

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
JLS
FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director
Development Review and Historic Preservation

DATE: November 13, 2015

SUBJECT: ZC #15-16: Setdown Report - First Stage and Consolidated PUD
680 Rhode Island Avenue NE (Square 3629, Lot 7, 813, 814)

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends the application by MRP Rhode Island Avenue Investors, LLC (MRP – “The Applicant”) for redevelopment of the 13-acre site, known as the Rhode Island Avenue Shopping Center be **set down** for a public hearing to allow a public review of the proposal to redevelop the site as a mixed-use development consisting of approximately 1,500 residential units with ground floor retail and service uses, as a Stage I PUD in five phases and a Stage II Consolidated PUD for the first phase of the development, described herein. A map amendment is not requested.

As outlined in Section IV of this report, the proposed PUD would not be inconsistent with the maps and written elements of the Comprehensive Plan and Maps.

OP will continue to work with the applicant to address areas where additional information is needed prior to the public hearing, as outlined in the summary at the end of this report and as may be requested by the Commission at set down.

Some OP analysis is based on drawings provided to OP to facilitate review, but not submitted to the record at the time of writing of this report. OP advised the applicant to submit these drawings to the record prior to setdown; OP will provide an update at the setdown meeting.

II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Location: Square 3629, Lots 7, 813 and 814. The shopping center property has frontage on Rhode Island Avenue to the south, 4th Street NE to the west, Metrorail tracks and the Metropolitan Branch Trail to the east and the Edgewood Terrace Apartments to the north.

Property Size: The site is approximately 13 acres.

Ward/ANC: Ward 5, ANC 5D

Current Zoning: C-3-A: Medium Density Commercial

Existing Use: The property is currently developed with a strip shopping center comprised of one story retailers and surface parking lots.

Proposal: The Applicant proposes redevelopment of the shopping center site with a mixed use development consisting of 1,500 residential units and ground floor retail uses in seven buildings. A new private road would be aligned as an extension of Bryant Street NE at 4th Street and would continue in a generally east/west direction, culminating at a plaza, with pedestrian and bike access to the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) and Metrorail. The north-south division of the site would provide three development parcels to the north and four to the south of the private main street. Existing driveways with access off Rhode Island Avenue would become private streets to connect with the main street. The driveway to the east would continue to the north property line.

The project would also involve:

- Demolition of the existing two-story retail building to the east of the site;
- Realignment of a section of the MBT, which currently fronts WMATA's pedestrian stairway to under the stairway;
- Provision of two stairways north of the site to promote connectivity with existing neighborhoods and with the MBT and Metro station.

The Applicant has requested a Consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) review for the first phase of the site's development involving two parcels closest to the trail and a First Stage PUD for the remaining five phases of the site's future development, described subsequently.

A map amendment is not requested with this application.

Relief and Zoning: Pursuant to 11 DCMR Chapter 24, the Applicant seeks flexibility from the existing Regulations:

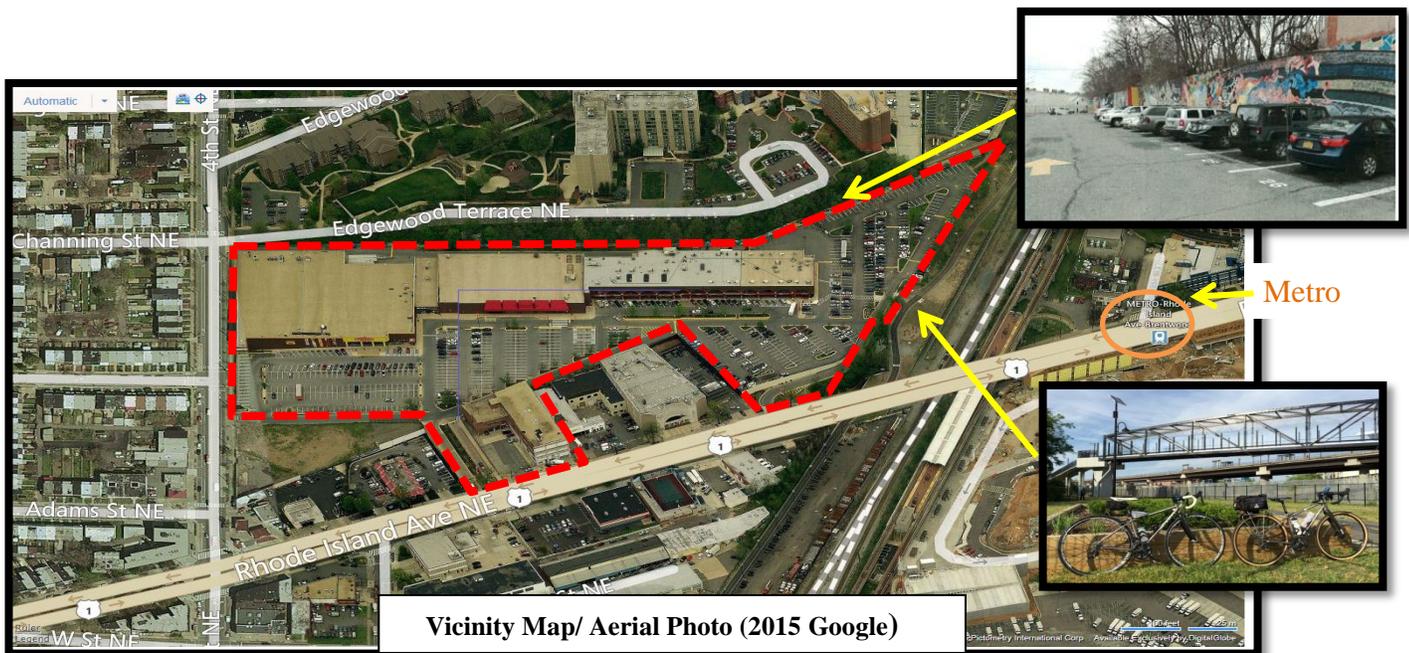
1. Section 2517 – More than one principal building on a single lot of record
2. Roof structures - More than one roof structure on specified buildings
3. Loading – From 55-ft. loading berths : 40 feet proposed
4. Utilization of land in Phase 2- 6 – Temporary Uses for no more than 10 years.
5. Flexibility from Section 2407.10 which allows a First Stage PUD to be valid for a period of one year. Proposed - Stage II PUD for Phases 2-6 to be filed no later than within 3 years of issued C/O for Building IB.

Please refer to Sections VI and VII of this report for more zoning related information.

III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The irregularly-shaped property consists of three lots totaling 579,231 square feet (13.29 acres) and is currently developed with a strip shopping center with two, large format retail stores (circa 1984), a two-story shopping mall with thirteen one-story retailers, surface parking consisting of approximately 720 spaces and a storage building, which fronts on Rhode Island Avenue. The site has frontage along 4th Street N.E. to the west and Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. Access is provided via three curb cuts, two along Rhode Island Avenue and one at 4th Street N.E. The surface parking east of the shopping center currently serves as a commuter parking lot. A four-story apartment building currently under construction fronting on 4th Street, a gas station at the corner of 4th and Rhode Island Avenue, a bank, fast-food chain and church properties abut the property along its south property line. A large retaining wall along the northern property line separates the property from the Edgewood Terrace apartment complex.

The entire PUD site is shown in the dashed outline on the diagram below. The Property is currently zoned C-3-A, Medium Density Commercial and no map amendment is contemplated.

