required rear yard for the Project is 15 feet, but the Project technically will not provide a rear yard. Because of the unique site plan and Property configuration, it is not possible to provide a conventional rear yard for the Project. However, the two courtyards will provide ample open space to account for the absence of a rear yard, and it works better than a rear yard for providing open space in an urban setting. Since the rear alley is so wide (30 feet), the requested rear yard will not have an adverse impact.
4. The alley lot alley width restriction in § 2507.2. The alley on which an alley lot fronts must be at least 30 feet wide to construct a single-family dwelling. In this case, the alley on which the Alley Parcel fronts is 25 feet wide. The proposed townhouse for the Alley Parcel will contribute to the enlivening of the alley with the Project and will improve a lot that will otherwise remain vacant.
5. The alley lot dwelling height limit in § 2507.4. The height of a structure on an alley lot is limited to the width of the alley. The alley on which the Alley Parcel fronts is 25 feet wide, so the carriage house is limited to a height of 25 feet. However, because of the small size of the Alley Parcel, it is not possible to construct a house with all of the necessary functions and circulation space without a third story. Otherwise, the house will be limited to mostly circulation space and not enough bedroom and common space to create a house that is sufficiently large to accommodate the necessities of a modern house.
6. The parking space location requirement in § 2116.1. A required parking space must be located on the same lot as the structure it is intended to serve. The

parking for the single-family dwelling on the Alley Parcel will be across the alley in the underground garage located under the south block of townhouses. Since the Alley Parcel contains only 458 square feet of land area, accommodating a parking space (which would occupy 171 square feet) would consume 37% of the lot's area. The location of the parking space in the underground garage is close enough that it will be very convenient for the owner of the house.

IV. THE APPLICATION MERITS APPROVAL PURSUANT TO THE PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

The Zoning Regulations, at 11 DCMR § 2403.1 *et seq.*, set forth the evaluation standards for Commission approval of PUD applications. The PUD must not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities, it must not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted public policies and programs, and it must offer project amenities and other public benefits that are superior to what would likely be provided under matter-of-right development. The Project's impact on the surrounding area and city services and facilities is discussed below. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan is addressed in Section V, and public benefits and project amenities are described in Section VI.

A. *Project Impact on the Surrounding Area*

The PUD Evaluation Standards, at 11 DCMR § 2403.3, state: "The impact of the project on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to be unacceptable, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project."

The Applicant submits that the impact of the Project on the surrounding area will be favorable because it will: 1) bring new market rate and affordable housing to the neighborhood,

2) replace an undesirable and incompatible industrial use in a residential neighborhood with well-designed residences and an innovative site plan, 3) promote the goal of infill development close to a Metrorail station, and 4) provide many larger 3+ bedroom units to accommodate families desiring to stay in the neighborhood and city.

Moreover, the Project's proposed height and massing are consistent with current development projects in the area and with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies for this area. The Project will replace an automobile repair shop/parking lot and a warehouse in a prime residential location with an attractive building and site plan that will preserve neighborhood character.

The Project will create 45 new housing units on a property that is close to other residential and resident-serving retail uses. While an eclectic mix of uses are within close proximity to the PUD Site, the predominant character of the broader surrounding community is residential. This location is highly desirable for residents because of its distinct residential character within the core of the city, so the Project will provide new housing opportunities, near a Metrorail station, for new residents in the area and for the District as a whole.

B. Project Impact on City Services and Facilities

The proposed Project will not have an adverse impact on the public facilities that it will rely on for service.

i. Transportation and Parking

The Applicant engaged a transportation consultant, Wells & Associates, to further study the area's traffic conditions and the Project's traffic generation. The Applicant will submit its Traffic Impact Study with the Pre-Hearing Submission (or earlier) and will continue to work with DDOT to refine the Project's vehicular and pedestrian circulation plans.

The Project is transit-oriented, and its location will induce public transit usage. The PUD Site is less than 1/3 mile from the Potomac Avenue Metrorail station, and it is served by multiple Metrobus lines approximately one block away on Pennsylvania Avenue. Two Capital Bikeshare stations are also within approximately 1/3 mile. Thus, the Project will not overly burden the road network.

