

100 POTOMAC AVENUE, SE
Final Planned Unit Development
and
Amendment to the Zoning Map of the District of Columbia
(Square 707, Lots 800, 801 and 802; Square 708, Lot 809; Square 708E, Lots 807 and 808;
Square 708S, Lot 806)

Report to the Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia

November 4, 1999

Abstract

The Zoning Commission proposes to approve a Planned Unit Development (PUD) which will allow development of the “gateway” site on the north side of the Anacostia River. The PUD “Primary” site is located immediately to the east of the Frederick Douglass Bridge. The PUD also includes the development of an “Amenity” site (Square 664E), located at the terminus of South Capitol Street and the river. The proposed PUD Primary site project is a two-building commercial development that contains a total gross floor area of 1,521,013 square feet of office, retail, and service commercial uses. This site will be landscaped and contain pedestrian amenities including a waterfront esplanade extending the full 850 feet of the project’s frontage on the river. The Amenity site includes the development of a terminus park at the end of South Capitol Street with frontage on the Anacostia River, a maritime education center under the auspices of the Earth Conservation Corps and a dedicated residential development of approximately 253,000 gross square feet (to be constructed at such time as market-rate residential is economically feasible).

At the preliminary (first-stage) review of this PUD, the Commission deferred comment on the potential effect on identified federal interests pending review of the final (second-stage) submission.

Federal Interest

Identified federal interests are views to the Capitol Dome, the Anacostia River location (a Special Place), South Capitol Street and Potomac Avenue (Special Streets), and the gateway status of both the Primary and Amenity sites.

Authority

Section 8 of the National Capital Planning Act of 1952, as amended (40 U.S.C. 71(g)), and D.C. Code, Section 5-417

Commission Action

The Commission has reviewed the final (second-stage) Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related amendment to the Zoning Map of the District of Columbia for Lots 800, 801, and 802 in Square 707, Lot 809 in Square 708, Lots 807 and 808 in Square 708E, and Lot 806 in Square 708S located at 100 Potomac Avenue, SE and finds that:

Subject to the guidelines, standards and conditions established by the Zoning Commission, the PUD will not adversely affect the federal establishment or identified federal interests. The proposal is not inconsistent with policies in the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

As a related comment, the Commission notes that matter-of-right development of Square 708 (immediately to the west of the Frederick Douglass Bridge) could result in a physical environment inappropriate to the gateway status of this area. Therefore, the Commission requests that the Zoning Commission, to the extent possible, encourage the preparation of guidelines, standards and conditions to help avert such an occurrence in the future.

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BACKGROUND AND STAFF EVALUATION

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Pursuant to the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, Section 5-417, D.C. Code (1994 Repl. Vol.) and the District of Columbia Public Space Utilization Act, Section 7-1034, D.C. Code (1995 Repl. Vol.), the proposed PUD is referred to NCPC for review and comment.

Zoning Commission Action

First-stage approval of the proposed Planned Unit Development was given by Zoning Commission Order No. 850, dated June 8, 1998. In the first-stage review and in accordance with Section 2402.2(a) of the Zoning Regulations, the Zoning Commission reviewed and approved the site's suitability for use as a Planned Unit Development, the appropriateness, character, scale, mixture of uses and design of the uses proposed, and the compatibility of the proposed development with citywide, ward, and area plans of the District of Columbia.

Pursuant to Section 2402.2(b) the purpose of a second-stage consideration by the Zoning Commission is to conduct a detailed site plan review to determine compliance of the second-stage submission with the intent and purpose of the planned unit development process, the first-stage approval, and Chapter 24 of the Zoning Regulations.

On September 13, 1999, the Zoning Commission took proposed action to approve the Planned Unit Development (PUD) on Square 707, Lots 800, 801 and 802; Square 708, Lot 809; Square 708E, Lots 807 and 808; and Square 708S, Lot 806, having a consolidated street address of 100 Potomac Avenue, SE, Washington, DC. The Zoning Commission plans to consider final action on this case on November 15, 1999.

The Zoning Commission's proposed action to approve the PUD also established the guidelines, conditions, and standards for the PUD project. The full text of the "Proposed Guidelines, Conditions and Standards" to the Approval in Case No. 98-17F (Second-Stage PUD Application at 100 Potomac Avenue, SE) is attached to this report.

The PUD Proposal

The PUD Primary site is bounded by Potomac Avenue, SE to the north, First Street, SE to the east, the Anacostia River to the south, and the Frederick Douglass Bridge access ramp to the west. The property consists of 253,502 square feet of land area, including approximately 850 linear feet of waterfront on the Anacostia River. The PUD also includes Square 664E as an "Amenity" site whose future development is governed by agreements attached to the PUD approval. Square 664E is 91,000 square feet and is bounded by S, T, and Water Streets and the Anacostia River. South Capitol Street terminates directly to the north of the site.

Development of the PUD site is limited to a 6.0 FAR with 58 percent lot occupancy and building heights up to 130 feet.

The applicant submitted projects for both the PUD Primary and Amenity sites that are consistent with the guidelines, conditions and standards of the First-Stage Order.

- The proposed Primary site project is a two-building commercial development that contains a total gross floor area of 1,521,013 square feet devoted to a mix of office, retail, and service commercial uses.
- The buildings range in height from 109 feet immediately fronting the Anacostia River to 130 feet adjacent to the Fredrick Douglass Bridge. The western building is proposed to be taller to provide an appropriate framing of this gateway to the District.
- The two buildings will be separated by a landscaped pedestrian corridor with cascading stairway that preserves the vista of Half Street, SE to the Anacostia River. The buildings will be set back a minimum of 50 feet from the river.
- The PUD site will be landscaped and contain pedestrian amenities that include a waterfront esplanade extending the full length of the project's frontage on the river. The waterfront esplanade is enhanced

by an event area at the foot of the cascading steps and by two waterfront pavilions providing seasonal food and beverage service.