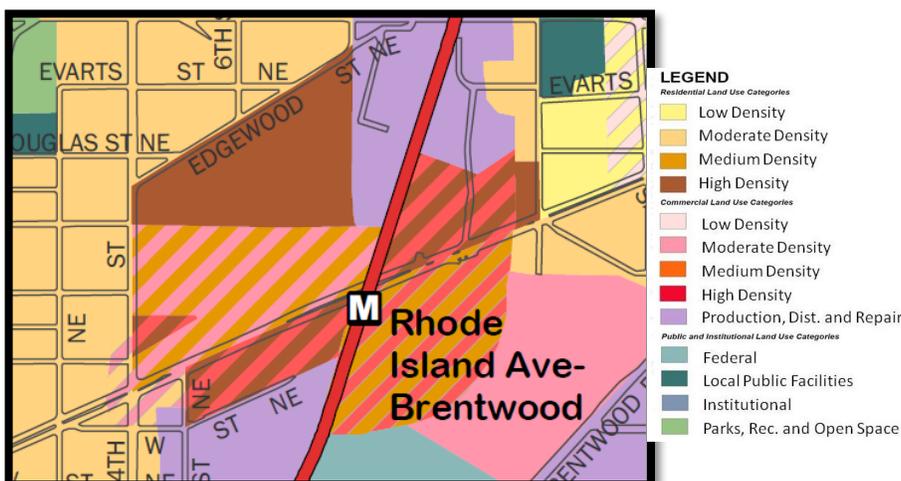


The Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) abuts the property to the west and provides pedestrian and bike access to the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station through an elevated walkway. While the project site is within the Metro Station’s half-mile walk-shed the physical barrier of the large retaining wall along the north property line constrains pedestrian access to Metro for existing residents living north of the site. The topography of the site includes a rise in elevation from Rhode Island Avenue (elevation between 54’ to 62’) approximately ten (10) to fifteen (15) feet up to the northern/rear property boundary, where the elevation is seventy (70) feet. The grade changes and large retaining walls have become barriers for pedestrian and bicycle activity, have implications for stormwater runoff and drainage, and present design challenges for connectivity with neighborhoods to the north.

IV. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS AND POLICIES

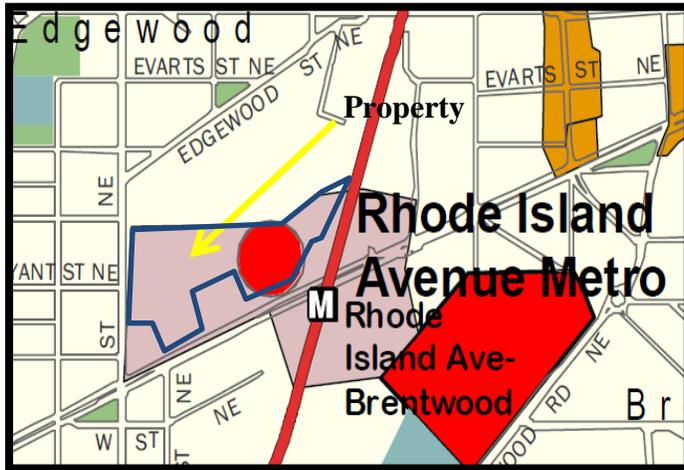
The proposed PUD must be determined by the Zoning Commission to be not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and with other adopted public policies (§ 2403.4).

A. Future Land Use Map



The Future Land Use Map designation for the Property is striped Moderate-Density Commercial, Medium-Density Residential. The overall density (FAR 3.62, exclusive of private streets) would be consistent with the Map designation, as would the mix of uses proposed.

B. General Policy Map



The Generalized Policy Map designates the Property as part of an “Enhanced/New Multi-Neighborhood Center” which is to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers in the adjacent neighborhoods, but include depth and variety. Their service areas are typically one to three miles. These centers are generally found at major intersections and along key transit routes and may include supermarkets, general merchandise stores, drug stores, restaurants, specialty shops, apparel stores, and a variety of service-oriented businesses, and office space for small businesses although their primary function remains retail trade.

Mixed-use infill development is encouraged to provide new retail and service uses, and additional housing and job opportunities.

In conjunction with the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station, the parcel is designated a Land Use Change Area, where redevelopment should include exemplary site and architectural design. It is anticipated that as the development phases are refined, the development would contribute to the high quality residential, commercial and multi-modal transit area envisioned along the Rhode Island Avenue corridor.

C. Comprehensive Plan Policies

The Property is located in the Upper Northeast Area of the Comprehensive Plan. There are several policies within the Upper Northeast Area Element, as well as policies in the Citywide Framework Element, which encourage a mix of uses particularly for underutilized areas of the Metrorail Station and connectivity among the variety of transportation option along the corridor. In addition, the proposal would particularly further policies of the Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environmental Protection, Economic Development, Parks Recreation and Open Space and Urban Design Area Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, as outlined below.

An OP sponsored study by ULI in 2014, also includes general guidance for the immediate area around the Metrorail Station.

Upper Northeast Area Element (UNE):

Planning and Development Priority

- *Retail choices in Upper Northeast need to be expanded... Many of the commercial areas in Upper Northeast are dominated by used car lots, carry-outs, liquor stores, automotive uses and other activities that are not conducive to neighborhood shopping...Rhode Island Avenue ...and the areas around the Metro stations have the potential to become pedestrian-oriented shopping districts. 2407 (e)*
- *There is general—though not universal—agreement that the Rhode Island Avenue, Brookland/CUA, and Fort Totten Metrorail stations are logical locations for future development. The stations are currently adjoined by parking lots ...that do not take advantage of their proximity to Metro. These*

areas may provide opportunities for apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and other types of moderate and medium density housing...2407 (i)

UNE-1.1.3: Metro Station Development: *Capitalize on the presence of the Metro stations at Rhode Island Avenue... to provide new transit-oriented housing, community services, and jobs. New development around each of these three stations is strongly supported. 2408.4*

UNE-1.1.6: Neighborhood Shopping: *Improve neighborhood shopping areas throughout Upper Northeast... encourage ... pedestrian-oriented retail development along Rhode Island Avenue. 2408.7*

UNE-1.2.1: Streetscape Improvements: *Improve the visual quality of streets in Upper Northeast, especially along....Rhode Island Avenue...Landscaping, street tree planting, street lighting, and other improvements should make these streets more attractive community gateways.” 2409.1*

UNE-2.1.4: Northeast Gateway Urban Design Improvements: *...development that includes ground floor retail uses and upper story housing would be desirable. The surrounding area is under-served by retail uses and would benefit from new restaurants, local-serving stores, and other services. 2415.4*

UNE-2.5.1: Rhode Island Avenue/Brentwood Metro Station: *Encourage the development of additional medium-to high-density mixed use development around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station, particularly on the surface parking lots in the station vicinity. 2415.5*

UNE-2.5.2: Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Sites: *Encourage the long-term reuse of older commercial and industrial sites in the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station vicinity with higher-value mixed uses, including housing. Future mixed-use development should be pedestrian-oriented, with design features that encourage walking to the Metro station and nearby shopping. 2415.6*

UNE-2.5.3: Pedestrian Improvements: *Enhance pedestrian connections between the neighborhoods around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station and the station itself. This should include improvements to the “public realm” along Rhode Island Avenue, with safer pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other amenities that make the street more attractive. 2415.7*

The redevelopment of this older strip shopping commercial center within walking distance of a Metro Station would transform the site as a mixed-use residential and retail development which is desired by the neighborhood and supported as a development priority of the Plan.

