

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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NCPC File No. Z.C. 04-18



**PROPOSED NEW SUB-AREA OF THE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT IN CERTAIN SQUARES
OF THE MOUNT VERNON TRIANGLE AREA
AND MAP AMENDMENT FOR SQUARE 483**

K and 5th Streets NW
Washington, D.C.

(Squares 451, 483, 484, 484w, 515 and 516)

Submitted by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

October 27, 2005

Abstract

The Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia has taken a proposed action to establish a sub-area within the Downtown Development District (DD) encompassing portions of Square 451, 483, 484, 484w, 515 and 516, along 5th and K Streets NW within Mount Vernon Triangle, which is bounded by Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York Avenues NW; and to amend the zoning map to include Square 483, located at the northwest corner of 5th and K Streets NW, in the DD and rezone it from C-3-C to DD/C-3-C. The proposed zoning district is designed to increase street vitality and retail activity along the major spines of the Mount Vernon Triangle area. The map amendment is proposed to bring Square 483 back into the Downtown Development District (DD) where it had been prior to 1996.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of comments to the District of Columbia Zoning Commission pursuant to Section 8 of the National Capital Planning Act (40 U.S.C. § 8724(a)) and D.C. Code § 2-1006(a).

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

Concludes that the proposal to create a sub-area within the Mount Vernon Triangle area of the Downtown Development District (DD), and the inclusion of Square 483 in the Downtown

Development District and the rezoning of the Square from C-3-C to DD/C-3-C would not adversely affect any identified federal interests nor be inconsistent with the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*.

Reminds the Zoning Commission that this action does not apply to any properties within the Central Area that may be owned by the District of Columbia and used for or intended to be used for District public buildings, as set forth in the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (Sections 106.4 and 106.5) and The National Capital Planning Act authority 40 U.S.C. § 8722(e); D.D. Code § 2-1004(c).

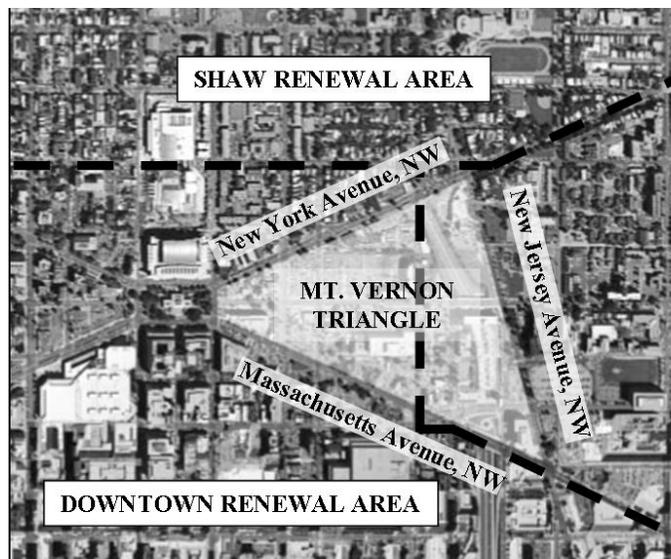
Requests that the District of Columbia Office of Planning submit *The Mount Vernon Triangle Action Agenda: Creating a vibrant new downtown neighborhood* for review and comment by the Commission pursuant to The National Capital Planning Act § 40 U.S.C. § 8722(e).