- As a condition of the PUD, shuttle bus service will be provided between the project and the Navy Yard Metrorail Station, and a transportation management plan will be implemented as it relates to the off-street parking facilities for 1,495 vehicles as provided within the project.

The Amenity site is dedicated to the following uses:

- A terminus park at the end of South Capitol Street with frontage on the Anacostia River.
- A dedicated residential development of approximately 253,000 gross square feet, to be constructed at such time as market-rate residential is economically feasible.
- A maritime education center for training youth at risk that is under the auspices of the Earth Conservation Corps, a District of Columbia not-for-profit entity.

Zoning

The Zoning Commission previously granted first-stage approval to the PUD and related map amendment changing the Zoning Map designation of the PUD site from a Zone District classification of M to a Zone District classification of C-3-C, subject to certain guidelines, conditions, and standards. Zoning Commission Order No. 850 dated June 8, 1998, reflected the Zoning Commissions decision on the application (“First-Stage Order”).

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION

On April 2, 1998 the Commission reviewed the preliminary (first-stage) PUD and proposed a related amendment to the Zoning Map for the District of Columbia to rezone from M to C-3-C Lots 800, 801 and 802 in Square 707; Lot 809 in Square 708; Lots 807 and 808 in Square 708E; and Lot 806 in Square 708S, located at 100 Potomac Avenue, SE. The Commission found that:

- The preliminary PUD will not adversely affect views to the Capitol Dome.
- Review of the design details included in a final (second-stage) PUD is necessary before a determination can be made about the (effects on) other identified federal interests.
- A residential component is vital to establishing the mixed-use living city character that is desired in this gateway area. The Commission recommended that the Zoning Commission require the applicant to maintain the portion of Square 664E reserved for residential development in a park-like condition for use by the public until such time as residential development is feasible. The Commission also recommended that, during the second stage PUD proceedings, the Zoning Commission establish a proceeding for periodic review as to the economic feasibility of the residential component.
- To aid in the evaluation of the effects on federal interests, and to ensure that the federal interests are protected, the Commission requested that the Zoning Commission require the submission of the following information as part of the Final PUD application:

- Detailed plans for Square 664E including site development plans, building plans, elevations, cross-sections, and sight-line studies from various locations across the river (including but not limited to I-295). These plans should show the transferred 1.0 FAR (floor area ratio) residential component, the Earth Conservation Corps' program, and the public waterfront open space in the extended right-of-way of South Capitol Street.
- A plan and description of the amount and type of ground floor uses that will be provided to encourage pedestrian activity along both Potomac Avenue and the waterfront.
- A property line survey for the PUD site, recorded with the District of Columbia Office of the Surveyor, that includes the land between the existing property line and the bulkhead.

FEDERAL INTEREST EVALUATION

Included with the second-stage PUD submission were detailed site development plans, building plans, elevations, sections, and perspective views as well as narrative descriptions of the proposed final PUD. The submission included landscaping plans for both the PUD Primary and Amenity sites and the design of the South Capitol Street terminus waterfront park. A physical three-dimensional (3-D) massing model, CAD simulations, additional computer-generated views and photomontages were also submitted for NCPC's final PUD review.

Comprehensive Plan

In general, the PUD appears to conform to the policies of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital. The hard-edged waterfront is appropriate to this urban site in close proximity to the Southeast Federal Center and the Washington Navy Yard. Through the design of distinctive buildings and the incorporation of monuments, fountains, sculpture, and other features of civic art, the PUD offers the opportunity to enhance South Capitol Street and Potomac Avenue as Special Streets, and the waterfront as a Special Place.

Views to the Capitol Dome

Photographs and computer modeling indicate that the proposed PUD will not adversely affect views of the Capitol Dome.

Riverfront Location (Special Place)

the PUD Primary site project incorporates a minimum 50-foot setback along the Anacostia River.

A pedestrian esplanade extends the full 850-foot length of the project's river frontage and it is enhanced by an events area at the extension of Half Street to the river and by two waterfront pavilions that will provide 2,300 gross square feet of seasonal food and beverage service. In addition, approximately 10,000 gross square feet of specialty retail shops and publicly accessible exhibition space is to be included at the concourse level of the east building on the esplanade. This program is appropriate to the anticipated development of this Special Place.

- Review of the final submission of the Primary site project reveals a 500 plus foot east building at 109 feet in height that incorporates few setbacks on the esplanade and only minimal setbacks on the floors above. A continuous 320 feet long by 65 foot high undulating glass wall is cantilevered to 10 feet beyond the building wall at the esplanade.

South Capitol Street Terminus Park (Special Place)

Whereas the “matter-of-right” development of the Amenity site (Square 664E) allows a 130-foot-high building that would block the views and vistas down South Capitol Street, the proposed PUD development of the Amenity site provides an open space view corridor, aligned with the South Capitol Street right-of-way. Computer modeling confirms that views and vistas along South Capitol Street will not be adversely affected by the proposed development of the Amenity site.

In addition, the proposed development of the Amenity site includes a South Capitol Street terminus park that will front on the Anacostia River. Improved and accessible to the public, the park is appropriate to this waterfront location and can easily be adapted to site a future monument/memorial.

Potomac Avenue (Special Street)

The proposed design of Potomac Avenue incorporates a wide streetscape that provides exceptional width and openness and the pedestrian usage and amenities encouraged for Special Streets. Street views and vistas are maintained. To enhance Potomac Avenue and make a welcoming statement to the surrounding community, approximately 5,000 gross square feet (not less than 40% of the total linear frontage of both the east and west building's frontage) of community-oriented retail shops and service uses is committed to be provided.