Land Use Element

LU-1.2.2: Mix of Uses on Large Sites *Ensure that the mix of new uses on large redeveloped sites is compatible with adjacent uses and provides benefits to surrounding neighborhoods and to the city as a whole. 305.7*

LU-1.3.1: Station Areas as Neighborhood Centers: *The establishment and growth of mixed use centers at Metrorail stations should be supported as a way to reduce automobile congestion, improve air quality, increase jobs, provide a range of retail goods and services, reduce reliance on the automobile, enhance neighborhood stability, create a stronger sense of place, provide civic gathering places, and capitalize on the development and public transportation opportunities which the stations provide. 306.10*

LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations: *Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth,*

particularly station in areas...with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance...306.11

LU-1.3.4: Design To Encourage Transit Use: Require architectural and site planning improvements around Metrorail stations that support pedestrian and bicycle access to the stations and enhance the safety, comfort and convenience of passengers walking to the station or transferring to and from local buses. These improvements should include lighting, signage, landscaping and security measures... 306.13

LU-1.3.6: Parking Near Metro Stations Encourage the creative management of parking around transit stations, ensuring that automobile needs are balanced with transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel needs. New parking should generally be set behind or underneath buildings and geared toward short-term users rather than all-day commuters. 306.15

Policy LU-2.1.11: Residential Parking Requirements Ensure that parking requirements for residential buildings are responsive to the varying levels of demand associated with different unit types, unit sizes, and unit locations (including proximity to transit). Parking should be accommodated in a manner that maintains an attractive environment at the street level and minimizes interference with traffic flow. Reductions in parking may be considered where transportation demand management measures are implemented and a reduction in demand can be clearly demonstrated. 309.16

The proposed site planning improvements, including the bike paths, realignment of the trail and public plaza are intended to promote access to the Rhode Island Metro Station and bicycle use along the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT). The applicant intends to work with DDOT to refine elements related to the MBT and proposed use of public space with the potential trail realignment.

Transportation Element

T-1.1 Land Use-Transportation Coordination In general, the demands on our transportation system are reduced when homes are located close to places of employment and shopping... The transportation system as a whole benefits when more compact residential and employment areas are situated along major transit routes. Travel times are reduced and there is better use of public transportation investments. ... Future opportunities will arise to strengthen the linkage between land use and transportation as new development takes place. 403.1, 403.2

T-1.1.4: Transit-Oriented Development Support transit-oriented development by investing in pedestrian-oriented transportation improvements at or around transit stations, major bus corridors, and transfer points. 403.10

T-2.2.2: Connecting District Neighborhoods Improve connections between District neighborhoods through upgraded transit, auto, pedestrian and bike connections, and by removing or minimizing existing physical barriers such as railroads and highways. 408.6

T-2.3.2: Bicycle Network Provide and maintain a safe, direct, and comprehensive bicycle network connecting neighborhoods, employment locations, public facilities, transit stations, parks and other key destinations. Eliminate system gaps to provide continuous bicycle facilities. Increase dedicated bike-use infrastructure, such as bike-sharing programs like Capital Bikeshare, and identify bike boulevards or bike-only rights of way. 409.9

T-2.3.A: Bicycle Facilities Wherever feasible, require large new commercial and residential buildings to be designed with features such as secure bicycle parking and lockers, bike racks, shower facilities, and other amenities that accommodate bicycle users. 409.11

T-2.3.D: Bicycle Sharing Support the expansion of bicycle sharing kiosks throughout the District to develop a complete bicycle-sharing network and encourage bicycling. 409.14

T-2.4.1: Pedestrian Network Develop, maintain, and improve pedestrian facilities. Improve the city's sidewalk system to form a network that links residents across the city. 410.5

The proposal presents several opportunities to improve pedestrian facilities through improved sidewalks throughout the site, and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for residents living north of the site through two proposed stairways. These investments would strengthen the land use/transportation links that is envisioned for new developments by the Comprehensive Plan.

Housing

H-1.1.4: Mixed Use Development: Promote mixed use development, including housing, on commercially zoned land, particularly in neighborhood commercial centers, along Main Street mixed use corridors, and around appropriate Metrorail stations. 503.5

The proposed development would provide over 1,500 residential units where none currently exists on the large site near a metro station and bicycle trail, helping to address the need for new housing on currently non-residential sites in the District.

Environmental Protection Element

Policy E-2.2.4: Alternative Energy Sources Support the development and application of renewable energy technologies such as active, passive, and photovoltaic solar energy, fuel cells, and other sustainable sources. 610.6

Policy E-2.2.5: Energy Efficient Building and Site Planning The planning and design of new development should contribute to energy efficiency goals. 610.7

Policy E-3.1.1: Maximizing Permeable Surfaces Encourage the use of permeable materials for parking lots, driveways, walkways, and other paved surfaces as a way to absorb stormwater and reduce urban runoff. 613.2

Policy E-3.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff Promote an increase in tree planting and landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces. 613.3

Policy E-4.2.3: Control of Urban Runoff Continue to implement water pollution control and “best management practice” measures aimed at slowing urban runoff and reducing pollution, including the flow of sediment and nutrients into streams, rivers, and wetlands. 619.8

The project would be LEED Silver certified upon final completion. Several elements including bio-retention swales, landscaping where none existed, tree plantings and extensive green roofs would be included. OP would encourage the applicant to explore other site sustainability measures, as well as energy efficiency on the site, as may be recommended by the District Department of the Environment and Energy (DDOE).

Economic Development

ED-1.1.5: Use of Large Sites Plan strategically for the District's remaining large development sites to ensure that their economic development potential is fully realized. These sites should be viewed as assets that can be used to revitalize neighborhoods and diversify the District economy over the long term. Sites with Metrorail access, planned light rail access, and highway access should be viewed as opportunities for new jobs and not exclusively as housing sites. 703.13

The new mixed use development, including new uses such as a grocery store would provide improved employment opportunities for immediate residents and the District as a whole. The proposal for the redevelopment of this large site would potentially help in the revitalization of the immediate neighborhood and could spur additional development improvements along the Rhode Island Avenue corridor.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

PROS-1.4.3: Parks on Large Sites Include new neighborhood and/or community parks on large sites that are redeveloped for housing and other uses that generate a demand for recreational services. The potential for such parks to enhance the connectivity of parks and open spaces throughout the city should be an important planning and design consideration, particularly where multiple large adjacent sites are being redeveloped. 807.6

PROS-2.2.2: Park Safety and Security Design parks, trails, and recreational facilities to improve public safety. Avoid creating hidden and difficult to access areas where security problems or vandalism could result. Lighting, fencing, building materials, and other design components should be selected to enhance the safety of park users. Park lighting shall be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods. 810.6

PROS-3.1.6: Compatibility with Parklands Maintain and design public and private development adjacent to the edges of open spaces and parks to be compatible with these parklands and improve park access and safety. 812.14

PROS-3.3.3: Small Park and Mini-Park Cluster Improvements Prioritize improvements of small park and mini-park clusters in areas with limited access to parks and open space and a growing population. Apply common themes, such as sustainability, place-making, or connectivity to plan, enhance, and maintain the small parks as a system. 814.6a

PROS-4.3 Open Space and the Cityscape Improving open space is part of the District's broader vision of "building green and healthy communities." The following policies seek to increase the amount of open space in the city and protect open space where it exists today. Although these spaces are often small, they collectively make an important contribution to the livability of the city. 819.1

- *Policy PROS-4.3.2: Plazas in Commercial Districts Encourage the development of outdoor plazas around Metro station entrances, in neighborhood business districts, around civic buildings, and in other areas with high volumes of pedestrian activity. Use the planned unit development process to promote such spaces for public benefit and to encourage tree planting, public art, sculpture, seating areas, and other amenities within such spaces. 819.4*
- *Policy PROS-4.3.3: Common Open Space in New Development Provide incentives for new ... buildings to include "green roofs", rain gardens, landscaped open areas, and other common open space areas that provide visual relief and aesthetic balance. 819.5*

The proposal would provide an immediate benefit with respect to recreational open space on the site in the first phase of the site's development. The proposed plaza would be an inviting area for transit and trail users, replacing an under-utilized parking lot. Other small areas throughout the development would provide opportunities for landscaped open spaces

Urban Design

UD-1.4.1: Avenues/Boulevards and Urban Form: *Use Washington's major avenues/boulevards as a way to reinforce the form and identity of the city, connect its neighborhoods, and improve its aesthetic and visual character. Focus improvement efforts on avenues/boulevards in emerging neighborhoods, particularly those that provide important gateways or view corridors within the city. (§906.4)*

