

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Ellyn Goldkind



NCPC File No. Z.C. 06-08

**CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AT THE FORT LINCOLN
URBAN RENEWAL AREA (FORT LINCOLN NEW TOWN)
THE VILLAGE AT WASHINGTON GATEWAY
Bounded by Fort Lincoln and Commodore Joshua Barney Drives, NE**

Square 4325, Parcel 173/145
Washington, D.C.

Submitted By the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

February 22, 2007

Abstract

The Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia has submitted for comment a consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) for residential development at Fort Lincoln New Town in the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area of northeast Washington, D.C. The Village at Washington Gateway is subject to the PUD guidelines for R-5-D zone districts as well as to the terms of the Urban Renewal Plan for the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area (PLAN) adopted by the Commission on May 6, 1972 and re-adopted on April 5, 1990. The proposed development for the 23-acre site (Square 4325, Parcel 173/145), which includes 357 single family townhouses and two-over-two townhouse condominiums, is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital; however, it does not fully comply with the requirements for residential development set forth in the PLAN.

Federal Interests

The identified federal interests relevant to this project include the Urban Renewal Plan for the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area and the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

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:

Finds that:

- The proposed PUD for the Village at Washington Gateway in the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area, as shown on NCPC Map File No. 00.00(06.00)42183, is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.
- Buildings heights up to 90 feet are allowed as matter-of-right in the existing zoning, but are inconsistent with the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Plan, which limits the height of townhouses to 40 feet and walkup apartment buildings to 60 feet (PLAN, §513.31).
- The General Land Use Map of the PLAN identifies a portion of the proposed development site for Office/Warehouse use. The proposed land use is residential.
- Section 660.0 of the PLAN states that zoning must be consistent with the PLAN. Current zoning is R-5-D, which permits medium/high density residential uses.
- In order for the proposed development to be consistent with the PLAN, the Land Use Map would need to be changed. NCPC supports such a modification.
- As result of the repeal of D.C. Code Sections 6-301.05 and 6-301.11, there is presently no available process for amending existing urban renewal plans. NCPC staff and the District of Columbia have been working cooperatively to resolve this deficiency, and a technical amendment to the statute is currently being developed.

And therefore **recommends** that the Zoning Commission:

- Recommend to the City Council that it amend the D.C. Code to reinstate a process for amending the PLAN, and request that staff of the DCOP, the NCRC, and the NCPC work together to develop recommendations for modifications to the PLAN and to the existing zoning that are consistent.

In addition, the Commission **delegates** to the Executive Director any further design review of projects within the Urban Renewal Area for conformance with the PLAN.

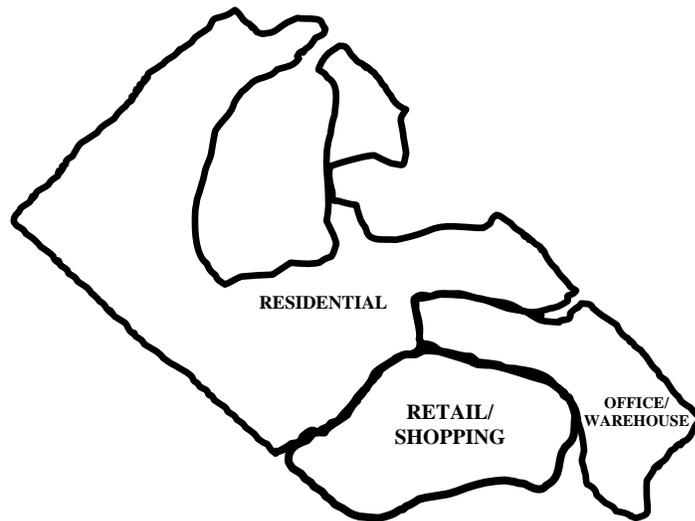
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area (Area) was established in 1972 as a “model in-town community” comprised of mixed-use development that would maximize urban amenities and livability, and include “a variety of housing types, densities and bedroom sizes for Low Income, Moderate Income families and individuals, including the elderly,...and with expanded opportunities for home ownership by all income groups” (PLAN, §310.04a). The PLAN for the

Area was last amended in April of 1990. The site of the Village at Washington Gateway is currently identified as “residential” as well as “Office - Warehouse” in the General Land Use Plan for Fort Lincoln.



FORT LINCOLN – GENERAL LAND USE PLAN

The land is currently zoned R-5-D; this zoning classification permits medium/high density development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats, and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 75%, a maximum FAR of 3.5 and a maximum height of ninety (90) feet. The PLAN requires that zoning be consistent with the requirements of the PLAN, but inconsistencies in allowable heights of certain types of residential development have existed since zoning was first adopted in 1976.

The proposed development is subject to the requirements of the Plan as well as the PUD regulations for R-5-D zone districts; when zoning and PLAN requirement have not been consistent, the more stringent requirements have historically taken precedence.

Site

The subject site is located between Fort Lincoln Drive, Fort Lincoln Drive North, and Commodore Joshua Barney Drive in northeast Washington, D.C. The land is currently unimproved and is immediately north of the planned retail/shopping development (Washington Gateway Regional Retail Center, concept design reviewed by the Commission in October 2006); development of streets and intersections on Fort Lincoln Drive have been coordinated with the planned circulation of the shopping area.