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PROJECT SUMMARY

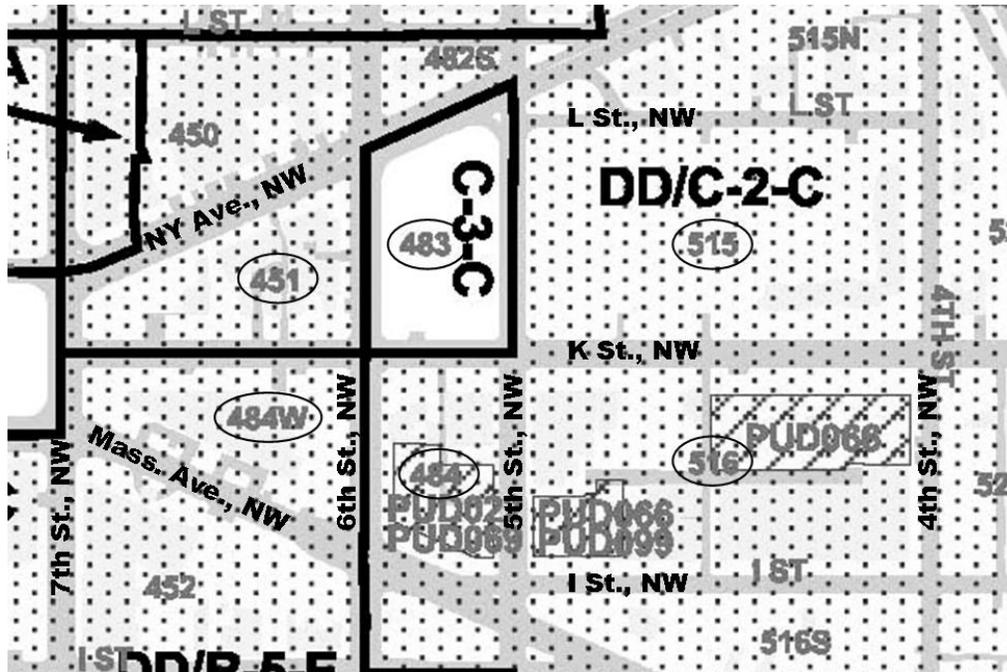
Site Description

The proposed sub-area is located within Mount Vernon Triangle, which is bounded by New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey Avenues, NW, to the east of Mount Vernon Square and the Washington Convention Center. The portion of Mount Vernon Triangle located west of 3rd Street, NW is in within the Downtown Urban Renewal Area, which places it within the Central Area for the purposes of NCPC authority under the National Capital Planning Act.



AERIAL: MOUNT VERNON TRIANGLE

The proposed sub-area will encompass portions of Square 451, 483, 484, 484w, 515 and 516 along 5th and K Streets NW within Mount Vernon Triangle and the Downtown Development District (DD). Square 484, proposed for rezoning and inclusion in the DD, is located at the northwest corner of 5th and K Streets NW.