UD-2.2 Designing for Successful Neighborhoods *Not all neighborhoods have a strong sense of identity, however. Some are negatively affected by dilapidated buildings, poorly maintained properties, vacant storefronts, and worse. ... Infill development ... create a real opportunity to establish a stronger identity, and to create neighborhood centers where they are lacking today. 910.2*

- *The prospect of significant future growth in the city's neighborhoods will require a heightened focus on architectural quality in both well established and emerging areas. ... greater emphasis on design compatibility and appropriate scale is needed. ... the priority should be on setting a higher design standard and defining a stronger, more positive image. 910.3*
- *High quality materials that are durable and rich in texture and details should be encouraged. 910.4*

UD-2.2.5: Creating Attractive Facades *Create visual interest through well-designed building facades, storefront windows, and attractive signage and lighting. Avoid monolithic or box-like building forms, or long blank walls which detract from the human quality of the street.*

UD-2.2.8: Large Site Development *Ensure that new developments on parcels that are larger than the prevailing neighborhood lot size are carefully integrated with adjacent sites. Structures on such parcels should be broken into smaller, more varied forms, particularly where the prevailing street frontage is characterized by small, older buildings with varying facades. 910.16*

UD-2.2.9: Protection of Neighborhood Open Space *Ensure that infill development respects and improves the integrity of neighborhood open spaces and public areas. Buildings should be designed to avoid the loss of sunlight and reduced usability of neighborhood parks and plazas. 910.18*

UD-2.3 The Design of New Neighborhoods *...large sites provide some of the city's best opportunities for distinctive architecture as well as the application of green design and low impact development principles...They can and should improve neighborhood connectivity, create new open space, and define a stronger identity for adjacent area. ...represent an unparalleled opportunity to knit the city together... and represent a major component of our inclusive city. 911.1*

UD-2.3.2: Large Site Scale and Block Patterns *Establish a development scale on large sites in keeping with surrounding areas. "Superblocks" (e.g., oversized tracts of land with no through-streets) should generally be avoided in favor of a finer-grained street grid that is more compatible with the texture of Washington's neighborhoods. This also allows for more appropriately scaled development and avoids large internalized complexes or oversized structures. 911.4*

UD-2.3.3: Design Context for Planning Large Sites Ensure that urban design plans for large sites consider not only the site itself, but the broader context presented by surrounding neighborhoods. Recognize that the development of large sites has ripple effects that extend beyond their borders, including effects on the design of transportation systems and public facilities nearby. 911.6

UD-3 Improving the Public Realm This element has three objectives:

- Improving the appearance and vitality of street and sidewalk space
- Balancing security and aesthetic considerations in public realm design
- Encouraging superior public building and infrastructure design. 912.2

The design policies in support of these objectives are referenced in Section 913.8 through 913.15, and 913.18 through 913.20, including (in short):

- Improving streetscape design;
- Management of sidewalk space;
- Streetscape design and street function;
- Street lighting;
- Streetscape and mobility;
- Enhanced streetwalls;
- Improving the street environment;
- Neighborhood public space;
- Privates sector streetscape improvements;
- Programming of outdoor space; and
- Signage.

The project represents a significant improvement to the public realm, to the area around WMATA's pedestrian stairway, connections to the bike trail, the proposed public plaza with furniture and future programming of the plaza area. The applicant will continue to work with DDOT and OP in the refinement of the plaza area and the immediate surrounding open areas, prior to the final design.

ULI Study (2014)

With the addition of PUDs under review and not yet presented, the corridor within a mile of the Rhode Island Metro Station is expected to have a substantial influx of residents, as development progresses as anticipated under the programs and plans noted above. As such, continued infrastructure and public realm planning, among other considerations, are important factors that will facilitate the success of the area. The following ULI Study conducted in 2014 provided recommendations for the commercial future of Rhode Island Avenue (ULI TAP – Recommendations):

- *Redevelopment ... should include significant, well-designed, publicly accessible open space, along with developer commitments to maintain those open spaces. – Prioritizing Open and Recreational Spaces, Pg. 11, Paragraph 3, (2014)*
- *The Panel acknowledged that any current and future retail in the study area will suffer significant competition from neighboring retail nodes in the District, including Monroe Street Market, 901 Monroe, Brookland Station, Brookland Manor redevelopment, McMillan Reservoir, and the H Street corridor. The market could support an increase of 1,200 new households with an average annual income of \$65,000 in the study area...However, because of retail competition of nearby submarkets, the Panel cautioned that this increase in households would only fuel as much as 48,500 square feet (SF) of new retail development in the study area – analogous to the size of one grocery store.*

- *The Panel also suggested creating additional medium scale residential density along Rhode Island Avenue, with neighborhood-scale retail along Rhode Island Avenue and 4th Street, NE. This area would also be the site for the new Maker District – in large part because it exhibits the most limited connectivity of all sites in the study area, and therefore is a logical receiving zone for Maker uses.*

The applicant intends to provide a marketing analysis and plan with respect to the site's future retail opportunities.

V. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Stage I PUD (Phase II through VI) – (Illustrative Site Plan – Exhibit 14A1 – L1.01- (Attached))

The proposed development of the five parcels in the timeline of Phases II through VI would include approximately 1,200 residential units above grocery/retail and service uses on the ground floors, as preliminarily identified on the plans. All buildings are proposed as seven-stories with a maximum height of 90 feet, based on the street right-of-way width of Rhode Island Avenue, as determined by the Height Act. The measuring points for the buildings are proposed according to the applicant's submitted measurements shown in the plans (reproduced above).

The development concept for each parcel's site layout, massing and height are briefly described in the following phases:

Phase II - Block 3 – The 138,181 square feet parcel would be developed with a grocery store on the ground level as the main anchor of the overall development. The grocery would front 4th Street and smaller retail stores would front the main private street. The residential lobby for 355 residential units would punctuate two retail areas along the main street. Two levels of below-grade parking for 213 spaces and 80 bike spaces would be accessed off the private street to the west of the building. Three, 55-foot enclosed loading berths to serve the grocery use are proposed at the rear of the building, to be accessed off 4th Street, via a private street. (Sheet 3.101-3.107) (Residential Parking Ratio – 0.6)

Phase III- Block 4 - This parcel, located south of the proposed grocery would front both 4th Street and the project's main street. The building would have 143 residential units, 16,000 square feet of retail and two levels of below grade parking with 86 spaces. Access to the parking would be off 4th Street, with loading proposed off the private street to the east of the building. Shared parking with the larger building to the north should be considered, as proposed curb cuts to access below-grade parking are shown between two existing curb cuts. This may create potential pedestrian conflicts and not satisfy DDOT's requirements. (Sheet 4.001 through 4.301) (Residential Parking Ratio – 0.60)

Phase IV - Block 2 – The building proposed on the 106,004 square feet parcel would be centrally located, on the north side of the proposed main street and east of the grocery site. The projected 434,417 square-foot gross floor area building would accommodate 351,919 square feet of residential uses and 22,730 square feet of retail. Interior private drives to the east and west sides of the building would provide access to three levels of below-grade parking with approximately 199 parking spaces for 332 residential units and ground floor retail. Two, 40-foot loading berths would be provided on the first floor level, which would be accessed off the private street to the east of the building. The bike path proposed through the site from the MBT would run along the front and east of the building. (Exhibit 2 - Sheets 2.001 -2.301). (Residential Parking Ratio – 0.60)

Phase V - Block 5 – This 75,683 square feet parcel is currently developed with a warehouse. Ultimately, this building would be demolished to develop a seven story building, which would have frontage along Rhode Island Avenue and two private streets. The 310,268 gross square feet development would include 303 residential units and 24,156 square feet of retail space. Up to 182 parking spaces would be provided to serve the residential units, which would be accessed off the private street connecting to Rhode Island Avenue. (Residential Parking Ratio 0.60)

Phase VI-Block 6 –The proposed irregularly shaped 40,757 square-foot parcel is the smallest of the subdivided lot. A seven-story building of 78 residential units with 8,800 square feet of ground floor retail is proposed for a 97,547 gross square feet building. Forty-seven spaces are proposed in two levels below-grade with access provided via an alley that would separate Building 5 (west) from the subject building. This is anticipated as the last building in the development cycle. (Residential Parking Ratio 0.60)

Building Appearance

The height, massing and below grade parking layouts were presented in concept for Stage I designs and may be subject to change through a future second stage PUD review. Elevated courtyards for the larger buildings of Blocks 2 and 3 would provide recreational areas for future residents. Detailed design information, including façade treatments, detailed plans, and materials will be provided as part of Stage Two review by the Commission.