Gateway Location

To frame this key gateway entrance to the Nation's Capital, the western building is proposed to be the taller of the two buildings on the PUD Primary site. In addition, the introduction of a distinct cylindrical element in this location will serve as a focal point both from the Frederick Douglass Bridge and as the terminus of Half Street. Detailed elevations of the Primary site buildings indicate that the facades are to be precast concrete, articulated by glass and metal curtain wall elements. A high standard of building design, including the use of high-quality building materials, is required of buildings in Special Places and it is therefore recommended that, to the extent feasible, the applicant consider the use of stone in place of the precast that is currently proposed.

As a related comment, the Staff notes that matter-of-right development of Square 708 (immediately

to the west of the Frederick Douglass Bridge) could result in a physical environment inappropriate to the gateway status of this area. Therefore, the recommends that the Commission request that the Zoning Commission, to the extent possible, encourage the preparation of guidelines, standards and conditions to help avert such an occurrence in the future.

Residential Amenity Site Requirement

The Zoning Commission has required 1.0 FAR of residential development be located on the PUD Amenity site and a dedicated residential project of approximately 253,000 gross square feet is committed to be constructed at such time as market-rate residential is economically feasible.

As requested by the Commission, the applicant submitted details regarding the timing of the conveyance of the Amenity site to the Earth Conservation Corps and an outline of the restrictive covenants applicable to the Amenity site. These include a description of the mechanisms to accomplish the conveyance, the phasing of development, the mechanism for fixing and enforcing the design plan and development guidelines, a reversionary mechanism in the event that development does not occur within specified dates, a mechanism by which a portion of the Amenity site will be reserved for residential development, and a mechanism for the Zoning Commission to review on a periodic basis the economic feasibility of development of the residential component of the Amenity site.

Amenity Site Covenants require the applicant to cease current industrial operations on the northern portion (Parcel A) of the amenity site at such time as a substantial tenant is found for the PUD Primary site. Industrial operations on the southern portion (Parcel B) of the site will continue for a minimum

of five years and than until one year after the time that market rate residential development is deemed to be economically feasible, but no longer than ten years after ceasing such operations on Parcel A.

Property Boundary of the PUD Site

The applicant provided a property line survey for the PUD site, recorded with the District of Columbia Office of the Surveyor, which reflects the land area between the PUD site and the existing bulkhead line. The applicant also supplied authorization to establish new bulkheads along the waterfront of the PUD site, as issued by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

Summary

The second-stage development of this PUD appears to have resulted in resolution of the majority of the outstanding issues that were identified by the Zoning Commission, the OP, and other District of Columbia agencies. The PUD promises to spur economic development in a Development Opportunity Area and the Central Employment Area as identified in the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Commission found that proffers related to the PUD, including development of the Amenity site, constitutes significant amenities. The Zoning Commission also found that the goal of

the Comprehensive Plan to introduce residential activity to this “gateway” area of the city is furthered by

the residential component proposed for the Amenity site. NCPC staff concurs.

Staff has reviewed the final (second-stage) PUD submission and supplemental materials including a 3-D massing model, photo montages, CAD simulations and views of the project and finds:

- The PUD will not adversely affect views of the Capitol Dome.
- The PUD Amenity Site project will not have an adverse effect on the Special Place and gateway qualities of the South Capitol Street terminus waterfront park.
- The PUD Primary Site project will not have an adverse effect on the Special Place and the gateway qualities of this waterfront location.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE OF PLANNING REPORT

The District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP) stated that the second-stage PUD generally meets and is in compliance with each of the requirements of the guidelines, conditions, and standards of the Zoning Commission's first-stage approval and recommended approval of the second-stage PUD.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Zoning Commission held four public hearings on the first-stage application and one public hearing on the second-stage application on December 7, 1999. Testimony was received from the applicant, OP, elected officials, and Advisory Neighborhood Commissions 6B and 2D.

- Ms. Sharon Ambrose, Ward 6 Councilmember:
 - Stated that the PUD is the culmination of several years of careful planning with the potential to alter one of the most underutilized assets of the city.
 - Testified that it is critical that the District support development and zoning decisions such as this PUD project that will bring people, residents, employees, and commuters back to the Anacostia River and its shoreline.
 - Noted that the inclusion of a residential component (to be developed when economically feasible and upon market conditions becoming favorable) recognizes the importance of having a residential component in the area at some appropriate time in the future without its being an obstacle to development of the PUD project at this time.
 - Pointed out that the critical considerations of the PUD project's mass, urban design elements and the provision of access to the waterfront have been thoughtfully addressed in the final (second-stage) design.
 - Noted that the Earth Conservation Corp's maritime education center offers a wonderful educational, recreational, and work training resource for the District.
 - Testified that the PUD project and its proffered amenities will provide balanced and appropriately

mixed land uses that will support the long-awaited rebirth of the Anacostia River and its environs.

- The ANCs neither supported nor opposed approval of the second stage application, but noted that the project had been somewhat scaled down and that the public amenities package had been enhanced and the project generally improved during the course of the zoning proceedings.
- There were no parties that testified either in support or opposition to the PUD.
- There were no persons in opposition.

