

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

John Mann

NCPC File No. Z.C. 06-31



CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND MAP AMENDMENT AT 5220 WISCONSIN AVENUE, NW Square 1657, Lots 810, 811 and 812 Washington, D.C.

Submitted by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

June 28, 2007

Abstract

The Zoning Commission has referred a proposed action for a consolidated planned unit development at 5220 Wisconsin Avenue, NW and a related map amendment to rezone the property from R-5-B to C-2-C. The proposed mixed-use development would consist of a residential building with ground-floor retail.

Federal Interests

The identified federal interests relevant to this project include compliance with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and the Height of Buildings Act of 1910.

Commission Action Requested by Applicant

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

Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

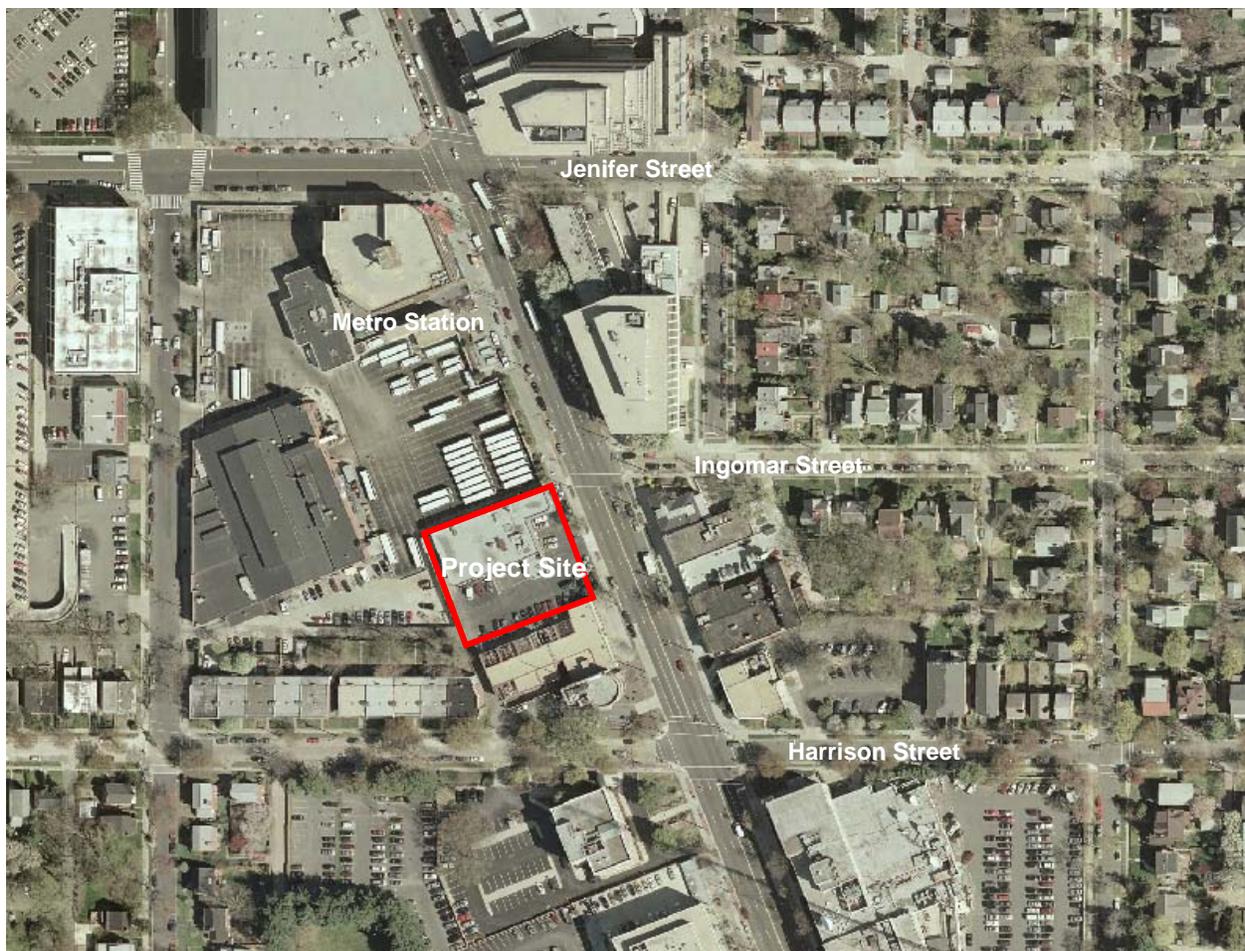
- **Recommends** that the Zoning Commission approve the consolidated planned unit development at 5220 Wisconsin Avenue, NW and related map amendment to rezone the property from R-5-B to C-2-C.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site