Access and Circulation

A total of 88,600 square feet would be dedicated to the project site's private streets, with 12,300 square feet dedicated to bike lanes in the complete PUD. The private streets would vary in width as follows:

- 70 feet (west entrance of property via Rhode Island Avenue)
- 85 feet (Main Street),
- 52.5 feet (east Rhode Island Avenue entrance) and
- 65 feet (right-of-way between Building 1A and 1B). (Sheet L1.11)

The streets do not appear to have a continuous width for their entire length, including narrowing at the corners to accommodate pedestrian movement and green areas. Drive lanes vary between 11 and 14-feet in width. Landscaping and street sections show street trees and related LID landscaping features are proposed to control storm water runoff, enhance the site's sustainability and the aesthetic appeal consistent with District standards.

Vehicular parking and loading proposed for Blocks II through VI would be accessed primarily from the main private street and entrances along Rhode Island Avenue. Forty-foot loading berths would be provided and the applicant has requested flexibility from the 55-foot loading berth requirement for residential uses. The proposed grocery use in Block III (Phase II) would have enclosed, 55-foot loading berths and would be accessed via 4th Street.

Open Space

Over 157,600 square feet of public-accessible open spaces would be included in the overall site, with 44,200 square feet of green space and 12,650 square feet dedicated to a plaza area. Visual information about the landscape elements, including hardscape, site furnishings and the planting palette of street trees are provided in the landscape sheets of the plans (Sheets L2.05 to L2.06). OP is supportive of the landscaping proposed along the private streets but will *request DDOT's and Urban Forestry's guidance* regarding the adequacy of proposed 5-foot wide tree pits to ensure street trees reach maturity.

LEED Silver certification is proposed for the development. Street rights-of-ways were excluded from land area to determine the floor area ratio.

Overall, OP supports the concept design for the First Stage parcels. However, the projected residential parking ratios and low bike parking ratios are not yet reflective of the site's potential as a transit/bike oriented (TOD/BOD) redevelopment site.

The plans should include the location of the existing Bryant /Adams Street NE across 4th Street in connection with the main street proposed through the site. Details on paving materials should be provided for DDOT's review and comments. In collaboration with DDOE, the applicant should explore:

- Co-generation opportunities for the site's development; and
- The potential for solar panel installation, given the site's orientation and the potentially large roof area of the entire development.

Stage II PUD (Phase I) (Illustrative Site Plan – Exhibit 14A2 –L2.01 (Attached))

The applicant proposes Phase I development to include:

- Construction of two, 7-story buildings of 345 residential units, with 2 levels of shared below-grade parking for 317 spaces combined (residential and retail uses). Described in plans as Building I A and IB on 2 parcels –Block 1A and 1B.
- Development of a 12,650 square feet plaza with related realignment of the Metropolitan Branch Trail and incorporation of WMATA's pedestrian stairway with the plaza;
- Two pedestrian connections to the north of the site;
- Demolition of the existing 2-story retail structure and retention of the existing one-story building and approximately 288 surface parking spaces;
- Inclusion of temporary uses west of Parcel 1A and east of the existing one-story retail building currently on the site;
- Use of the Hinkle Building on Block 5 (storage building) for any use permitted in the C-3-A District until a Stage 2 application is approved for the site. The building would be renovated as a residential/retail building.

Building Appearance – Blocks - 1A and 1B

The building proposed on Block 1A would consist of 162,403 square feet of residential uses above 7,335 square feet of retail on the ground floor. The retail portion of the building on Block 1A would be along the private main street, which would lead to the proposed plaza area. The retail portion of building on Block 1B would front on Rhode Island Avenue and wrap around to the south side of the main street opposite Block 1A.

Both buildings would be clad primarily with red, black and dark grey brick, with precast stone at the building bases to relate to the pedestrian scale. Corner elements would accentuate the building entrances, while a mix of corrugated metal and composite metal panels would act as trim. It is not clear whether illuminated panels would be installed above the retail spaces, extending partially east to be visible from the Rhode Island Avenue to other points along the private street.

Ground floor units of Building 1 A would have immediate access to the plaza and terrace areas proposed closer to and almost seamless with the MBT. Residents would benefit from the proposed elevated courtyards above the ground floor retail for each building, as well as smaller terraces as shown on Sheet 1.107 of the plan (September 28, 2015). Deep balconies would extend the interior for some units and interior courtyards and a pool (Building 1B) would provide recreational opportunities for future residents.

Housing and Affordability

According to the development data provided to OP, the number of residential units proposed for Block 1A's building would be 212 units and for Block 1 B 133 units, for a total of 345 units, with a unit mix as follows:

Building	2Br+den/3 Br.	2 Br.	1 Br. + Den	1 Br.	Jr. 1Br.	Efficiency	Totals
1A	13	41	41	81	34	22	212
1B	10	25	25	39	20	14	133
Totals	23	66	6	120	54	36	345

Table 1

Affordable housing is proposed as follows:

Block IA Residential Unit Type	Res. GFA % of total	Units	Income Type	Control Period	Affordable Unit Type
Total	190,481 sf 100%	212		Life of Project	
Market Rate	175,243sf /92%	TBD	Market	Life of Project	-
IZ	15,238sf/8%	TBD	80% AMI	Life of Project	TBD
Affordable/Non IZ	NA	NA	NA	NA	

Table 2

Block IB Residential Unit Type	Res. GFA % of total	Units	Income Type	Control Period	Affordable Unit Type
Total	122,572 sf/100%	133		Life of Project	TBD
Market Rate	12,766/92%	TBD	Market	Life of Project	TBD
IZ	9,806/8%	TBD	80% AMI	Life of Project	TBD
Affordable/Non IZ	N/A	-	-	-	-

Table 3

The applicant will provide the needed information prior to a public hearing. OP has encouraged the applicant to consider additional affordable units, and/or a deeper level of affordability.

Parking and Loading

Three levels of shared, below-grade parking with approximately 297 regular sized spaces and 66 compact spaces are proposed. Access would be provided off the private street east of the parcels via Rhode Island Avenue. Storage areas would be provided on each level and secured bike spaces for 120 bicycles are shown on the 1st and 2nd levels. The location of visitor bike parking spaces or short and long-term spaces for bicycles is required.

Loading is shown on the first level for both buildings, accessed from the private street entering Rhode Island Avenue on the east side of the site. OP expects that the loading dock for Block 1B would be enclosed and controlled due to the anticipated level of traffic that may enter the site from this private street off Rhode Island Avenue. The applicant will work with DDOT to resolve loading, parking access and related concerns upon submission of the site's Comprehensive Traffic Report (CTR).

Public Plaza, Metropolitan Branch Trail and WMATA's Pedestrian Bridge

Up to 12,300 square feet of bike trails would run through the site to connect with the existing MBT. The location of the proposed plaza design is largely under-utilized, as it currently serves as a commuter parking lot.

The proposed public plaza, the MBT and WMATA's pedestrian bridge, in combination would play a vital role in the site's successful redevelopment and long-term vitality. Its location along a major multi-modal transportation corridor, creates a unique condition for the large site to maximize the use of the available transportation options, including use of the MBT by bikes and pedestrians, access to Metro by pedestrians further north of the site, as well as pedestrian and bike access to both Metro rail and bus.