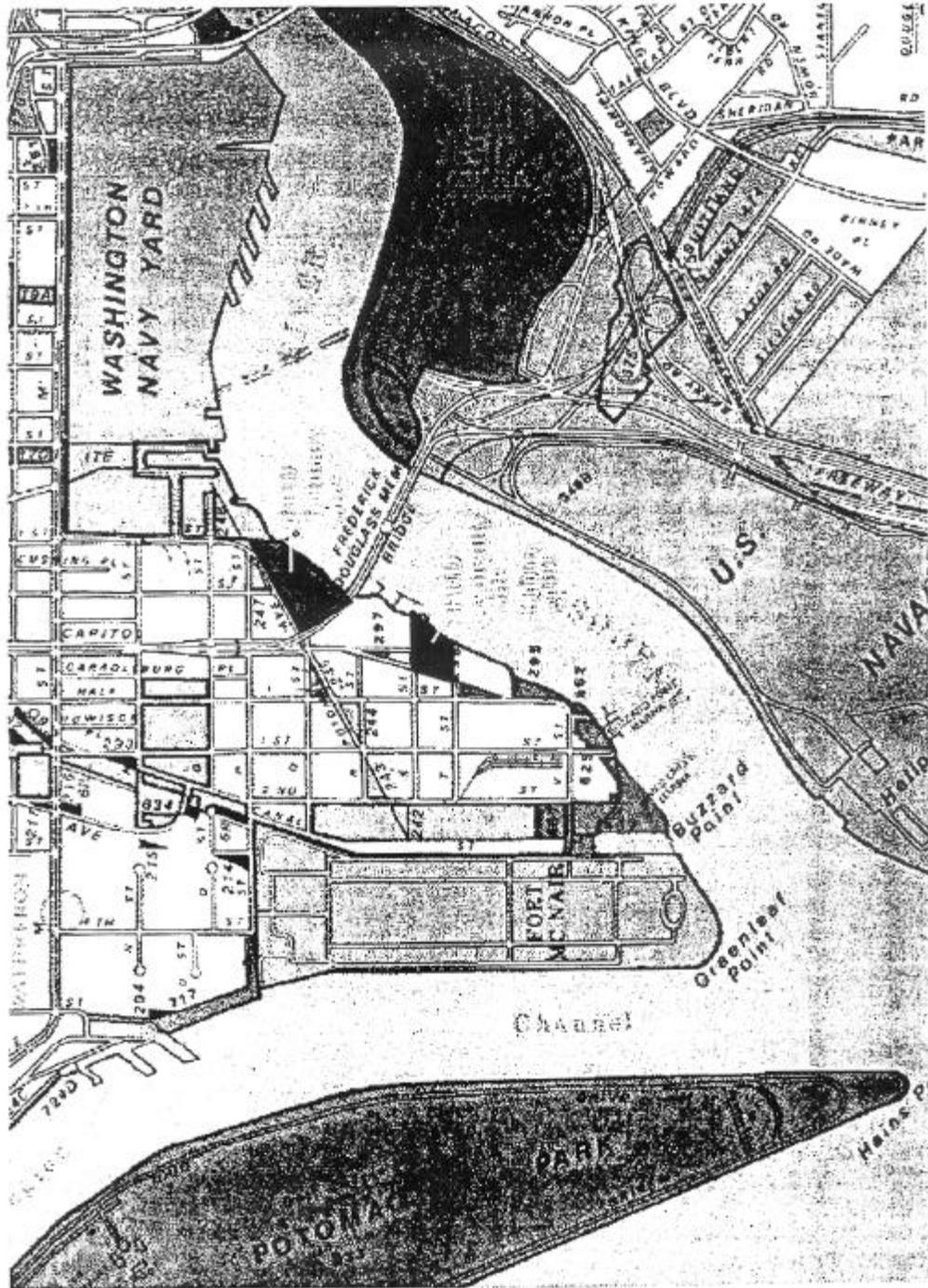
CONFORMANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

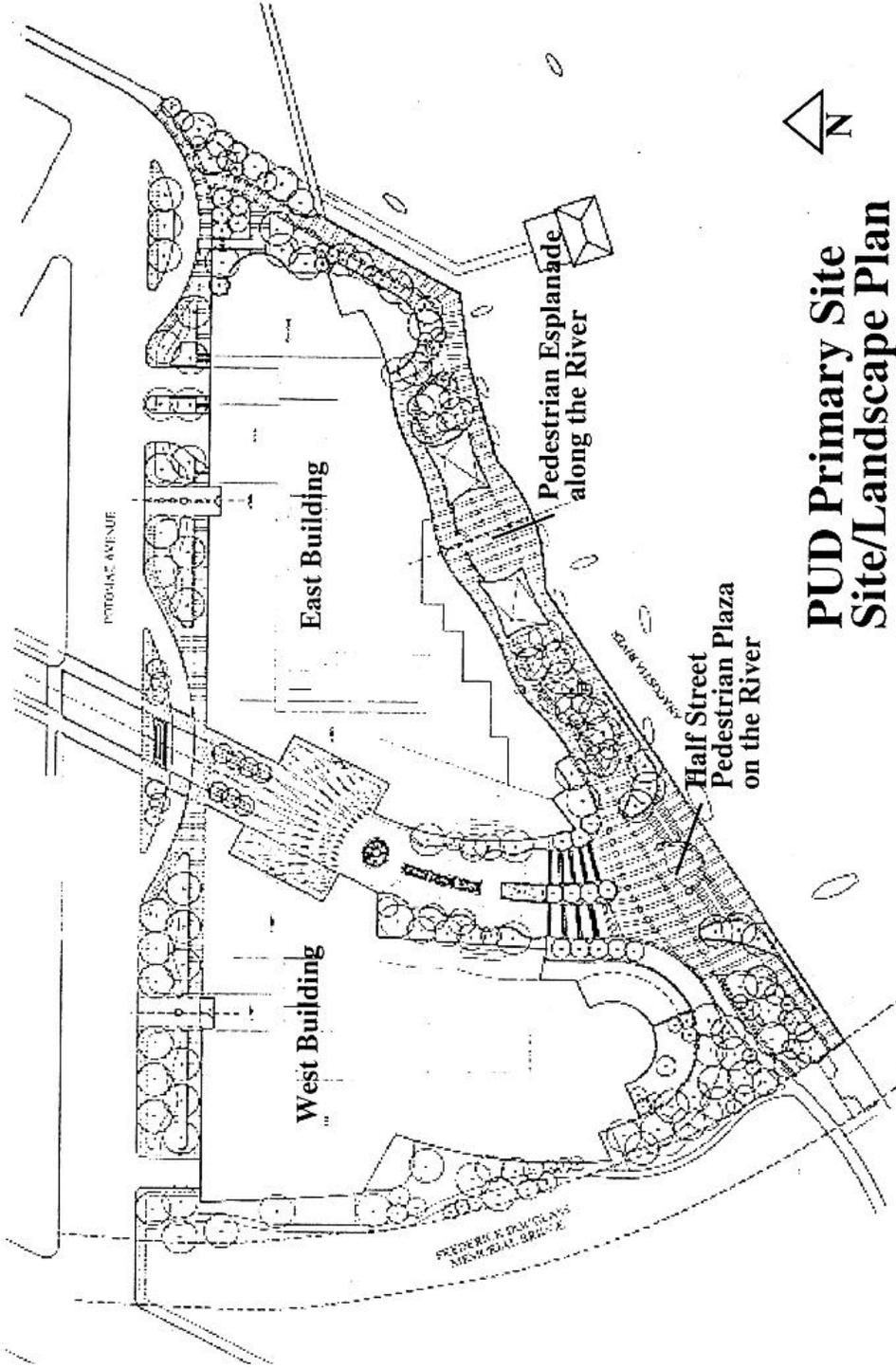
The Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan contain policies that apply to the proposed PUD.