The 22,500-square foot property is located on Square 1657, on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue, NW, between Harrison and Jenifer Streets. The site is bordered by a PEPCO substation to the south, a twenty-foot-wide alley to the west, and a WMATA bus garage to the north. The site is zoned R-5-B and is currently occupied by a used car dealer and a flower shop. An entrance to the Friendship Heights Metro station is located approximately 300 feet from the northern edge of the property on the bus garage property, and the site is adjacent to the Friendship Heights regional commercial center.



Wisconsin Avenue, NW

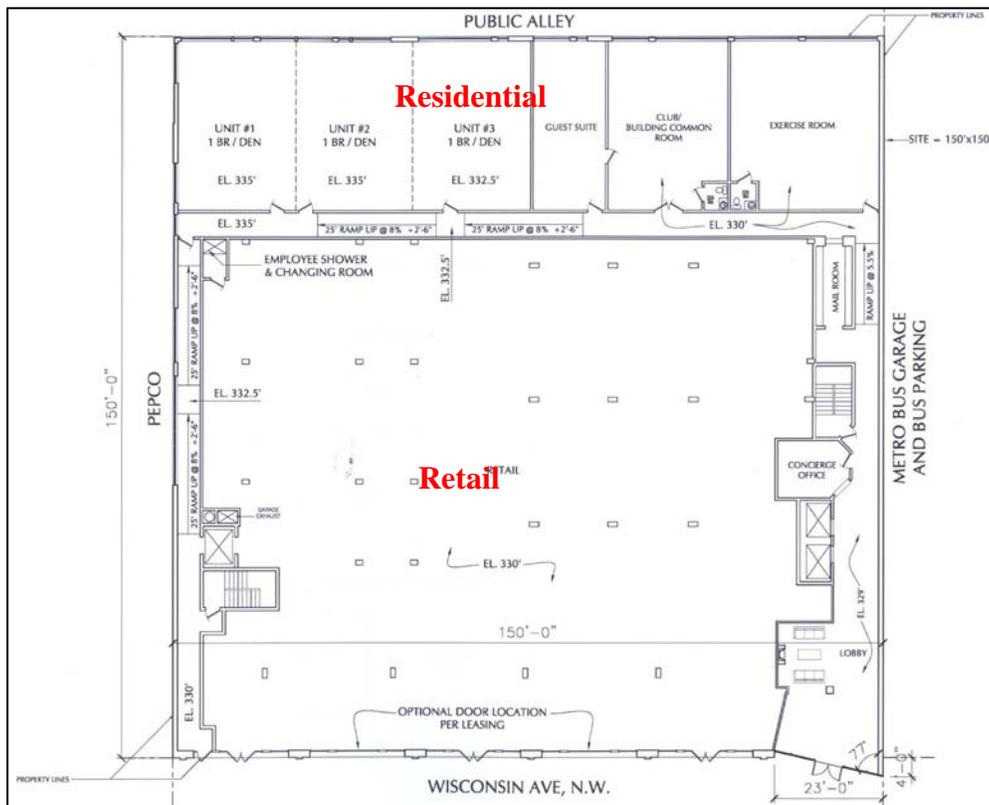
Background

On March 8, 2007 and April 12, 2007 the Zoning Commission conducted public hearings on the proposed planned unit development. At a public meeting held on June 11, 2007, the Zoning

Commission approved the proposal. The case is referred to the National Capital Planning Commission for review and comment, pursuant to the District of Columbia Home Rule Act of 1973, as amended, 87 Stat. 790, Pub. L. No. 93-198, D.C. Code Section 1-201 et seq. The Zoning Commission plans to take final action on this application at the end of the NCPC 30-day review period, possibly at a Special Public Meeting to be scheduled in July 2007.