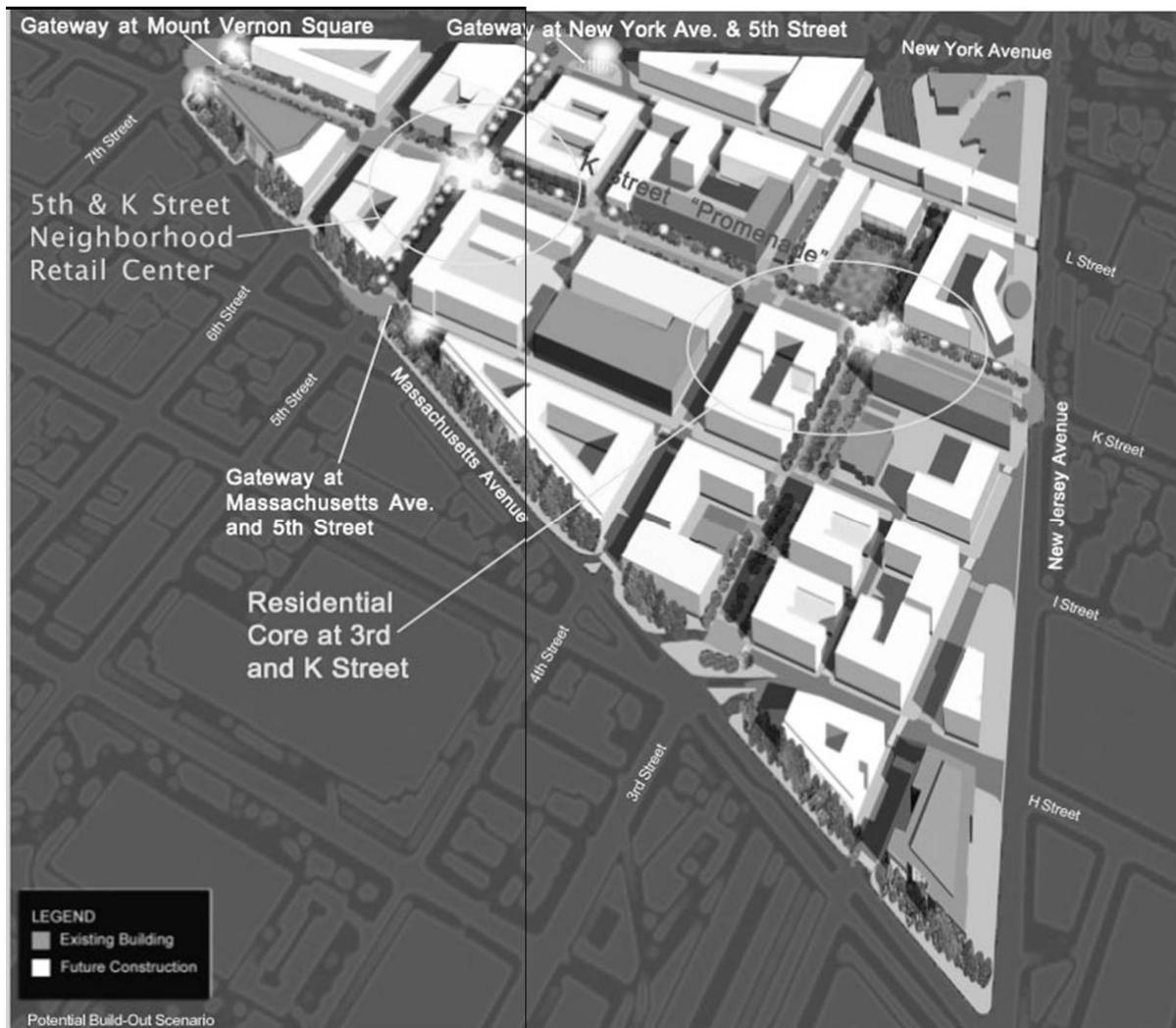
ZONING MAP

(CIRCLED SQUARES LOCATED WITHIN THE PROPOSED SUB-AREA PLAN)

Background

On March 23, 2004 the Mayor unveiled *The Mount Vernon Triangle Action Agenda: Creating a vibrant new downtown neighborhood*. The *Action Agenda* was documented in a publication produced by the District Office of Planning (DCOP) and was the result of joint effort by DCOP and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development, the National Capitol Revitalization Corporation (NCRC), the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the Mount Vernon Triangle Alliance, which is a group of ten major property owners in the Triangle. The *Agenda* also had input from the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 2C and 2F, and an extensive series of public meetings.

The *Action Agenda* recommended creating a new sub-area within the Downtown Development District zoning overlay (DD), focused on establishing a range of preferred uses and minimal physical standards to promote the activation of K Street and 5th Street NW, the two streets that the *Action Agenda* identified as the spines of the Mount Vernon Triangle neighborhood.