The Project will reduce the amount of automobile traffic in the alley and pedestrian-automobile conflicts. The current uses on the Property are automobile-intensive, and their elimination will remove alley traffic. In addition, all traffic will access the Project through alleyways since the large curb cut will be eliminated, so pedestrian conflict points will be minimized.

The Project will provide 45 underground automobile parking spaces. This number of spaces equates to a ratio of one space per residential unit. Because most of the units will be large, it is expected that most residents will want to have cars. Thus, the provided number of parking spaces will satisfy the expected demand of residents without providing too much.

In addition, the Project will provide 48 secure bicycle parking spaces for all residents. These spaces will be located in a dedicated room in the underground garage. This number of spaces far exceeds the DDOT requirement.

ii. Water/Sewer Demand

The water and sanitary service usage resulting from the Project will have an inconsequential effect on the District's delivery systems. The site is currently served by all major utilities. The Project's proposed storm water management and erosion control plans will minimize impact on the adjacent properties and existing storm water systems. The requisite

erosion control procedures stipulated by the District will be implemented during construction of the Project.

Further, as more specifically detailed in Section VI, no adverse environmental impact will result from the construction of this Project.

iii. Public Schools

Regarding the impact on the District of Columbia Public Schools (“DCPS”) system, the Project is within the boundaries of Watkins Elementary School at 420 12th Street SE, Stuart-Hobson Middle School at 410 E Street NE, and East High School at 1700 East Capitol Street NE. In addition, several other schools are in the general vicinity of the Project, offering schooling options to residents who may seek alternatives to the neighborhood public schools, including Cesar Chavez Public Charter School for Public Policy, Capitol Hill Day School, and St. Peter School.

In the city as a whole, the population of school-age children is declining while the population of childless households is increasing. Due to these trends, the current under-enrollment of the neighborhood public schools, and the relatively convenient access to charter and private schools in the vicinity, the Applicant expects that the public school network will be able to accommodate the school-age children that may reside at the Project.

V. THE APPLICATION IS “NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND WITH OTHER PUBLIC ADOPTED POLICIES [...] RELATED TO THE SUBJECT SITE.” 11 DCMR § 2403.4.

A. *Comprehensive Plan*

The proposed PUD is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and will advance numerous goals and policies enumerated in the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital adopted in 2006 (the “**Comprehensive Plan**”).

The purposes of the Plan are to: (a) define the requirements and aspirations of District residents, and accordingly influence social, economic and physical development; (b) guide executive and legislative decisions and matters affecting the District and its citizens; (c) promote economic growth in jobs for District residents; (d) guide private and public development in order to achieve District and community goals; (e) maintain and enhance the natural and architectural assets of the District; and (f) assist in conservation, stabilization and improvement of each neighborhood and community in the District (D.C. Code § 1-245(b)).

Generally, the Project will advance these purposes by furthering the social and economic development of the District through the construction of new residential units with an innovative site plan on underutilized land, eliminating an undesirable and incompatible industrial use in a residential neighborhood, providing affordable residential units, constructing a more environmentally sustainable structure than the current buildings and uses, and constructing larger residential units in a desirable residential neighborhood.

B. Compliance with Citywide Elements

The Project will serve the goals of several of the citywide elements of the Comprehensive Plan, as follows:

i. Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map (“FLUM”) includes the Property in the Moderate Density Residential land use category. The current C-M-1 zone is inconsistent with this FLUM designation, and such a designation supports the construction of a high-quality multifamily residential project. The proposed Project, with an FAR of 2.86, a maximum height of 54.8 feet (with top floor setbacks), and a requested Zoning Map amendment to the R-5-B Zone District, is consistent with the Moderate Density Residential land use category for the Property.

ii. Generalized Policy Map

The Generalized Policy Map (“GPM”) includes the Property in the “Neighborhood Conservation Area” category. Under the terms of the GPM, for this category, new residential development is appropriate since it will replace an incompatible industrial use with a residential use consistent with the neighborhood. Thus, the Project will aid in conserving the predominantly residential character of the neighborhood by adding more residences. As an infill development with new housing, the Project will be consistent with the Property’s designation on the GPM.

