

STAFF RECOMMENDATION



NCPC File No. ZC 03-27

CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

Square 1732, Lots 817 and 820
4600 – 4614 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

Report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

November 24, 2004

Abstract

A mixed-use development of 37,983 square feet in the C-2-A Zone District is proposed for a site at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Brandywine Street, NW, in Lots 817 and 820 of Square 1732. The current commercial property would be replaced with a development of 42 residential units and 1,650 square feet of neighborhood-oriented retail space along Wisconsin Avenue. The development conforms in height and Floor Area Ratio with the requirements for a Planned Unit Development in the C-2-A Zone District.

Authority

Section 8 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8724(a)) and DC Code § 2-1006(a)

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission concludes that the ~~modified~~ consolidated Planned Unit Development for the property at 4600 – 4616 Wisconsin Avenue, NW **would not adversely affect the identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.**

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Site Description

The 12,661-square foot site is located at 4600-4614 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, in Square 1732, Lots 817 and 820. The site, which is located in the C-2-A Zone District, is located at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Brandywine Street, NW, and fronts both streets. It is currently occupied by Babe's Billiards.

Adjacent to the property to the north and within the C-2-A Zone is a four-story office building with ground-floor retail. To the east of Wisconsin Avenue are retail and office buildings, radio and television transmission towers and a five-story office building, also within the C-2-A zone. The one-story Friendship Animal Hospital, as well as single-family and semi-detached dwellings within the R-2 zone, continue on Brandywine Street to the west, across a north-south alley. To the south, across Brandywine Street and within the C-3-A zone, are a five-story office building with ground floor retail and a two-story office building. The Tenleytown Metrorail Station is two blocks south of the site.

Proposal

The mixed-use, primarily residential building would include a total of 37,983 square feet of gross floor area, would have a total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3.0, would be approximately 65 feet in height, and would occupy 60% of the property. (Matter-of-right development in the C-2-A zone allows a height of 50 feet and an FAR of 2.5.)

The residential portion would include 42 one- and two-bedroom condominium units (accessed from Brandywine Street) for a total of 36,333 square feet of gross floor area. One unit would be “affordable.” The non-residential portion would include approximately 1,650 square feet of neighborhood-oriented retail space along Wisconsin Avenue. The project would also provide 4,600 square feet of residential recreation space in a landscaped courtyard in the rear yard of the property. There would be two levels of parking below grade, including 44 parking spaces that would be accessed from Brandywine Street.

The building’s facades would incorporate brick, precast concrete, glass and metal, with site work including decorative paving, terracing, and planting. The project is designed by the architecture firm of Cunningham + Quill.

Zoning Commission and Office of Planning

The Zoning Commission by a 5-0 vote took proposed action on November 8, 2004 to approve the consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD). The proposed Decision is attached.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3E approved the proposal. Its letter is attached.

The Office of Planning (OP) report approved the application, determining that the proposed consolidated PUD was not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, would bring needed housing to the District, and would provide a mixed-use building in close proximity to a Metrorail Station. OP found that the project was of “exceptional merit” and would replace a commercial development with one that was largely residential.

The application proposes the construction of a mixed-use building that would require the approval of one waiver and one variance. The project otherwise is in conformance with the minimum requirements for a PUD within the C-2-A zone. The waiver is needed because the project at 12,661 square feet is smaller than the minimum PUD area of 15,000. However, the project is in conformance with the zoning regulations in that it is 95.7% residential, in excess of the minimum 80% residential required, so the OP recommended approval of the waiver, stating

that the proposed development is of exceptional merit and in the best interest of the City. The requested variance would allow 12.66% of residential recreation space rather than the 20% required. The proposed residential open space consists of a 4,600 square foot landscaped courtyard at the rear (west) of the building, designed for passive recreation. OP recommended approval of the variance, noting that the design of the building includes private balconies and private roof decks for passive recreation and that the property is in close proximity to a public park.

OP has determined that the proposed amenities package is commensurate with the relief requested. The amenities offered by the developer include the architectural design of the building; a larger rear set-back than required with a tree buffer; employment and training opportunities; an affordable housing unit; a green roof; new housing units in the Tenleytown Metrorail Station Housing Opportunity Area; and financial awards to Janney Elementary, Friends of the Tenley Library, Wilson Senior High School PTA, Friends of Fort Bayard Park, and the DC Fire Department.

Staff has also determined that the project is consistent with Comprehensive Plan policies and objectives relative to transit-oriented development, housing, and for transit-oriented neighborhoods.

Federal Interests

The proposed project is consistent with the Planned Unit Development (PUD) guidelines for the C-2-A District. The mixed-use, primarily residential building would include a total of 37,983 square feet of gross floor area, would have a total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 3.0, would be 65 feet in height, and would occupy 60% of the property.

The staff has not identified any federal interests that would be adversely affected by this project. Wisconsin Avenue is a gateway street into the District of Columbia, but Eastern Avenue is approximately eight blocks from the site. Wisconsin Avenue is not an original L'Enfant Street. Fort Reno is not adjacent to the site, but is in the vicinity, at the northeast corner of Chesapeake Street and Belt Road, east of 41st Street and Wisconsin Avenue, NW. Fort Bayard, the subject of amenity funding to the Friends of Fort Bayard Park, is a historic Civil War fort managed by the National Park Service, which has approved the funding for renovation of the park. The development would benefit from proximity to the Tenleytown Metrorail Station.

The residential project helps to meet District of Columbia housing objectives, especially in the Tenleytown area, as well as objectives for transit-oriented development, especially in transit-oriented neighborhoods. The development is not inconsistent with the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, especially policies that support transit-oriented housing and development.



Perspective Rendering the the proposed development from Wiscpnsin Avenue and brandywine St.