- Policies in the Parks, Open Space and Natural Features Element applicable to the Buzzard Point waterfront emphasize public access to the shoreline, managing shoreline lands in a manner that protects their scenic values, and eliminating incompatible uses from waterfront areas. These policies specify:
 - The shorelines and waterfronts of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers within the District of Columbia should be publicly owned, except at planned waterfront locations in Georgetown and Buzzard Point where controlled private development could be permitted. Public access along the waterfront should be accommodated throughout. In non-public waterfront areas, access by the public should be arranged by easements or other binding agreements.
 - Within the District of Columbia, the character of publicly owned waterfront areas should reflect great variety, ranging from hard-edged urbanity in Georgetown, the Southwest Urban Renewal Area, and the Southeast Federal Area, for example, to a more natural treatment along the shorelines of the Upper Anacostia River.
- The PUD Primary site is located adjacent to Potomac Avenue and the Amenity site is located at the terminus of South Capitol Street and the Anacostia River. Both are designated as Special Streets in the Preservation and Historic Features Element. Moreover, the Primary site is located in a Special Place as designated in this element. This element contains policies that provide for the protection and enhancement of Special Streets and Special Places. The applicable policies state:
 - Special Streets and Places should be maintained and enhanced in a manner that promotes their roles as major features that help establish the images and the symbols of the National Capital in the minds of its residents and visitors. They should be embellished, when possible, with monuments, fountains, sculpture, gardens, distinctive buildings, and other features of civic art. These embellishments should be placed strategically to serve as frequent points of orientation and visual delight. To the extent practicable, public activities and buildings should be located and focused on the Special Streets and Places.
 - Existing Special Places should be protected, enhanced, and strengthened. New ones should be created as new activity centers are developed or neighborhoods revitalized.

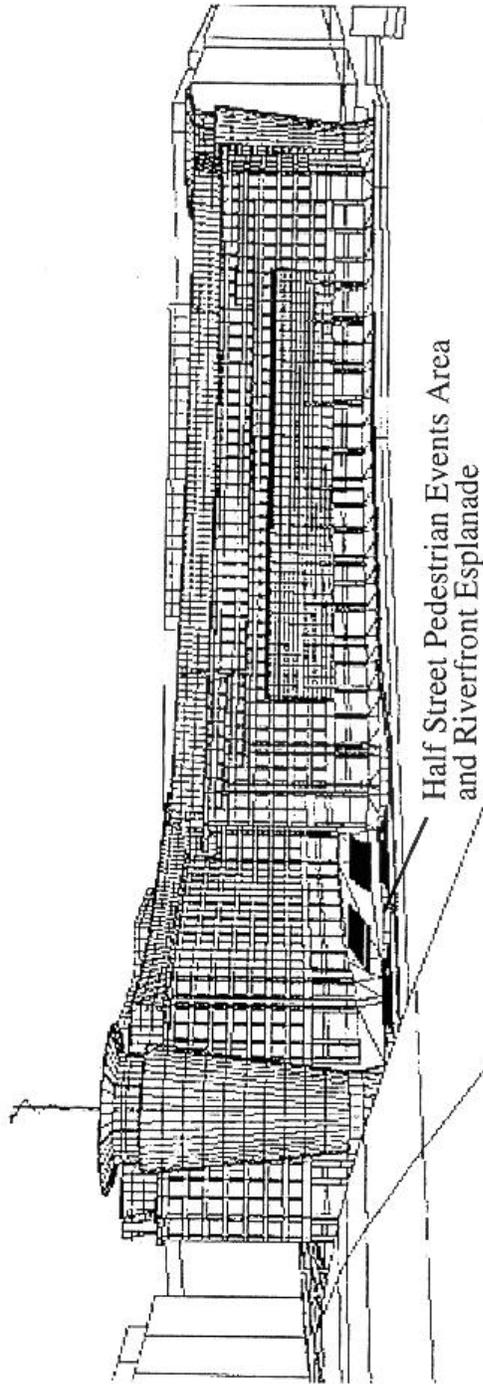
Historic plans and their underlying principles should be used for guidance in planning major improvements. Civic art should be used to enrich such places and to establish their identity and image.

- The exceptional width and openness of the street space along Special Streets should be retained where this quality exists. Street views or vistas should not be obscured and movement should not be impaired by structures or signs within the public rights-of-way.
- Architecturally prominent buildings should be located in Special Streets and Places to accentuate vistas, provide focal points, and mark entrances. The general height, rooflines and massing of buildings should serve as a unified background for the public space in these Special Streets and Places.