iii. Land Use Element

The Plan devotes a great deal of attention to the preeminence of transit-oriented development. The Project will advance the following policies of the Land Use Element:

- **Policy LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations** – Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance. Ensure that development above and around such stations emphasizes land uses and building forms which minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas.
- **Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development** – Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern.
- **Policy LU-2.1.3: Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods** – Recognize the importance of balancing goals to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with parallel goals to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment. The overarching goal to “create successful neighborhoods” in all parts of the city requires an emphasis on conservation in some neighborhoods and revitalization in others.
- **Policy LU-2.2.4: Neighborhood Beautification** – Encourage projects which improve the visual quality of the District’s neighborhoods, including landscaping and tree planting, facade improvement, anti-litter campaigns, graffiti removal, improvement or removal of abandoned buildings, street and sidewalk repair, and park improvements.
- **Policy LU-2.3.1: Managing Non-Residential Uses in Residential Areas** – Maintain zoning regulations and development review procedures that: (a) prevent the encroachment of inappropriate commercial uses in residential areas; and (b) limit the scale and extent of non-residential uses that are generally compatible with residential

uses, but present the potential for conflicts when they are excessively concentrated or out of scale with the neighborhood.

- **Policy LU-3.1.4: Rezoning of Industrial Areas** – Allow the rezoning of industrial land for non-industrial purposes only when the land can no longer viably support industrial or PDR activities or is located such that industry cannot co-exist adequately with adjacent existing uses. Examples include land in the immediate vicinity of Metrorail stations, sites within historic districts, and small sites in the midst of stable residential neighborhoods. In the event such rezoning results in the displacement of active uses, assist these uses in relocating to designated PDR areas.
- **Policy LU-3.1.5: Mitigating Industrial Land Use Impacts** - Mitigate the adverse impacts created by industrial uses through a variety of measures, including buffering, site planning and design, strict environmental controls, performance standards, and the use of a range of industrial zones that reflect the varying impacts of different kinds of industrial uses.

The Project will replace undesirable industrial uses and will rezone industrially-zoned land in the center of a well-established residential neighborhood. At the same time, the Project will enhance this residential neighborhood and will beautify this block by constructing new residences with compatible architectural style. Furthermore, the Project will promote better development on the PUD Site through the provision of new housing units with close proximity to a Metrorail station. The Project will be the quintessential infill development that will allow an underutilized site to be brought to its highest and best use with new housing in an established residential neighborhood and close to a Metrorail station. Given the innovative site plan and replacement of an industrial use with mostly new single-family townhouses, the Project will promote the stability and preservation of the existing residential neighborhood.

iv. Transportation Element

The Project will promote the following Transportation Element policy:

- **Policy T-1.1.4: Transit-Oriented Development** – Support transit-oriented development by investing in pedestrian-oriented transportation improvements at or around transit stations, major bus corridors, and transfer points.

The Project will be a transit oriented development since will contribute a notable amount of new housing at in close proximity to a Metrorail station and a major Metrobus corridor. The

Property's proximity to public transportation makes it a prime location for additional density and residences. Also, the Project will improve the pedestrian experience on the block by eliminating a large three-bay curb cut and resulting pedestrian-automobile conflicts.

v. Urban Design Element

The Project will further many of the policies of the Urban Design Element:

- **Policy UD-2.2.1: Neighborhood Character and Identity** – Strengthen the defining visual qualities of Washington's neighborhoods. This should be achieved in part by relating the scale of infill development, alterations, renovations, and additions to existing neighborhood context.
- **Policy UD-2.2.2: Areas of Strong Architectural Character** - Preserve the architectural continuity and design integrity of historic districts and other areas of strong architectural character. New development within such areas does not need to replicate prevailing architectural styles exactly but should be complementary in form, height, and bulk (see Figure 9.10).
- **Policy UD-2.2.5: Creating Attractive Facades** – Create visual interest through well-designed building facades, storefront windows, and attractive signage and lighting. Avoid monolithic or box-like building forms, or long blank walls which detract from the human quality of the street.
- **Policy UD-2.2.7: Infill Development** – Regardless of neighborhood identity, avoid overpowering contrasts of scale, height and density as infill development occurs.
- **Policy UD-2.2.9: Protection of Neighborhood Open Space** – Ensure that infill development respects and improves the integrity of neighborhood open spaces and public areas. Buildings should be designed to avoid the loss of sunlight and reduced usability of neighborhood parks and plazas.