The project proposes a realignment of the trail, currently traversing the front of the stairs to the pedestrian bridge to behind the stairway. This attempts to create an inviting stairway in the midst of a landscaped area leading to an activated, furnished, 12,650 square feet pedestrian plaza. The design would incorporate up to three access points to the MBT, including, to the north of Block 1A to join with the proposed pedestrian and bike stair to Edgewood Terrace; two access points from the plaza to the MBT; and another access east of Block 1B (Stage 1 Overall Site Plan, Sheet C-3).

The plan also shows the circulation pattern for vehicles and it would seem that potential conflicts could occur in the area of the plaza between vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles to and from the trail. OP will work with DDOT and the applicant to address this, and to provide detailed review prior to a public hearing.

Activation at trail's edge:



A recent [MBT Safety and Access Study \(2015\)](#)¹ referenced the proposed development site and the potential for a connection with the trail as shown in the diagram reproduced from the Study.

The study's research highlighted that... *“Aside from completion of the Trail, users also indicated a desire to connect to: Brookland, Edgewood and Bloomingdale area shops and r restaurants...and Howard University.”* In addition,... *“Private users and developers should consider ways to interact with the Trail and District agencies should*

review development plans with the goal of increasing “eyes on the Trail” to enhance the sense of safety and invite additional use of this unique asset. Trail amenities such as water fountains, benches, trash bins, and shade trees should also be incorporated into any new development”

OP is supportive of the proposed activation of the plaza area, including the potential for the development of small park areas north of the plaza. The applicant should provide information regarding the potential agreements including programming and maintenance of the space(s), where the property intersects with the public space and the trail. Further, collaboration with the MBT's management is needed to refine the design, if necessary, in support of enhanced safety and security at the trail's edge in the vicinity of the site.

¹ This study is the product of collaboration between the NoMa Business Improvement District, key property owners, the District Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Police Department, along with the input of over 900 individual residents and stakeholders, identifying key opportunities with an action agenda for Trail improvement.

Temporary Uses and Retail



In order to accommodate the Phase I development, the two story retail building on the site would be demolished and the larger retail stores would remain temporarily. East of the large retailer and west of Block 1A would include vacant area where temporary uses are being explored to help establish the site as a retail destination.

In the interim, as part of the Phase I site development, the existing structure in Block 5 is proposed to be renovated as a mixed-use residential/retail building with ground floor uses for any use permitted within the C-3-A District, until approval of a Stage II application (Sheet 5.001-5.301).

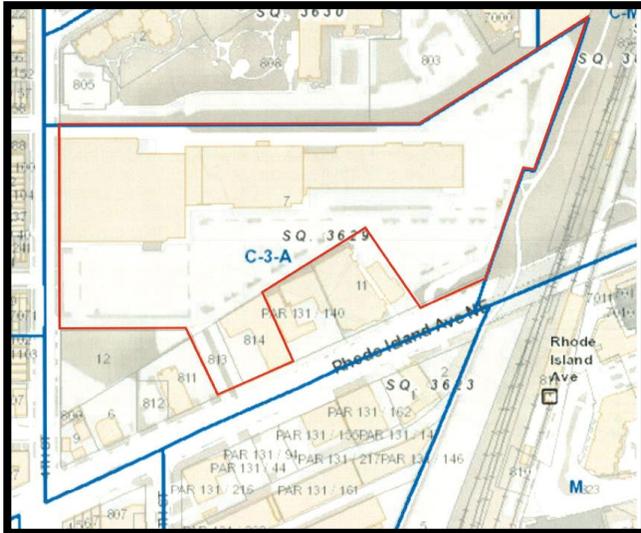
Additional information should be provided prior to the public hearing regarding potential uses and the parking and loading impacts.

TABLE SUMMARY

PUD STAGE/Parcel Area (sf) Stage I PUD (Phases)	Proposal	GFA (Total)	FAR	Height	Dwelling Units	Parking Spaces
Phase II BLK 3 (113,092 sf)	Mixed-use res./grocery	420,702.24 sf	3.71	90ft.	355	243
Phase III BLK 4 (33,067 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	144,476.57 sf	3.71	90ft.	143	98
Phase IV BLK 2 (106,004 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	434,616.40 sf	3.99	90ft.	332	457
Phase V BLK 5 (63,157 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	310,095.96 sf	4.89	90 ft.	303	313
Phase VI BLK 6 (43,977 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	97,508.5	3.01	90 ft.	78	84
Private Streets (88,600 sf) Bike Lanes (12,300 sf)						
TIMELINE Stage II PUD for Phases II-VI	To be filed no later than within 3 years of issued C/O for Bldg. IB					
Stage II PUD – PHASE I	Proposal	GFA (Total)	FAR	Height	Dwelling Units	
BLK 1A (82,264 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	195,788 sf	2.38	90 ft.	212	141
BLK 1B (48,264 sf)	Mixed-use residential/retail	165,580 sf	3.41	90 ft.	133	261
TIMELINE Building I A	To be constructed within 3 years of the effective date of the consolidated PUD order					
Building IB	BP to be filed within 1 year of issuance of C/O for IA Construction within 1 yr. of issued BP					

Table 4

VI. ZONING



The Property is within the C-3-A Commercial District, which permits matter-of-right medium density development, with a density incentive for residential development within a general pattern of mixed-use development, where retail, service and office uses are the predominant uses, and where buildings do not generally exceed 8 stories in height.

The following table compares the existing matter-of-right development capacity of the C-3-A District with the requested Stage I and Stage II PUDs:

Stage I

As previously stated Phases II through VI is presented as a Stage I PUD for review in concept with respect to the proposed building's height and massing as follows:

Standard	C-3-A By Right	C-3-A PUD	Proposal
Uses § 741	Any use permitted in C-2 Districts under § 721 and § 741	Any use permitted in C-2 Districts under §§ 721 and 741	Primarily residential with ground floor retail, gym and grocery
Height in ft. § 770	65 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.
FAR §771§ 2405.2	4.0 (max) 4.8 (with IZ)	4.5 4.8 (with IZ)	3.62
Lot Occupancy	75% (res.)100% (comm.)	75% (res.)100% (comm.)	52.40% (residential) 66.68% (commercial)
Parking	1 space/750 sf retail (if more than 3,000 sf); 1 space per 4 units	1 space/750 sf retail (if more than 3,000 sf); 1 space per 4 units	965 (residential) 861 (retail)
Loading	Multifamily > 50 units 1 berth @ 55 ft. 1 platform @ 200 sf. 1 svc space @ 20 ft. Retail 1 berth @ 30 ft. 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 svc space @ 20 ft.	Multifamily > 50 units 1 berth @ 55 ft. 1 platform @ 200 sf. 1 svc space @ 20 ft. Retail 1 berth @ 30 ft. 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 svc space @ 20 ft.	For residential 1 berth @ 40 ft. 1 platform@ 200sf 1 svc @20ft.

Table 5

Revised development data would be submitted to the record by the applicant, and OP will include the information as part of its presentation to the Commission at setdown.