Proposal

Akridge Real Estate Services has requested that the Zoning Commission approve a planned unit development to build a residential building with ground-floor retail, and related map amendment to rezone the property from R-5-B to C-2-C.



First Floor Plan

The seven-story development would total 118,125 square feet. Approximately 13,200 square feet would be devoted to retail use and approximately 7,875 square feet would be devoted to parking and loading. The remaining 97,050 square feet would be devoted to residential use, providing between 60 and 70 units. The retail component of the project would be located on the ground floor along Wisconsin Avenue. Above the first floor, the center of the building would be developed as an interior courtyard for the residential portion of the project. Access to the garage and loading areas would be from the alley on the western border of the property. Up to 104 parking spaces would serve the site.

The majority of the Wisconsin Avenue façade would have a height of 58 feet. A taller portion with a height of 79 feet would angle away from the street and property line as it approaches the southwest corner of the site. The southwest corner of the proposed building would step down to three stories as a transition to the three-story apartment buildings adjacent to the site. The building façade on the five-story portion of the structure will consist mainly of brick and will have a traditional architectural character. The seven-story portion of the façade will consist of glass and metal and will have a more modern architectural character. Other building facades would include split-face block and corrugated metal.

The applicant has requested relief from three provisions of the zoning regulations: maximum lot occupancy requirements, minimum rear yard requirements, and loading berth requirements. Relief is required from the maximum lot occupancy requirements because the regulations limit residential lot occupancy to 80 percent. However, commercial lot occupancy in the C-2-B zone is allowed to 100 percent. Because the ground floor would contain three residential units in addition to retail the relief is required.

Relief is required from the minimum rear yard requirements because the regulations require a 15-foot rear yard. However, because the property abuts an alley the rear yard can be measured from the centerline of the alley, up to a building height of 20 feet. Above 20 feet the rear yard must be measured from the property line. Because the rear wall of the structure would be on the property line, the building would have a 10-foot rear yard up to a height of 20 feet and no rear yard above that level. Therefore, relief is required.

Finally relief is required from the requirement to provide a 55-foot loading berth, in addition to a second 30-foot loading berth. Because a truck longer than 30 feet would not be able to navigate the alley, the applicant has proposed instead to provide two 30-foot loading berths.

Principal public benefits and project amenities would include:

- Affordable Housing. Approximately seven units of on-site affordable housing would be provided for households making no more than 80 percent of Area Median Income.
- Environmentally Sensitive Design Elements. The applicant has agreed to achieve LEED certification. The project would include a green roof, bicycle storage and other environmental components.
- Public Space. The Wisconsin Avenue streetscape will be improved with new sidewalks, trees, planters and benches.
- Two car-sharing spaces would be accessible from and located directly off the public alley at the rear of the building.
- Community Residential Facility. The applicant has committed to contribute \$500,000 to the Lisner-Louise-Dickson-Hurt Home for the indigent elderly.
- School Improvements. The applicant has committed to contribute \$100,000 to the Janney School Parent-Teacher Association.
- Bus Service. The applicant has committed to contribute \$30,000 to Iona Senior Services to expand their bus service for senior citizens.
- PEPCO Substation Improvement. The PEPCO substation façade will be enhanced with storefront-type windows, restoration of the façade, and a new sidewalk.

- Transportation Study. The applicant has committed to contribute \$40,000 towards a consultant to study transportation concerns in the Friendship Heights neighborhood.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Building Heights