The Project design will embrace and complement the existing residential neighborhood through attractive architecture and innovative urban site design. The Project's design will take cues from the established neighborhood architectural style while facilitating the vibrancy and growth of the neighborhood with a contemporary interpretation. The Project's site plan will successfully create a strong sense of place, while relating to the existing residential buildings nearby. The courtyard and the central lane (mews) will provide the open space commensurate with the rest of the residential neighborhood. At the same time, the Project will have a scale,

height, and density that is both compatible with the neighborhood and appropriate for an infill site in a highly desirable neighborhood with close proximity to a Metrorail station.

vi. Housing Element

The PUD will advance the following goal and policies of the Housing Element:

- **H-1.1 Expanding Housing Supply** – Expanding the housing supply is a key part of the District’s vision to create successful neighborhoods. Along with improved transportation and shopping, better neighborhood schools and parks, preservation of historic resources, and improved design and identity, the production of housing is essential to the future of our neighborhoods. It is also a key to improving the city’s fiscal health. The District will work to facilitate housing construction and rehabilitation through its planning, building, and housing programs, recognizing and responding to the needs of all segments of the community. The first step toward meeting this goal is to ensure that an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land is available to meet expected housing needs.
- **Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support** – Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives.
- **Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth** – Strongly encourage the development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land in all parts of the city. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long-term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for higher-density housing.
- **Policy H-1.1.6: Housing in the Central City** – Absorb a substantial component of the demand for new high-density housing in Central Washington and along the Anacostia River. Absorbing the demand for higher density units within these areas is an effective way to meet housing demands, create mixed-use areas, and conserve single-family residential neighborhoods throughout the city. Mixed income, higher density downtown housing also provides the opportunity to create vibrant street life, and to support the restaurants, retail, entertainment, and other amenities that are desired and needed in the heart of the city.
- **Policy H-1.3.1: Housing for Families** – Provide a larger number of housing units for families with children by encouraging new and retaining existing single family homes, duplexes, row houses, and three- and four-bedroom apartments.

The Project will expand the District’s housing supply in an established and highly desirable residential neighborhood on a parcel that is otherwise underutilized. By providing 45 new housing units, the Project will promote housing in the central part of the city. Furthermore,

the majority of the units will be suitable for families because they will be large (2+ bedrooms), with the 30 townhouses providing 3+ bedrooms each.

C. Capitol Hill Area Element

The PUD site is located in the Capitol Hill Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Project will be consistent with the following policies of the Area Element:

- **Policy CH-1.1.1: Conserving Residential Uses** – Maintain the integrity and quality of Capitol Hill’s residential uses, and recognize the importance of its historic architecture and housing stock to the entire District of Columbia. Ensure that Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations for Capitol Hill neighborhoods sustain its moderate density land use pattern.
- **Policy CH-1.1.2: Renovation of Housing Stock** – Encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of the building stock throughout the Capitol Hill Planning Area, taking steps to preserve and restore important historic features. Where infill development occurs, its scale and character should be compatible with prevailing neighborhood densities and its design should contribute to neighborhood continuity and quality.
- **Policy CH-1.1.7: Alleys** – Protect Capitol Hill’s system of historic alleys and develop plans for the use of large block interior spaces where appropriate. These plans should be developed in coordination with the affected Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, residents, and community groups.