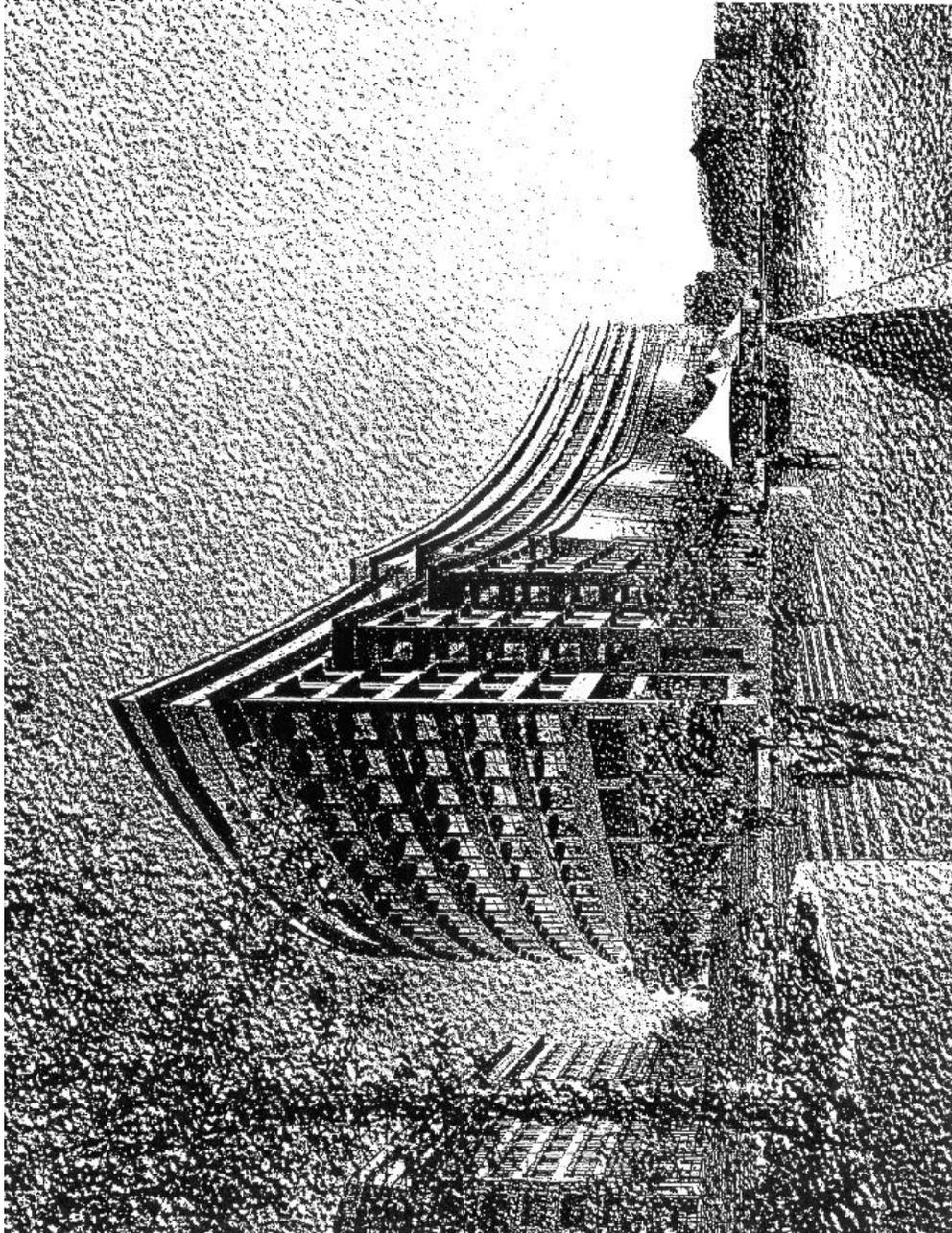
**PUD Primary Site
Site/Landscape Plan**