Stage II PUD –Phase I

Standard	C-3-A By Right	C-3-APUD	Proposal	
			Block 1A	Block 1B
Uses § 741	Any use permitted in C-2 Districts under § 721 and § 741	Any use permitted in C-2 Districts under §§ 721 and 741	Residential with ground floor retail	Residential with ground floor gym
Height in ft/stories § 770	65 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.
FAR §771; §2405.2	4.0 (max)	4.5	2.38	3.41
Lot Occupancy % § 772	75% (res.)100% (comm.)	75% (res.)100% (comm.)	33.59% (res) 35.12% (comm.)	51.83% (res) 72.31 (comm.)
Rear Yard § 774	2.5”/vertical feet in height, but > 12’	2.5”/vertical feet in height, but ≥ 12’	59 ft. 10 ins	30 ft. 8ins
Side Yard § 775	None required, but if provided, then 2” in width/vertical feet in height, but ≥ 6’	None required, but if provided, then 2” in width/vertical feet in height, but ≥ 6’	21 ft 8ins and varies	13 ft. 3ins and 25 ft. 8ins
Parking (spaces) § 2101.1	1 space/750 sf retail (if more than 3,000 sf); 1 space per 4 units	1 space/750 sf retail (if more than 3,000 sf); 1 space per 4 units	Residential : 127 Retail: Shared between buildings	Residential: 111 Retail: 125 -260
Bike Parking § 2101.1	5% of number of required parking spaces	5% of number of required parking spaces	Info. not provided	Info. not provided
Loadings § 2201.1	Multifamily > 50 units 1 berth @ 55 ft. 1 platform @ 200 sf. 1 svc space @ 20 ft. Retail 1 berth @ 30 ft. 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 svc space @ 20 ft.	Multifamily > 50 units 1 berth @ 55 ft. 1 platform @ 200 sf. 1 svc space @ 20 ft. Retail (8,000 sf+): 1 berth @ 30 ft. 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 svc space @ 20 ft.	For residential 1 berth @ 40 ft. 1 platform@ 200sf 1 svc @20ft. (Relief Necessary)	For residential 1 berth @ 40 ft. 1 platform@ 200sf 1 svc @20ft. (Relief Necessary)
Multiple buildings § 2517	2 or more buildings a matter of right – on a lot not located with 25 ft. of a residence district.	2 or more buildings a matter of right – on a lot not located with 25 ft. of a residence district.	Relief required	Relief required

Table 6

VII. FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is requested from the existing Regulations as follows:

Section 2517.1 – More than one principal building on a single lot of record, within 25 feet of a residence District.

The PUD site is a combination of three lots, now subdivided as one lot (Lot 7). Currently, and as proposed there would be several buildings in one lot abutting the residential R-5-A District to the north. OP supports a site layout which considers the extension of the District’s street grid. Further for such a large site, multiple structures would not be contrary to the Comprehensive Plan and Maps.

Section 411, 777 Roof structures - More than one roof structure for Building 1A and 1B

More than one roof structure would be anticipated for the proposed buildings due to the location of the core and stair access to the roof as well as potential mechanical equipment. In addition, a single roof enclosure would increase visibility of the roof's massing. However, the design should reflect satisfaction with all other roof structure requirements. The applicant would provide a more detailed analysis of the required relief pursuant to the relevant sections for further review and evaluation as part of OP's final report prior to the public hearing.

Section 2201 -Loading – 55-ft. loading berths required: 40 feet proposed (residential uses)

Reduced loading berths are proposed for residential uses. The applicant would provide a more detailed analysis of the required relief pursuant to the relevant sections for further review and evaluation as part of OP's final report prior to the public hearing.

Section 2407.10 – First Stage PUD validity

The first-stage approval shall be valid for a period of one year, unless a longer period is specified by the Commission, or unless the Commission extends that period. The applicant proposes that the approval be extend until “no later than within 3 years of an issued certificate of occupancy for building 1B.”

VIII. PUD EVALUATIONS AND STANDARDS

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments (“PUD”) are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. Section 2400.1 and 2400.2 states “The PUD process is designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits...The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development and other incentives, such as increased building height and density; provided, that the project offers a commendable number or quality of public benefits and that it protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience.” The Applicant has requested various flexibilities detailed above and also offers several public benefits and amenities. No map amendment is requested.

Per § 2403.3 PUD Evaluation Standards, the PUD regulations further state that “[t]he impact of the project on the surrounding area and upon the operations of city services and facilities shall not be unacceptable, but shall instead be found to be either favorable, capable of being mitigated, or acceptable given the quality of public benefits in the project.”

Sections 2403.5 – 2403.13 of the Zoning Regulations state the definition and evaluation standards of public benefits and project amenities. Public benefits are tangible, quantifiable superior features of a proposed PUD that benefit the surrounding neighborhood or public in general to a significantly greater extent than would likely result from a by right project. A project amenity is type of public benefit that is a functional or aesthetic feature of a development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience or comfort of the occupants and immediate neighbors.

In its review of a PUD application, § 2403.8 states that “...the Commission shall judge, balance, and reconcile the relative value of the project amenities and public benefits offered, the degree of development incentives requested, and any potential adverse effects according to the specific circumstances of the case.” To assist in the evaluation, the Applicant is required to describe amenities and benefits, and to “show how the public benefits offered are superior in quality and quantity to the typical development of the type proposed...” (§2403.12)

The following table compares the existing matter-of-right development capacity of the C-3-A District with the requested Consolidated PUD for Phase I's development:

Standard	C-3-A M-O-R* (13 ac.=489,819 sf) (without streets)	C-3-A M-O-R* (Block 1A -82,264 sf without streets)	C-3-A M-O-R (Block 1B- 42,264 sf)	Consolidated PUD Proposal	
				Block 1A	Block 1 B
Uses	Retail/ mixed-use	Retail/mixed use	Retail/mixed use	Mixed-use	Mixed-use
Height	65 ft.	65 ft.	65ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.
FAR	4.0 (4.8 with IZ)	4.0 (329,056 sf.) 4.8 (with IZ)	4.0 (169,056 sf.) 4.8 (with IZ)	2.38 (excludes private right-of-way)	3.43 (excludes private right-of-way)
Lot Occ. %	75% res. 100% commercial	75% res. 100% commercial	75% res. 100% commercial	33.71% (max).	50.68%

Table 7

The PUD gains include 25 feet of additional height across the entire development for Stages I and II development; overall, the density is within the by-right permitted FAR.

The overall FAR 3.62 (without inclusion of the street and bicycle path areas) would be below the maximum FAR permitted as a matter-of-right.

The Applicant has offered the following amenities and benefits as an offset to the additional development gained through the application process:

- (a) *Urban design, architecture, landscaping, or creation or preservation of open spaces - § 2403.9(a)*

Urban Design

In terms of urban design, the Applicant will greatly improve the pedestrian realm from its current state through the ground floor building design and the proposed private streetscape and plaza elements.

The building design at the ground floor includes base articulation through the use of masonry that helps establish a comfortable pedestrian-scale along the Rhode Island Avenue streetscape. The proposed ground floor gymnasium, lobby and leasing entrances, floor-to-ceiling store front glass broken-up with masonry piers at predictable intervals, would help in the revitalization of a comfortable pedestrian experience along the Avenue.

The Applicant will provide an improved streetscape along Rhode Island Avenue, as well as to the interior of the site, which currently does not exist. These elements will improve the pedestrian experience from the current state of the site and the driveway access from 4th Street and Rhode Island Avenue. The applicant should address whether the tree box depths and general landscaping could be improved, and how the proposed streetscape would complement DDOT’s standards for streetscapes along the District’s avenues.

Architecture

The proposed architecture has an industrial vocabulary, with precast stone base at the first and second levels. A unique element of the proposed façade is the slightly projecting and recessing rectangular planes which help break up the horizontal mass of Building 1B along the south elevation on Rhode Island Avenue. The upper story residential units are distinguished from the retail base of the building as it seems recessed from the two lower levels.

Landscaping and Creation of Open Space

The Applicant intends to provide two types of landscaping concurrently with this project: on-site landscaping and off-site landscaping. With regard to on-site landscaping, the Applicant intends to provide plantings within the streetscape, raised green/softscape areas including trees, bio-retention planters, and up to 16,110 square feet of green roof areas. In terms of off-site landscaping, the Applicant intends to design and build hard and soft landscaping, inclusive of pathways to the trail east of the property. Off-site and on-site landscape elements will include main programmatic elements of a pathway from the Rhode Island Avenue sidewalk to the adjacent private property to the north that will connect through private property to a hardscape plaza, seating elements, lighting, trees and plantings. Existing on-site art along the retaining wall would remain. OP asked the Applicant for more information regarding signage and wayfinding to the location of the MBT and pedestrian bridge to Metro consistent with the MBT signage.