The Project will advance three key policies of the Capitol Hill Area Element by constructing an infill residential project that respects the integrity of the architecture and maintains the scale of the neighborhood. As described, the scale and character of the Project will emulate that of the surrounding community. Furthermore, the Project will put a large block of interior alley space into productive residential use that benefits the community by replacing an otherwise disruptive automobile repair shop and parking lot and warehouse.

VI. THE APPLICATION PROVIDES SUPERIOR PUBLIC BENEFITS AND PROJECT AMENITIES

The PUD Evaluation Standards, at 11 DCMR §§ 2403.5-2403.7, require the Commission to “evaluate the specific public benefits and project amenities of the proposed Development.”

That Section continues:

Public benefits are superior features of a proposed PUD that benefit the surrounding neighborhood or the public in general to a significantly greater extent than would likely result from development of the site under the matter-of-right provisions of this title. A project amenity is one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience, or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors.

Based on its meetings with the ANC and the community, the Applicant has developed a public benefits and amenities package best suited to the desires of the community.

A. Review of Project under Section 2403.9

The PUD Evaluation Standards, at Section 2403.10, provide that “a project may qualify for approval by being particularly strong in only one or a few” of the public benefits and project amenities listed in Section 2403.9, “but must be acceptable in all proffered categories and superior in many.” The Applicant submits that the Project provides superior public benefits and project amenities in these categories. The Applicant’s benefits and amenities are in the following categories:

i. Housing and affordable housing (§ 2403.9(f))

Pursuant to Section 2403.9(f) of the Zoning Regulations, the PUD guidelines state that the production of housing is a public benefit that the PUD process is designed to encourage. The Project will create 45 new residential units in the established residential Capitol Hill neighborhood, where housing is in high demand and where there are limited opportunities to construct new housing. This Project will be a net increase in housing units on the site, where none currently exist, and the housing units will be large to accommodate families.

ii. Urban design, architecture and landscaping (§ 2403.9(a))

Section 2403.9(a) lists urban design, architecture, and landscaping as categories of public benefits and project amenities for a PUD. As shown in the detailed plans, elevations, and

renderings included in the Plans, the Project will exhibit the characteristics of exemplary urban design, architecture, and landscaping. The Project will provide a superior design that fully responds to the site location and history while efficiently integrating a new building that will provide new housing for the community.

The Project's design will create a unique sense of place in an already unique neighborhood. The Project's contemporary design will respect the character and scale of the existing residential neighborhood, but it will offer an interesting new perspective. The Project will incorporate traditional, and time-tested materials in a modern fashion for a design that will endure, will contribute to the character of the neighborhood, and will enhance the aesthetics of the block and alley. The building articulation will appear as a series of traditional townhouses, but the site will incorporate common outdoor spaces not typical in Washington. The exemplary urban design of the Project will create a unique urban experience without detracting from or encroaching on the established residential character of the neighborhood. In particular, the central lane (mews) in the second block of townhouses will create a sense of community and historic quality. As described above, the architectural style will vary to break up the Project into components while creating a harmonious whole.

The landscape design of the Project will consist of the streetscape, the north and south courtyards and the green roofs. It will expand the existing green streetscape fabric from the residences to the east, wrap it into the courtyards, and onto the roof tops. At the street, the language of street trees, brick sidewalk, and entry plantings will be borrowed from the adjacent houses. The courtyards will maximize green space. At the north, a plaza with a central planting bed will move to the south along an arced path and then past a lawn anchored by a canopy tree. At the south, a second arced path will sweep across the planted green roof above the garage. A

shallower profile green roof will rest on the buildings' roofs. A mix of concrete and permeable pavers will create a simple palette of hardscape materials. The green roofs and permeable pavers will act with other measures to manage the site's stormwater.

iii. Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization (§ 2403.9(b))

Pursuant to Section 2403.9(b) of the Zoning Regulations, "Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization" are public benefits and project amenities to be evaluated by the Zoning Commission.