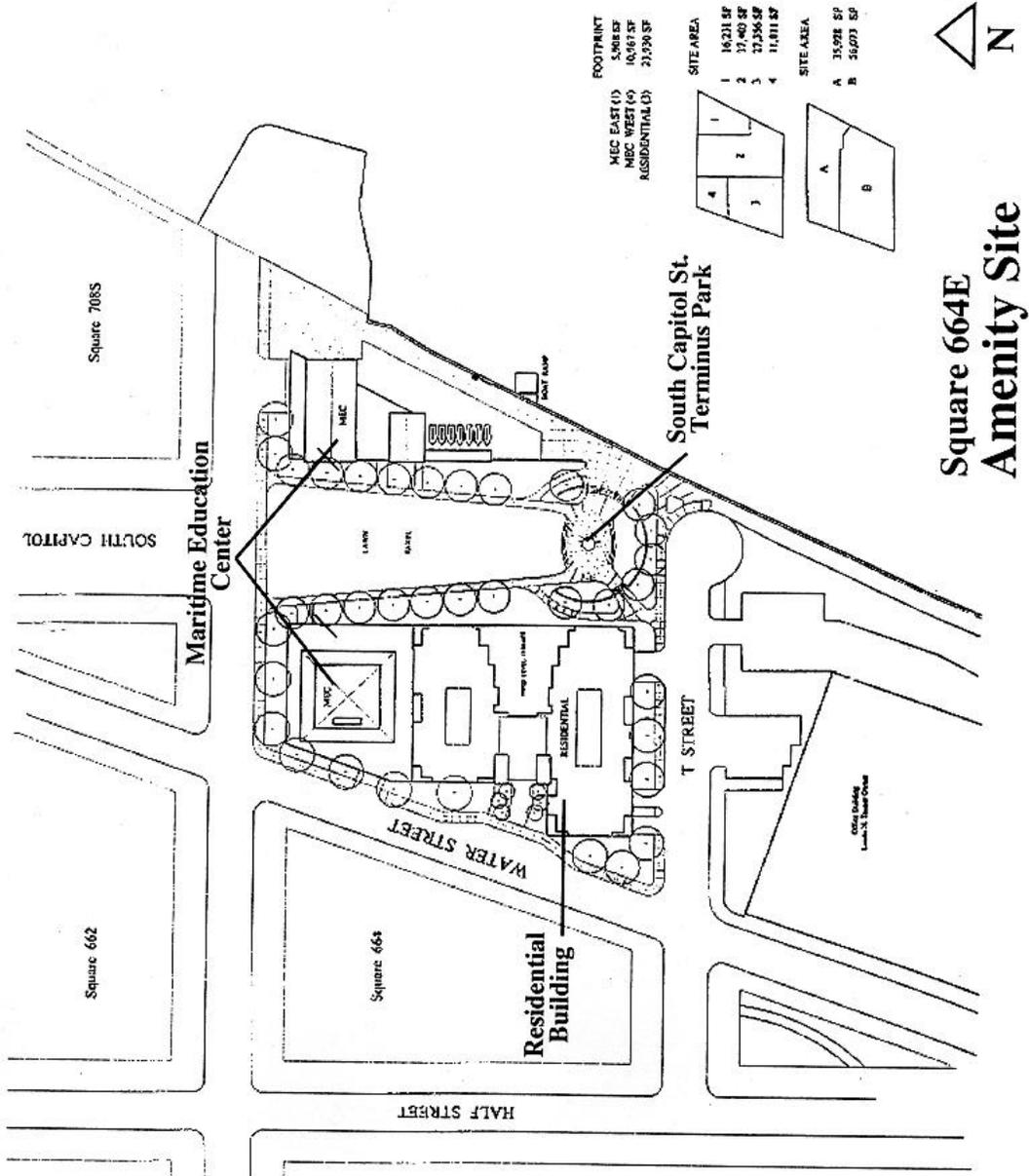


Half Street Pedestrian Events Area
and Riverfront Esplanade



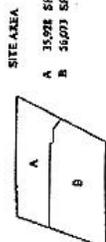
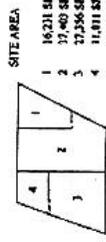
PUD Primary Site
CAD Simulation View from the Frederick-Douglass Bridge



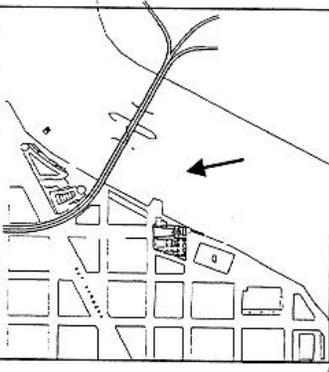
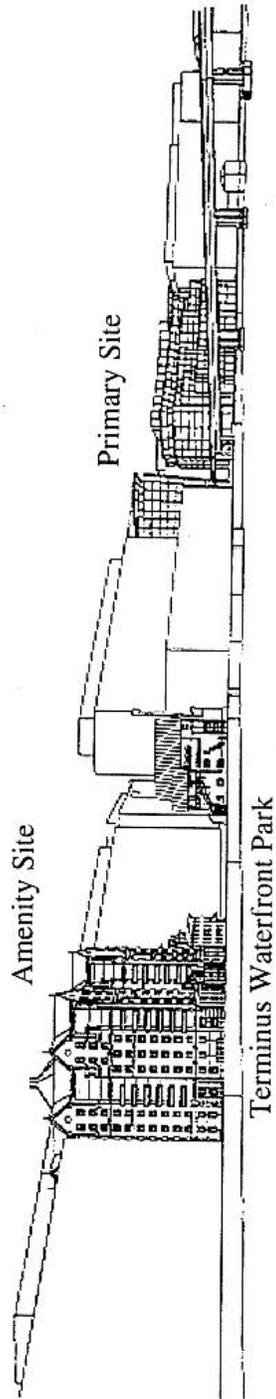


