

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: *JL for* Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director

DATE: October 9, 2015

SUBJECT: ZC #11-03D – Wharf Parcel 5, Request for Minor Modifications to an Approved Second Stage PUD

I. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

Wharf 5 Hotel REIT Leaseholder, LLC (Owner) requests approval of minor modifications to their approved second stage PUD (ZC #11-03B) at Parcel 5 of the Wharf development on Maine Avenue, SW. Parcel 5 was approved with two hotels on top of a retail base, and the proposed minor modifications would slightly alter the exterior design but maintain the overall massing and use mix of the building. A full description of the proposed changes is provided below. OP finds that the proposed changes would be of little or no consequence and are not inconsistent with the original Commission Order for the project, and represent improvements to the project with little or no potentially negative impact. OP therefore recommends that they be approved as minor modifications to the PUD.

II. PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The development on Parcel 5 would have two hotels – the Canopy, on the east side of the lot, adjacent to 7th Street park, and a Hyatt House, on the west side of the lot and facing Parcel 4. The below list and descriptions of proposed changes follows the order as presented in the application.

1. Removal of a floor from the Canopy hotel – The approved design had 7 guestroom levels on the western hotel and 8 levels on the eastern hotel, resulting in uneven floor plates, banding and window lines. The proposed change would remove one floor from the eastern hotel to align the stories, increase floor to ceiling height, and maintain overall building height. See Sheets 0.4 through 0.9. This results in a drop in FAR without impacting the overall massing.
2. Addition of a mezzanine level at the Canopy hotel – A small addition of back-of-house space is proposed between the ground floor and second floor. This would allow for on-site laundry services and likely a reduction in truck trips for off-site laundry. Because the ground floor height is approximately 20 feet, the new mezzanine can be accommodated

above other back-of-house areas near the parking ramp and the interior drive aisle. The change would not impact the exterior skin of the building. See Sheets 0.10 and 0.11.

3. Removal of a mezzanine level at the Hyatt House – The original design for the western hotel included a mezzanine space between the second floor lobby and the third floor. This space is no longer necessary for the new hotel operator, so it is proposed to be removed. The change would have no impact on the exterior of the building, and the lobby circulation is similar to before. See Sheet 0.12.
4. Wider penthouse on Canopy hotel – Because of a change in mechanical systems, more mechanical space was needed at the roof level of the hotels. What had been a corridor on the eastern side of the penthouse was taken with the enlargement of the mechanical rooms, so new corridor space is proposed. This change widens the face of the penthouse facing the water by approximately six feet, but the eastern side would still meet the one-to-one setback facing the 7th Street park. Because the penthouse wall facing the water, with no setback, would expand, the setback flexibility granted through the original PUD would be slightly extended. The design of the expanded penthouse would be compatible with the rest of the penthouse level as well as the fenestration pattern on the main building face below, and the expanded penthouse would not have an impact on any adjacent properties or the building’s public space. Also, the penthouse is located at the 110’ level, so is below the Height Act limit for this site. OP, therefore, has no objection to the expanded setback flexibility. See Sheets 0.16, 0.17 and 0.21.

The applicant also proposes to use some enclosed penthouse space as recreation area accessory to the outdoor recreation space. The interior area would be less than 20% of the outdoor area dedicated to communal recreation space. In addition, the design proposes new windows into the recreational space. See Sheets 0.4, 0.5 and 0.24.

5. Relocate the pool to the roof – The applicant has chosen to move the pool to the roof from the interior courtyard at the lobby level. In conformance with the original Order, the pool would remain open to the public. The design would ensure that the pool and all railings are set back at least one-to-one from exterior walls. See Sheets 0.17, 0.19, 0.22 and 0.23. Moving the pool to the roof provided an opportunity to revisit the design of the central courtyard and other open spaces on the second level. The proposed revised design proposes a water feature in lieu of the pool, and somewhat alters the arrangement of seating, bars landscaping and lounging areas throughout the courtyard and on the exterior side of the hotels. See Sheets 0.22 and 0.23. OP is supportive of this change, which reinforces the intent of the courtyard to be fully accessible to the public.
6. Deeper lobby, guest rooms and penthouse on Hyatt House – Because the Hyatt House is an extended stay hotel, more room depth was needed to accommodate in-room guest amenities. The additional 3’4” was added to the wall of the hotel facing the interior courtyard, and was carried down to the lobby level and up onto the penthouse level. See

Sheets 0.13, 0.15 – 0.17 and 0.21. As above with the expanded setback flexibility on the Canopy hotel, the expanded penthouse on the Hyatt House would also need additional flexibility. And as on the other hotel, the small expansion here would have no impact on the design of the building or on nearby buildings, and OP has no objection to the extended flexibility.

7. Addition of service corridor in Canopy – In order to allow movement directly from the service elevator to the kitchen, the design now proposes a service corridor at the lobby level of the Canopy hotel. The corridor would back onto the interior courtyard. Although it would bump out beyond the original wall in that location, it would still not extend beyond the third floor, which cantilevers out over the courtyard. See Sheets 0.12, 0.13 and 0.21.

OP has no objection to the proposed modifications. They are minor in nature and generally relate to improved functionality of the hotels and specific requirements of the hotel operators. The modifications would not impair the intent of the Regulations and would be consistent with the design intent of the original approval. They do not appear to be inconsistent with the Commission’s original review of the project, including the approved Order.

III. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Since the original approval there have been no changes to the Comprehensive Plan that would impact the requested modification. The requested modification, therefore, would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

IV. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of this writing the Office of Planning has not received comments on the application from the community. The applicant has presented the information to members of the ANC, including the Single Member District representative, and expects the full ANC to submit comments prior to the Commission’s meeting on this case.

JS/mrj