The Project will take advantage of the rare opportunity to provide highly-desired new housing on a currently non-residential site amidst a primarily residential neighborhood. The Project will strike the delicate balance between ushering change to the block and alley, while enhancing and retaining the character of the neighborhood. The Project will accomplish this by efficiently using the land to provide new housing units, but the innovative site plan and design will retain a sense of neighborhood character and open space. The open courtyard in the first block of townhouses and the central lane (mews) in the second block of townhouses will help integrate the Project into the neighborhood while making it a distinct place different from other residential projects nearby. Further, replacing an automobile repair shop and parking lot and a warehouse with new housing units close to a Metrorail station is a highly efficient and economical use of land.

iv. Environmental benefits (§ 2403.9(h))

According to Section 2403.9(h), "environmental benefits such as [...] stormwater runoff controls in excess of those required by the Stormwater Management Regulations; use of natural design techniques that store, infiltrate, evaporate, treat and detain runoff in close proximity to where the runoff is generated, and preservation of open space or trees" are deemed to be public benefits and project amenities. The Project will be designed to meet LEED Certified

requirements, and it will incorporate large amounts of landscaping and open space, as well as other environmentally-sensitive features. The Property is currently all paved or occupied with building, so it has no permeability or water retention. The Project will introduce landscaping and other green features, in excess of the GAR requirements, that will significantly increase the water retention on the site.

Furthermore, the Project will incorporate myriad sustainable features, such as permeable pavement, lack of irrigation, drought tolerant landscape, bird attracting features including bird houses, outdoor terraces, fruiting shrubs, and a pollinator garden.

v. Uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole (§ 2403.9(i))

According to Section 2403.9(i), "uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole" are deemed to be public benefits and project amenities. The addition of 45 new households, on a parcel that surely has a significantly lower taxable value than after the Project, will result in the generation of significant additional tax revenues in the form of property, income, and employment taxes for the District. In addition, these new residences will add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood and the block when they replace the automobile-oriented industrial uses currently operating.

vi. Effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access, transportation management measures, connections to public transit service, and other measures to mitigate adverse traffic impacts (§ 2403.9(c))

The Zoning Regulations, pursuant to Section 2403.9(c), state that "effective and safe vehicular and pedestrian access, transportation management measures, connections to public transit service, and other measures to mitigate adverse traffic impact" can be considered public benefits and project amenities of a project.

As previously described above, the Project site is located within 1/3 mile of a Metrorail stations, and it is in close proximity to a major Metrobus corridor and multiple retail and service options. Residents in the Project will be able to easily use public transit to and from work, and then they will be able to shop for basic necessities, such as groceries, and dine near home.

Furthermore, as will be articulated in the full traffic report to be submitted with the Pre-Hearing statement, the Project will incorporate a transportation demand management plan in and around the PUD Site to properly manage the traffic flow in the area.

The elimination of existing automobile-intensive uses will reduce the impact of traffic in the alley generated by the PUD Site, which will benefit the road and alley network. Also, the elimination of the three-bay curb cut on E Street will concentrate all automobile traffic to the Project through the alleys, which will reduce the potential for automobile-pedestrian conflicts.

This vehicular entrance and exit for the underground parking will be from the alley along the west side of the second block of townhouses. This location for vehicle access will allow for an uninterrupted E Street pedestrian right-of-way in front of the Property, which is unlike the existing condition of a large three-bay curb cuts. Accordingly, the single alley access point and absence of a curb cut for the Property will minimize vehicle-pedestrian conflicts.

vii. Employment and training opportunities (§ 2403.9(e))

According to Section 2403.9(e), "employment and training opportunities" are representative public benefits and project amenities. The Project will create several types of job opportunities. During its construction phase, the Project will provide jobs primarily in the construction and related fields. Once operational, the Project will provide jobs for its management.

viii. Uses of Special Value (§ 2403.9(i))

Section 2403.9(i) states that "uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole" can be considered public benefits and project amenities of a project. The Project will include the following public benefits and amenities:

- a. The Applicant will design the interior of at least one residential unit as a "senior unit." The design will include features and fixtures for suitable for seniors, such as grab bars, lever door handles, etc.
- b. The Applicant will pay the cost of installing a new Capital Bikeshare station near the Potomac Avenue Metrorail station, at an exact location to be determined by DDOT.
- c. The Applicant will repair and upgrade the 18 vegetable gardens at Watkins Elementary School.
- d. The Applicant will add to and upgrade street lighting and tree box planters for the sidewalks surrounding Square 1043.
- e. The Applicant is continuing its discussions with two other developers proposing PUDs in the immediate neighborhood to offer a joint proposal for public space improvements for the benefit of the greater neighborhood. The Applicant will have a more specific proposal prior to the public hearing.

ix. Other Public Benefits and Project Amenities (§ 2403.9(j))

According to Section 2403.9(j), public benefits and project amenities include "other ways in which the proposed planned unit development substantially advances the major themes and other policies and objectives of any of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan." As described in greater detail above in Section V, the Project is consistent with and furthers many elements and goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

B. Public Benefits of the Project

Section 2403.12 and 2403.13 require the Applicant to show how the public benefits offered are superior in quality and quantity to typical development of the type proposed. The Applicant has addressed this issue in the text of the statement, particularly Section VI.A above. It is only as a result of the additional density provided through the PUD process that the Applicant is able to construct such a well-designed project.

C. Environmental Analysis for Second Stage Application

i. Water Demand

The average daily demand for water from the Project is estimated to be approximately 13,500 gallons per day. Based on surrounding land use and existing infrastructure, this demand can be met by the existing District water system. The proposed connections for domestic and fire water supplies will be made to the existing distribution system and will be coordinated with DC Water.

ii. Sanitary Sewer Demand

The average daily demand on the sanitary sewer system for the Project is estimated to be approximately 13,500 gallons per day. The proposed connections for the sanitary and storm sewer lines will be made to the existing distribution system and will be coordinated with DC Water.

iii. Stormwater Management

The Project will accommodate its storm water run-off with a stormwater management system in compliance with standards set by the District Department of the Environment. The proposed systems will be designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with standards set by the District Department of the Environment. Stormwater management facilities are expected to consist of extensive green roof, bioretention and pervious pavement systems.

iv. Solid Waste Services

Solid waste will be collected by a private carrier at least twice weekly. Trash will be stored in dumpsters in the garage.

v. Electrical Service

Electricity for the Project will be provided by the Potomac Electric Power Company in accordance with its general terms and conditions of service. All electrical systems will be designed to comply with the District of Columbia Energy Code.

vi. Energy Consumption

The Project will be constructed in full compliance with Article 24 (Energy Conservation) of the District of Columbia Building Code. Conformance to code standards will minimize the amounts of energy needed for the heat, ventilation, hot water, electrical distribution and lighting systems contained in the buildings.

vii. Erosion Control

During excavation and construction, erosion on the project site will be controlled in accordance with District of Columbia law.

VII. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The development team has engaged in discussions about the Project with many community stakeholders. The Applicant has met on multiple occasions with the ANC 6B06 Single Member District representative and with individual nearby residents. The Applicant presented the project to the ANC 6B Planning and Zoning Committee for feedback and refinement. The Applicant also participated in at least three neighborhood meetings to walk the site, answer questions from neighbors, and/or solicit additional community feedback. The Applicant and development team will continue to meet with the ANC throughout the course of

the Project entitlement process. In addition, the Applicant will meet with other stakeholders, such as nearby residents and other community groups, to ensure inclusion in this process.


As discussed above, the Project's mixed-use development is consistent with objectives and policies that the Comprehensive Plan identifies for this part of the District of Columbia.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The Applicant submits that the Project complies with the requirements of Chapter 24 and related provisions of the Zoning Regulations applicable to Zoning Commission review and approval of Consolidated PUD and Related Map Amendment applications; complies with the 1910 Height of Buildings; is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; will provide significant public benefits that would not be provided by matter-of-right development; and will enhance the health, welfare, safety, and convenience of the citizens of the District of Columbia. The Applicant aspires to make this a distinguished project that will be a credit to its developer and to the community.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant submits that the Consolidated PUD and related Map Amendment application should be set down for a hearing by the Zoning Commission at its earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,
GOULSTON & STORRS, PC

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By: 
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