PROJECT SITE

Proposal

The approval of the consolidated PUD would allow for construction of residential units on existing vacant property designated for residential and office/warehouse use on the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area General Land Use Map (*see image, previous page*).

The following summarizes the proposal:

- The proposed site is currently zoned R-5-D.
- The purpose for the request for consolidated PUD is to facilitate residential construction of 357 single-family and two-over-two townhouse condominiums. Thirty dwelling units have been set aside to provide home ownership to low- to moderate-income households.
- The project will provide a composite gross floor area of approximately 756,000 square feet, a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.753, and a lot occupancy of 58.64 percent.
- Building heights will vary from 40 feet to 54 feet.
- The proposed PUD includes approximately four acres of open space, inclusive of a Community Green, smaller park areas, yards, and other landscaped areas.



PROPOSED SITE PLAN



VIEW FROM FORT LINCOLN DRIVE

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The proposed consolidated PUD, subject to the guidelines, standards, and conditions set by the Zoning Commission, would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. It would, however, be inconsistent with several requirements of the Urban Renewal Plan for the Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Area.

- The proposed development is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. Additionally, it is consistent with the Housing, Transportation, Urban Design, and Land Use District Elements of the Plan, as well as Policy UNE-2.4.1 for Fort Lincoln New Town, which recommends to “Support the continued development of Fort Lincoln New Town consistent with approved plans for the site. Fort Lincoln should be recognized as an important opportunity for family-oriented, owner-occupied housing, large-scale retail development, and additional employment. 2414.3”
- Aspects of the proposal are consistent with the zoning regulations, but not with the PLAN. Those inconsistencies relate to PLAN restrictions of building heights and land use. Building heights up to 90 feet are allowed as matter-of-right in the existing zoning, but the PLAN limits the height of single family townhouses to 40 feet and walkup apartment buildings to 60 feet (PLAN, §513.31). The General Land Use Map of the PLAN identifies a portion of the proposed development site for Office/Warehouse use and Section 532.00 prohibits residential development in this area.

The proposed development includes single family townhouses ranging from 40 to 43 feet in height, and a portion of the proposed residential development is sited on land reserved for Office/Warehouse use. While staff supports the slightly higher roofline of the townhouses and a modification of the General Land Use Map to allow residential uses on the subject site, the PLAN will require an amendment for the current design to conform.

- As result of the repeal of D.C. Code Sections 6-301.05 and 6-301.11, there is presently no available process for amending existing urban renewal plans. NCPC staff and the District of Columbia have been working cooperatively to resolve this deficiency, and a technical amendment to the statute is currently being developed.
- Staff raised concerns regarding the level of subsidized home ownership included in the proposal (as required by Sections 321.12 and 512.20 of the PLAN), but following consultation with the development team, we find that the level of low- to moderate-income housing throughout the Urban Renewal Area meets the goals set forth by the PLAN.
- Staff recommends further reviews under 40 U.S.C. §8722(b)(1) and (d), 40 U.S.C. §8724(a), and D.C. Code § 2-1006(a) once the PLAN is amended to ensure that the proposal and the PLAN are consistent, and requests that this review authority be delegated to the Executive Director.

The Fort Lincoln Urban Renewal Plan (Plan) defines design requirements for the residential areas. The following table summarizes the requirements defined by the Plan, and highlights (in **bold**) the proposed elements of the design that do not fully conform.

FORT LINCOLN URBAN RENEWAL PLAN SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL AREAS		
ITEM	URBAN RENEWAL PLAN	PROPOSAL
Site / Building Restrictions	Lot Occupancy, maximum: 50 percent Density, maximum: 24 units/acre Floor Area Ratio, maximum: 0.8 Townhouse Height, maximum: 40 feet Walk-up Apartment Height, max.: 60 feet	58.64 percent 15.5 0.753 40 – 43 feet 53 feet
Streets	Two 10-foot wide lanes with potential for three lanes during peak hours.	Complies Fully
Pedestrian Ways	Minimum of 20 feet in width (at least 10 feet of width paved). Link project area to adjacent areas and to Anacostia Park.	Width complies. Linkage to other areas required.
Income Mix	One-third of total dwelling units for subsidy assistance	Complies
Open Space	Tot Lots: 1,000 sq. ft., minimum Mini-Parks: 6,000 sq. ft., minimum	4 acres Complies Fully
Parking	One parking space for each dwelling unit and one space per five low income/elderly dwelling units.	2.51/dwelling unit

COORDINATION

D.C. Office of Planning (DCOP)

In its Report to the Zoning Commission (dated December 8, 2006), DCOP recommended approval of the PUD, with few conditions.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 5A

A letter of support for the project (dated December 15, 2006) was submitted to the Zoning Commission to convey the unanimous support of ANC 5A.

D.C. Department of Transportation (DDOT)

In its memo to the Zoning Commission (dated December 14, 2006), DDOT supported the approval of the proposed development in its present form.

Other Testimony

At the Zoning Commission hearing on December 9th, several parties spoke in support and in opposition of the proposed development. Those opposing the project expressed concern that pertained to environmental impacts to the wetlands/Anacostia River and urged the incorporation of low impact development strategies for storm water management.