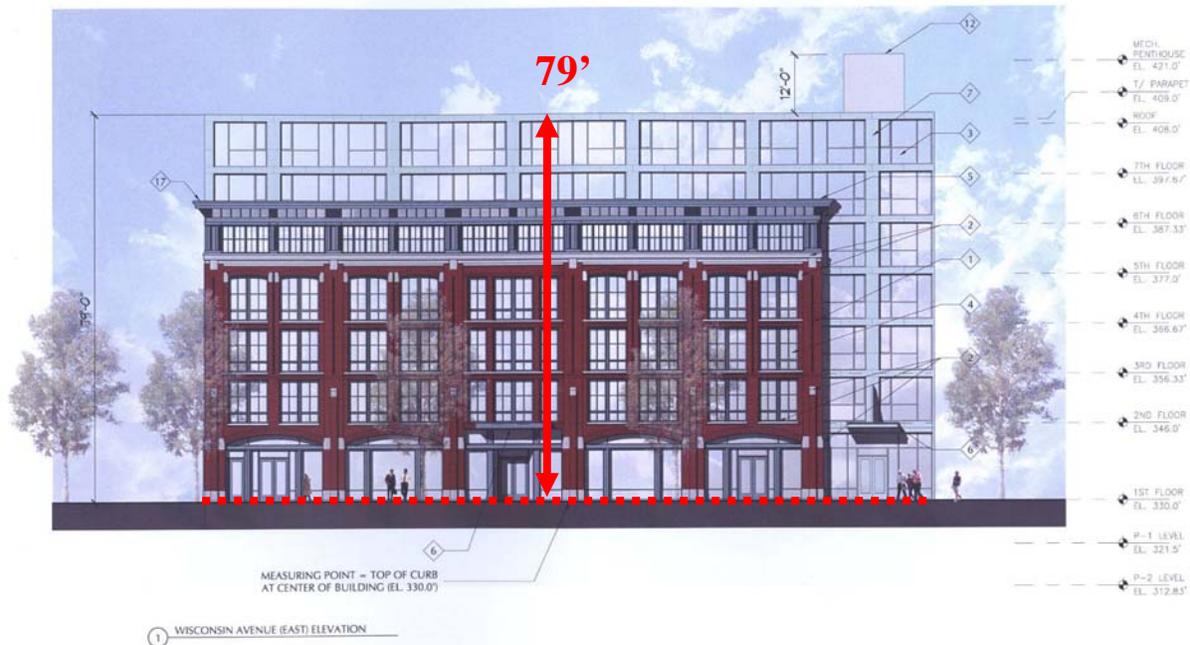
Staff has determined that the project conforms to the requirements of the Height of Buildings Act of 1910. Following is the analysis of the project.

Section 5 of the Height of Buildings Act states that “no building shall be erected, altered, or raised in the District of Columbia in any manner so as to exceed in height above the sidewalk the width of the street, avenue, or highway in its front, increased by twenty feet.” Wisconsin Avenue is 120 feet wide.

Section 5 of the Act also states that “no building shall be erected, altered, or raised in any manner as to exceed the height of one hundred and thirty feet on a business street.” Wisconsin Avenue is a business street.

Therefore, a building height of 130 feet is allowed at this site under the Height of Buildings Act. Since the highest point of the building is 79 feet above the measuring point the height is allowable.

Staff has determined that no other federal interests would be adversely affected by this proposal.



Wisconsin Avenue Elevation

CONFORMANCE

Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital

The proposed planned unit development is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. Further, the proposed project supports the Comprehensive Plan policy to “Support transit-oriented development at Metrorail stations” since the Friendship Heights Metrorail station is within 300 feet.

CONSULTATION

D.C. Office of Planning

In its February 26, 2007 report to the Zoning Commission, DCOP recommended approval of the modified application submitted by the applicant on February 15, 2007, subject to clarification of the construction management plan and the provision of a financial instrument to guarantee LEED certification.

D.C. Department of Transportation

In its February 7, 2007 comments to the Office of Planning, the Department of Transportation noted that the \$40,000 contribution the applicant has committed to study transportation issues in the Friendship Heights neighborhood will help to resolve “local transportation challenges.”

D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation

In its January 18, 2007 comments to the Office of Planning, the Department of Parks and Recreation noted their support for the green roof element of the project.

D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services

In its February 9, 2007 comments to the Office of Planning, Fire and Emergency Medical Services did not identify any issues related to this project that would impact their operations.

D.C. Metropolitan Police Department

In its February 13, 2007 comments to the Office of Planning, the Metropolitan Police Department noted that “the only police related concerns are the increased traffic disruption during construction of such a large project, and then problematic traffic issues (not enough parking for area residents or building occupants) upon completion of the project.”

Advisory Neighborhood Commission

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3E has expressed concerns with the application. At a public hearing ANC 3E held at its February 8, 2007 meeting, the ANC voted to oppose the

application. The ANC states the application is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: District Elements, that the project will have negative impacts on the community, and that the amenities were not discussed with the ANC. Staff has determined that the comments of the ANC do not affect the federal interest.