(b) Site planning, and efficient and economical land utilization - § 2403.9(b)

The proposal would completely transform a significantly underutilized site located within 1,000 sf of a Metro station and several Metrobus lines and the MBT Trail. The development will add to the activation of the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station area with its active retail uses, additional residents, streetscape and off-site improvements with significant open space improvements. Connectivity with an extension of the street grid and bike paths would support the variety of transportation modes and represent efficient site planning elements of the project.

(d) Housing - § 2403.9(f)

Up to 26% of the apartment units would be either two-bedroom or 2-bedroom units, and up to 36% in the one-bedroom category. Preliminary details regarding how the project meets the IZ requirements are shown in Tables 2 and 3. OP suggested to the applicant that they explore a deeper level of affordability or a larger contribution to the percentage of gross floor area to affordable housing.

(e) Environmental benefits- § 2403.9(h)

The Applicant intends to target LEED Silver rating certification. OP has advised the Applicant to work with DDOE regarding site sustainability measures, including energy efficiency on the large site.

(f) Uses of special value to the neighborhood or the District of Columbia as a whole § 2403.9 (i)

The Applicant intends to design and build a pedestrian pathway/bridge/stairs north of the site, plaza and other functional elements, as well as landscaping and maintenance of the District-owned property to the immediate east of the Property. The plaza area will ultimately add vitality to the internal areas of the site, as well as to the MBT and provide a measure of safety to Metro access. OP endorses this benefit of contributing to the safety and connectivity between the Rhode Island Avenue Metro and the Metropolitan Branch Trail, as it would be an important element in improving Metro's ridership by residents within the Metrorail's station walkshed.

OP discussed aspects of the proposed development's relation to the trail with participants of the MBT Study, referenced prior. The development is anticipated to further the objectives for trail development, including providing eyes on the trail. However, agencies supporting the trail's management, including District partners (Metropolitan Police (MPD) and DDOT) would welcome collaboration with the applicant regarding potential trail amenities in the vicinity of the site including:

- Signage within branding of the MBT;
- Call boxes with cameras;
- Signage for neighborhood business along the trail and
- Lighting.

A summary to date is provided in the following table:

BENEFIT OR AMENITY	MITIGATION	PUBLIC BENEFIT	PROJECT AMENITY	REQUIRED	APPLICANT PROFFER
Affordable housing (IZ) 8% at 80% AMI (in perpetuity)				X	
Market rate housing (where none currently exists)		X	X		
Superior Architecture		X		X	X
Continuation of street grid		X	X	X	
Open space and plaza, MBT Improvements	X	X	X		X
Preservation of public art		X	X		X
Improved connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods - bike path to 4 th Street and stairway connections		X	X		
New retail uses – grocery / gymnasium and temporary retail uses on open areas in Phase I		X	X		X
Environmental benefits, stormwater management, LEED Silver Certification	X	X	X	X	X
Participation in an employment program		X			X

TABLE 8

The benefits and amenities package is currently being refined through neighborhood and agencies input.

IX. AGENCY REFERRALS

If this application is set down for a public hearing, the Office of Planning will refer it to the following government agencies for review and comment:

- Department of the Environment (DDOE);
- Department of Transportation (DDOT);
- Department of Public Works (DPW);
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS);
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD);
- Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA); and
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

X. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicant held meetings with the ANC and neighborhood associations, including:

- ANC5E , ANC5E10;
- Edgewood, Eckington and Brentwood Civic Associations;
- Community Preservation and Development Corporation;
- Mt. Calvary Church; Coalition for Smarter Growth; and
- Rhode Island Avenue Main Street.

The applicant is scheduled to meet again with the ANC on November 17, 2015.

XI. SUMMARY OF OP COMMENTS

OP supports the overall proposed uses for the large site, as it would provide important amenities for residents of Ward 5. The development will contribute positively to pedestrian activity, the overall vitality and mix of uses that are anticipated within the walkshed of the Metrorail Station and the Metropolitan Branch trail. The proposal is in conformance with the First Stage PUD and Consolidated PUD for development of the site and is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, OP recommends setdown of the application. OP’s comments from this report, all of which can be addressed prior to a public hearing are as follows:

OP Comment	Planning and / or Zoning Rationale
Pursue discussions with DDOT to consider materials and design for the private streets and access to parking and loading	The curb cuts proposed off 4 th Street should be justified.
Collaborate with DDOT on signage consistent with the MBT. Collaborate with MBT agencies to provide amenities in support of the MBT as noted in the report.	This is a request made by the MBT agencies and supported by OP as key to the site’s relationship with the trail and Metro users.
Provide more information about external lighting for the entire development.	External lighting helps determine how it would be viewed at night from the surrounding neighborhood and the trail.
Provide more information about landscaping – Work with Urban Forestry on tree species and soil volume	Appropriate shade trees will enhance the pedestrian experience. Sufficient soil volume is necessary to ensure trees grow to full maturity and provide maximum benefit as anticipated by the development plan.

OP Comment	Planning and / or Zoning Rationale
Provide information on coordination among District agencies related to the public realm and public infrastructure including necessary easements and an ongoing maintenance plan for public access, use and enjoyment of the proposed plaza area.	This information would be required as part of the order and future covenant to preserve the programming, maintenance and continued access to the trail and Metro for the life of the project.
Consider an increase beyond 8% as affordable units, which may include levels of “deeper” affordability beyond 80% AMI, and/or provide them as larger unit sizes (at least 2- bedroom units).	OP would consider a deeper level of affordability and/or additional units as a project amenity.
Provide a discussion on the site’s proposed energy distribution, with consideration of renewable energy sources and efforts to meet or exceed stormwater management requirements.	OP anticipates the applicant meet with DDOE on sustainability initiatives prior to a public hearing.
Additional information should be provided prior to the public hearing regarding potential uses and the parking and loading impacts for the temporary uses proposed for Block 5 (Phase I Development).	The parking and loading implications would need to be reviewed by DDOT since the existing use would be changed from a storage to a mixed /use residential/retail (restaurant use).
Provide additional site grading information, including retaining wall sections showing existing and proposed grading, design and materials, including the proposed stairways north of the site.	Significant grade differences potentially conflict with some of the current environmental policies of the Comprehensive Plan and DDOE’s sustainability requirements. Therefore additional information would be required.
Refinement of the plaza area and the immediate surrounding open areas, prior to the final design.	For an improved design, the applicant will continue to work with DDOT and OP to refine elements of the plaza area and other open space features as it would relate to the public realm.
Provide proposed bicycle spaces for both phases of development, including long and short term parking.	Provision of a significant number of bicycle spaces is anticipated as part of the development, in support of the site’s location near the trail and Metro.
Additional information on the flexibility requests.	Justification should be based on the Regulations.
Provide additional detail and specificity with regard to the public benefits and amenities.	This information would be required as part of the Commission’s assessment of the benefits/amenity package and inclusion within the Order, upon approval.

Table 9

Attachment:

- 1) Illustrative Site Plan (All Phases) - Exhibit page L1.01
- 2) Illustrative Site Plan Block 1- (Phase I) - Exhibit 14A2 – L2.01



Illustrative Site Plan – Exhibit 14A1 – Page L1.01

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- ① RHODE ISLAND AVE. METRO STATION
 - ② EXISTING PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE TO METRO
 - ③ METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL
 - ④ PEDESTRIAN PLAZA
 - ⑤ CYCLE LANES
 - ⑥ RESIDENTIAL AMENITY TERRACE
 - ⑦ FLEXIBLE OPEN SPACE
 - ⑧ INTERIM CONDITION ARCHITECTURAL INSTALLATION (SEE SHEET L2.07)
 - ⑨ INTERIM CONDITION ARCHITECTURAL SCREEN
 - ⑩ INTERIM CONDITION CYCLE LANES
 - ⑪ ACCESS STAIR
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS
- Note: Plan for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect the exact design to be proposed

Illustrative Site Plan Block 1- (Phase I) - Exhibit 14A2 – Page L2.01