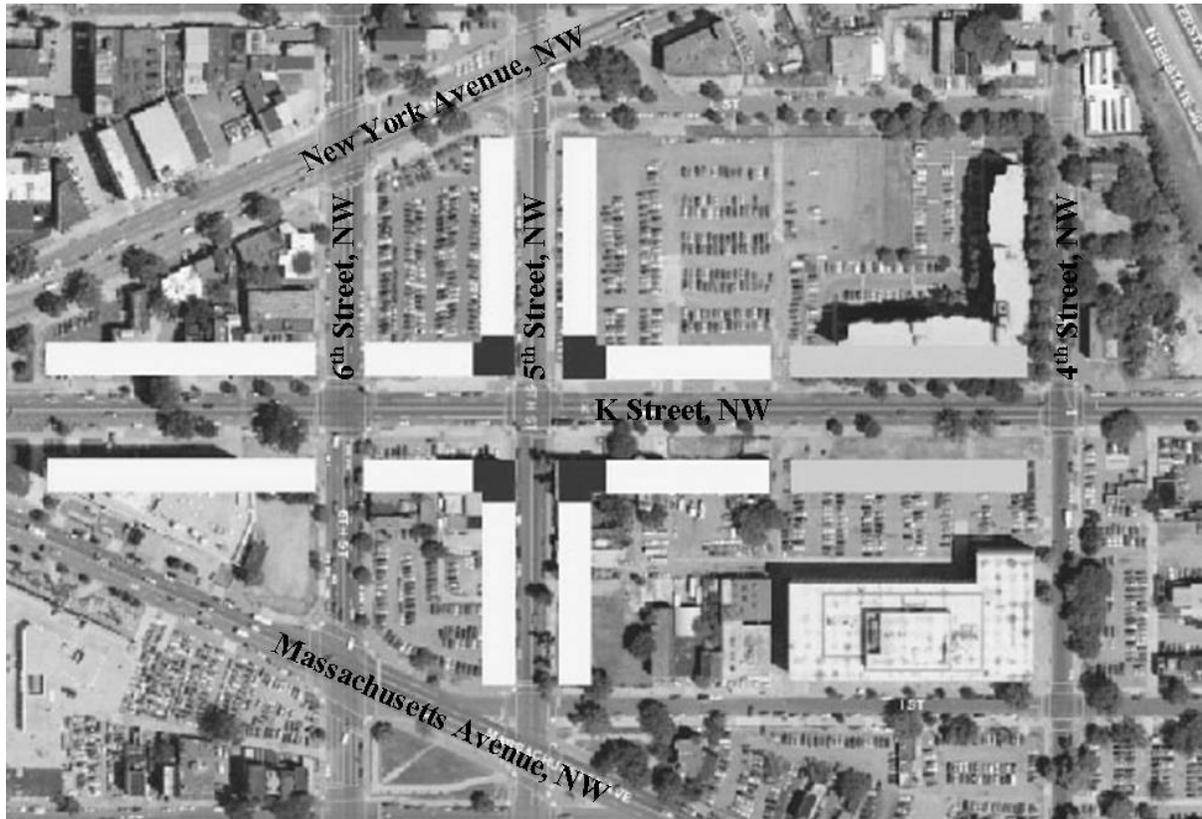


MOUNT VERNON TRIANGLE: POTENTIAL BUILD-OUT SCENARIO

The following public/private planning goals are stated in the *Action Agenda*:

- “Recognize the importance of residential development and supporting retail to the downtown”
- “Promote affordable housing, neighborhood amenities, and protect existing residential neighborhoods and community institutions”
- “Respond to the current market demands of empty-nesters, young professionals and non-traditional families seeking downtown housing, while still providing choices that are affordable and accommodate parents and children”
- “Provide locational opportunities for nonprofit institutions and non-traditional, innovative businesses”
- “Foster the development of smaller-scale performing arts, museum and gallery spaces”
- “Create synergies with adjoining neighborhoods including Shaw and the growing downtown”

“In addition to the objectives above, vision, land-use and economic goals were established... These included working within existing zoning requirements, with the exception of new overlays (this submission), to achieve a mixed-use build-out of residences, offices, hotels, cultural uses and retail. ...”

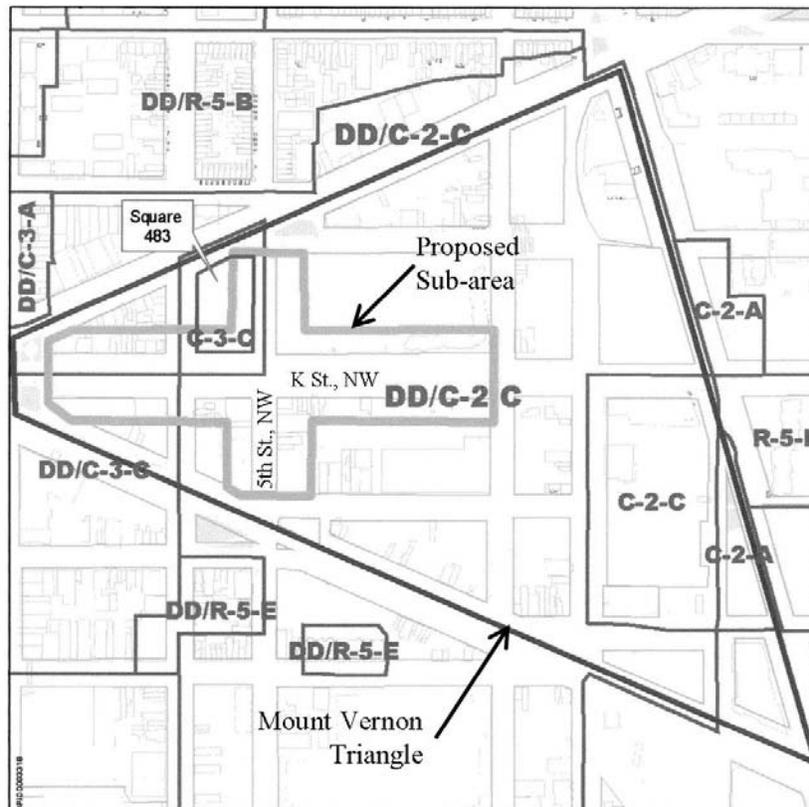


ACTION AGENDA: PROPOSED OVERLAY WITH PRIMARY & SECONDARY SUBDISTRICTS AND SPECIAL CORNER USE REQUIREMENTS

Proposal

The establishment of the sub-area is intended to facilitate the implementation of the Action Agenda by reinforcing K and 5th Streets as major spines of the Triangle and, as a high priority, implementing zoning to encourage street-level vitality and promote access to neighborhood retail and services along the spines.

The proposed action by the Zoning Commission also includes an amendment to rezone Square 483 from C-3-C to DD/C-3-C. This action will retain High-Density Commercial use with increased square footage of mixed use and residential development to be consistent with the proposed Downtown Development District. Originally this Square was included within the DD, but was removed in 1996 by the request of the property owner. The property owner now wishes to return the Square to the DD.