FOOTPRINT

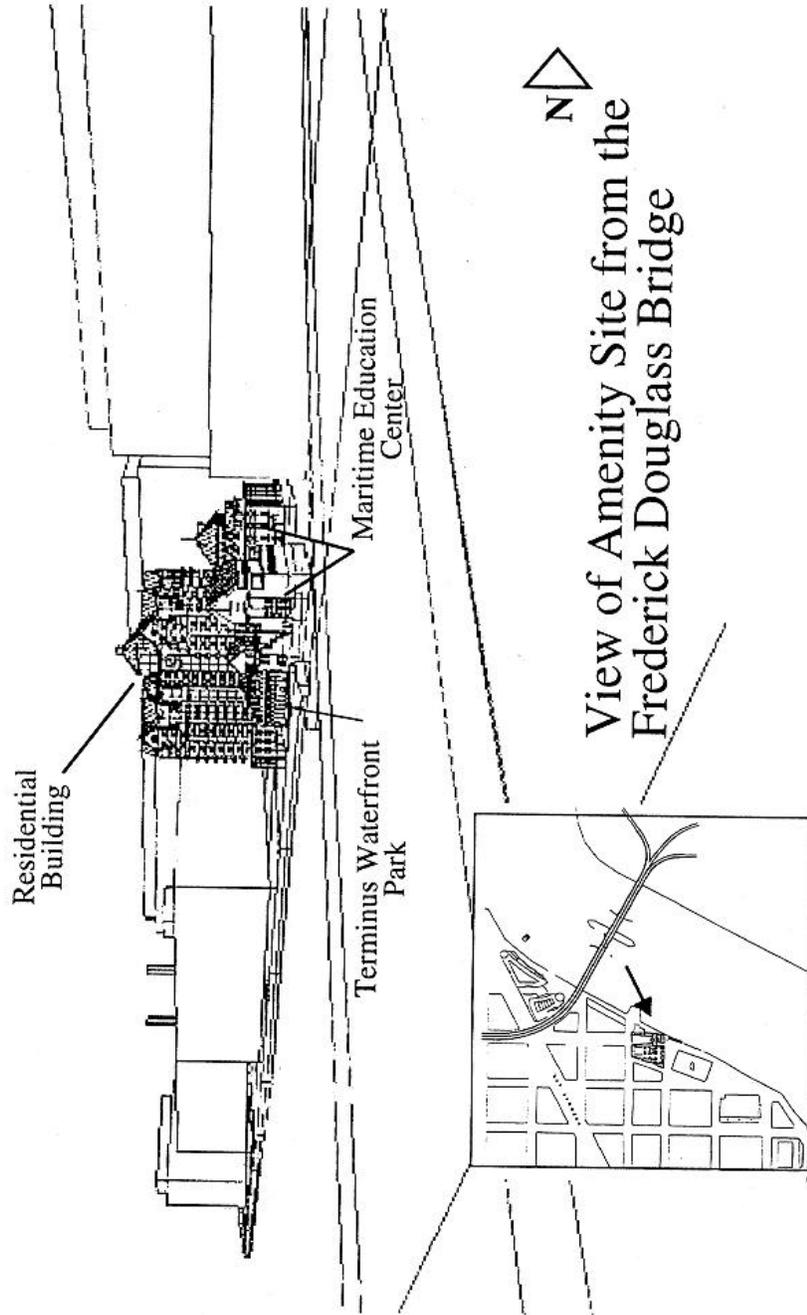
MEC EAST (D)	5,082 SF
MEC WEST (D)	10,067 SF
RESIDENTIAL (D)	23,990 SF

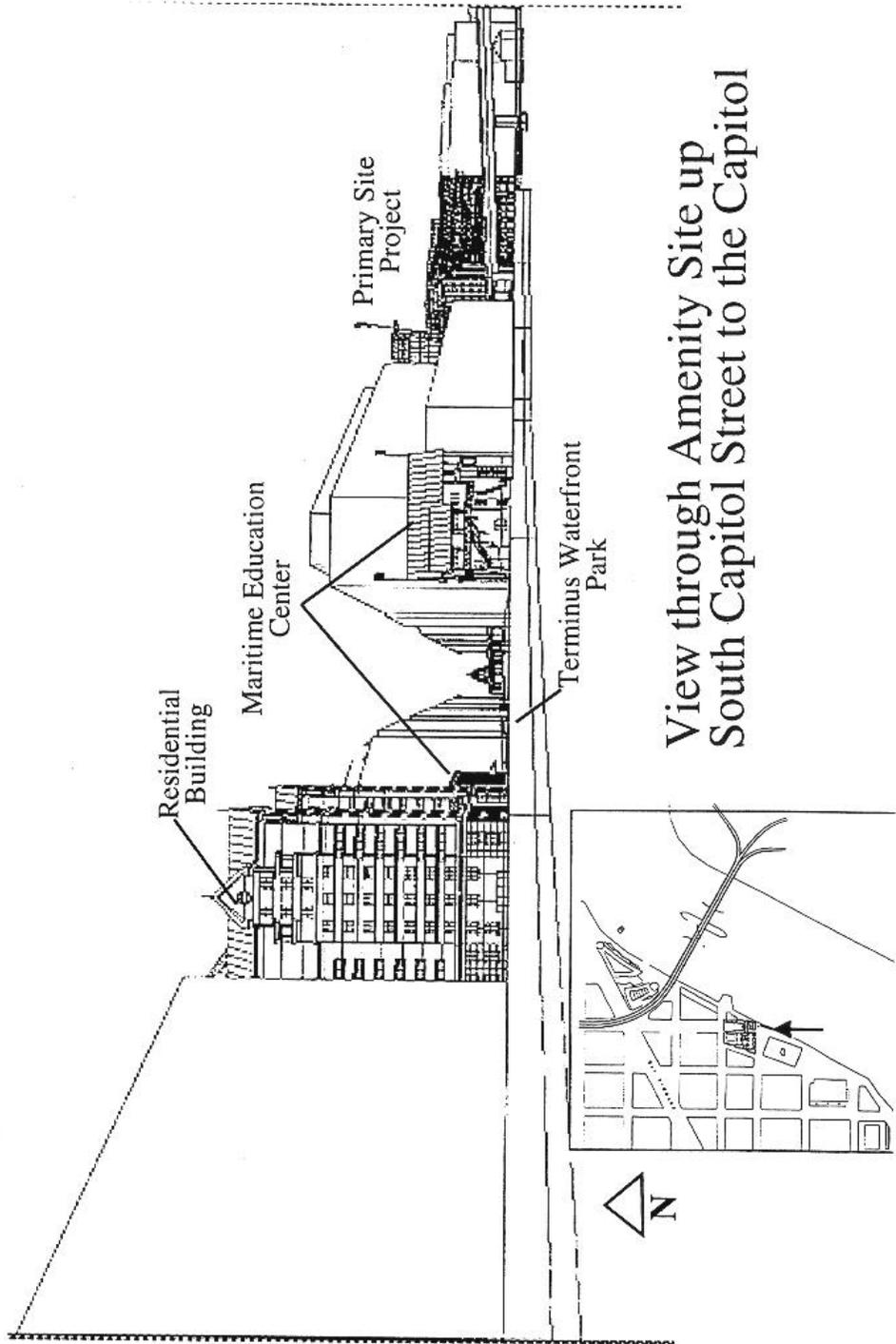


**Square 664E
 Amenity Site**



View of Amenity and Primary Sites
from across the Anacostia River





View through Amenity Site up
South Capitol Street to the Capitol