**MOUNT VERNON TRIANGLE BOUNDARIES, PROPOSED SUB-AREA,
EXISTING ZONING, BOUNDARIES AND SQUARE 483**

PROJECT ANALYSIS

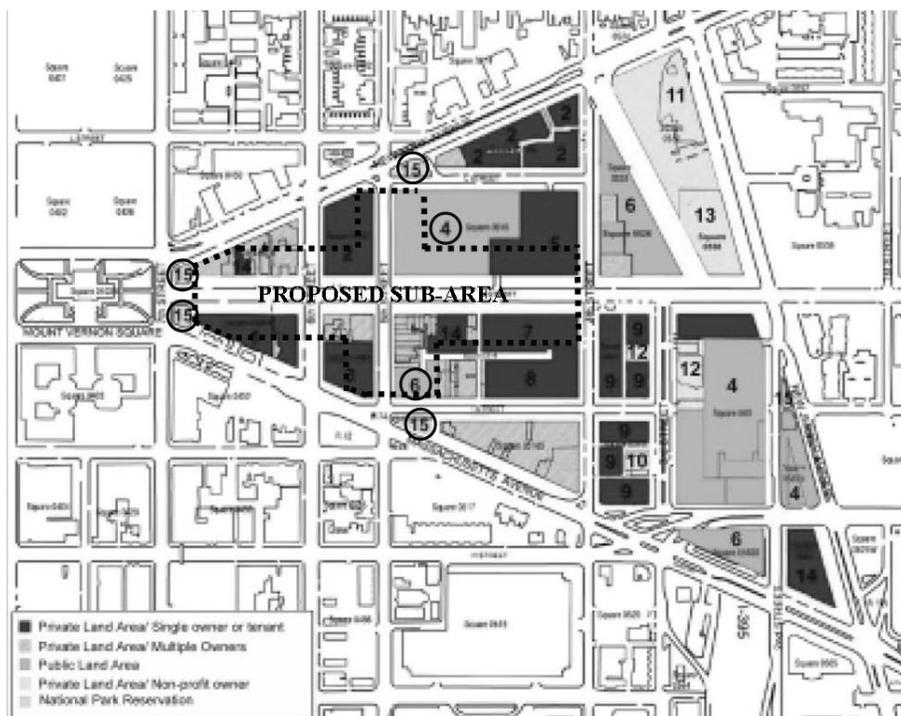
Staff notes that the creation of the proposed sub-area would apply primarily to private property owners in the area and would not have an adverse impact on any identified federal interests. Staff also notes that the proposed map amendment to rezone the privately owned Square 483 from C-3-C to DD/C-3-C would not have an adverse impact on any federal interests.

Four National Park Service reservations are located immediately adjacent to the proposed sub-area pla: to the north at 5th and L Streets, NW, to the south at 5th and I Streets, NW and to west at New York Avenue and 7th Street, NW and Massachusetts Avenue and 7th Street. Staff has determined that the proposed sub-area plan and map amendment would not have an adverse impact upon the reservations.

Staff notes that proposed DD sub-area and square to be rezoned are located within the Central Area. The District of Columbia Zoning Regulations section 106.4 states that "... properties owned by the Government of the District of Columbia in the Central Area are not included in any zone district." Section 106.5(c) states that "District of Columbia public buildings in the Central Area shall be exempt from zoning but shall continue to require approval of the National

Capital Planning Commission (NCPC)...” Since a portion of Square 515 is owned by the national Capital Revitalization Corporation (NCRC), a publicly chartered corporation, and a portion of Square 516 is owned by the District of Columbia (see Current Ownership Map below), staff recommends that the commission remind the Zoning Commission that this action does not apply to any properties within the Central Area that may be owned by the District of Columbia and used for or intended to be used for District public buildings, as set forth in the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (Sections 106.4 and 106.5) and The National Capital Planning Act authority 40 U.S.C. § 8722(e); D.D. Code § 2-1004(c).

Finally, staff notes that *The Mount Vernon Triangle Action Agenda* document that the sub-area is designed to facilitate has not been reviewed by NCPC. Given the Commission’s particular authority within the Central Area under the Planning Act, staff recommends that DCOP be requested to submit the *Action Agenda* to the Commission for review and comment.



CURRENT OWNERSHIP MAP

(Partial Legend: 4. NCRC; 6. District of Columbia; 15. National Park Service Reservation)