

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: ^{JLS} Jennifer Steingasser,
 Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation
DATE: March 20, 2017
SUBJECT: ZC Case 16-25 – Final Report for a Proposed Zoning Map Amendment
 Petition to Re-Map 2601 and 2641 Virginia Avenue NW from RA-5 to MU-2

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends that the Zoning Commission approve the proposed map amendment of 2601 and 2641 Virginia Avenue NW (Square 6, Lots 42 and 810) from RA-5 to MU-2 within the Foggy Bottom/West End neighborhood. As described in Sections V and VI of this report and the OP Setdown Report (Exhibit 10), the requested MU-2 zone district would not be inconsistent with the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use and Generalized Policy maps or with the written elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

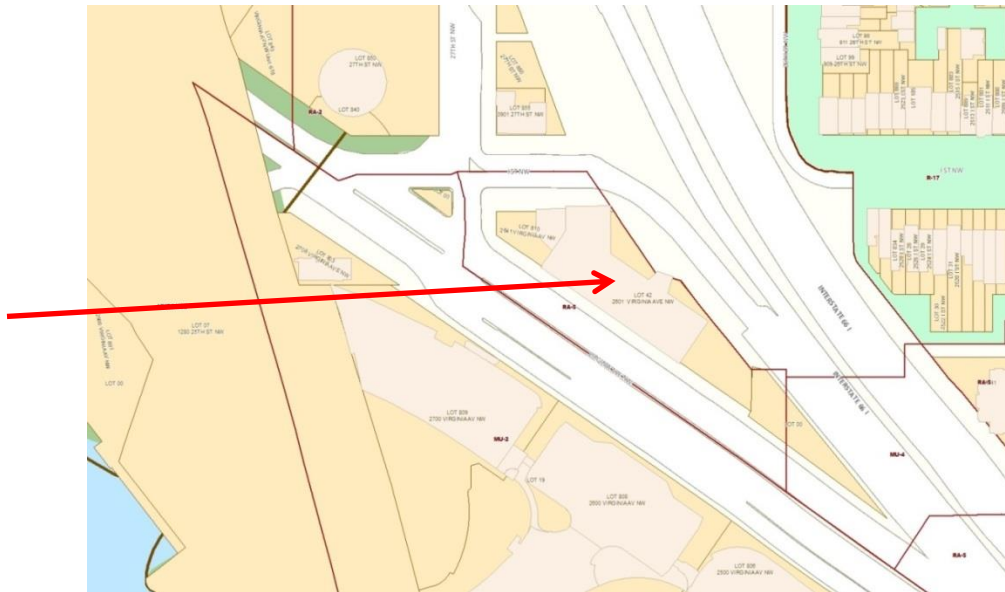
II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant	DC Boathouse LLC (owner of 2601 Virginia Ave., NW)
Proposed Map Amendment	From RA-5 to MU-2
Legal Description	Square 6, Lot 42 and Square 6, Lot 810
Property size	24,110 square feet total includes: -20,407 SF property at 2601 Virginia Ave. NW with former dormitory building -3,703 SF property at 2641 Virginia Ave. NW with gas station
Generalized Policy Map Designation	Institutional Uses
Future Land Use Map Designation	Mixed Use - High Density Residential/Medium Density Commercial Uses
Current Zoning	RA-5 (High Density Apartment)
Ward and ANC	Ward 2 and ANC 2A
Historic District	Not applicable

The Zoning Commission set down the application on January 9, 2017.

III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The Applicant proposes a map amendment to rezone both properties in Square 6 (2641 Virginia Avenue NW and 2601 Virginia Avenue NW). The properties are bounded by Virginia Avenue on the south, 27th Street NW to the west, and I Street and the on-ramp to I-66 on the north and east sides. 2641 Virginia Avenue NW is currently operating as a gas station with gas pumps and a small building. The building at 2601 Virginia Avenue NW was originally built as a hotel and most recently was used as a dormitory for George Washington University.



IV. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The Applicant proposes to rezone both properties from RA-5 to MU-2. The RA-5 zone is a high-density residential apartment zone and the MU-2 zone is intended to permit medium density mixed use with an emphasis on residential uses but permits non-residential uses. The proposed MU-2 would allow for mixed use, commercial and residential uses, which would not be allowed under the current zoning. The property directly across Virginia Avenue is currently zoned MU-2.

A comparison of the existing and the proposed zoning follows:

	Existing Zone – RA-5	Proposed Zone – MU-2
Permitted Use	Residential	Mixed Use
Height	90 feet	90 feet
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	6.0	6.0 (7.2 with IZ bonus)
Lot Occupancy	75%	80% (90% with IZ bonus)
Rear Yard	12 feet minimum	12 feet minimum

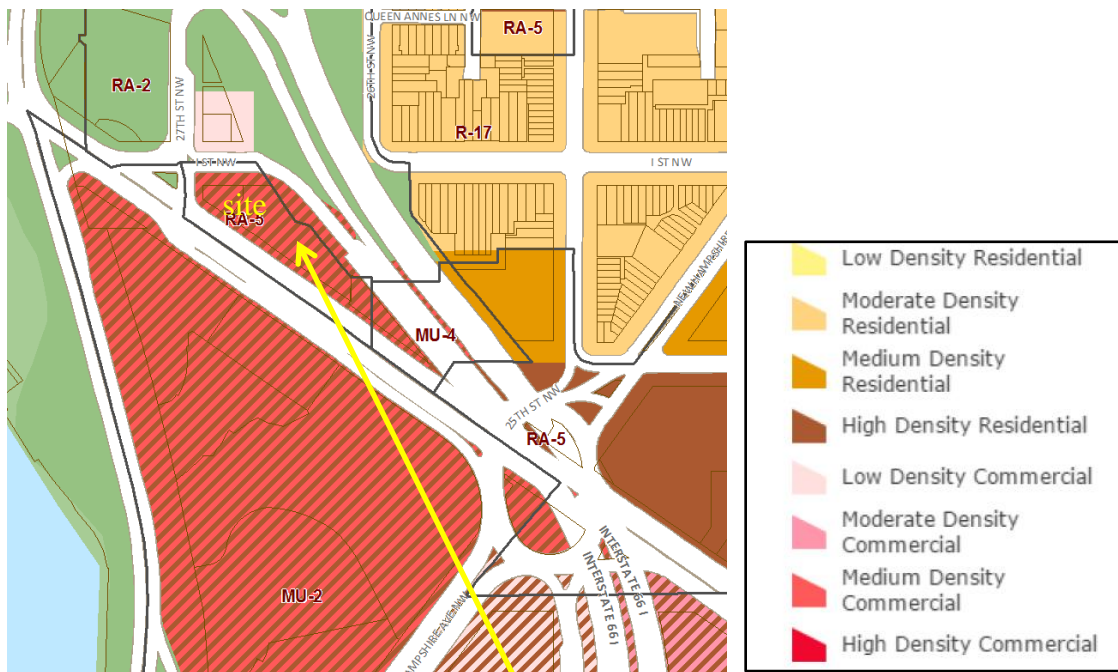
The site is improved with an existing building which has an FAR of 5.84. The current RA-5 zoning allows a maximum FAR of 6.0 and the proposed zone allows an FAR of 7.2 with the Inclusionary

Zoning (IZ) bonus. Based on the potential rezoning, the Applicant has filed an application for special exception with the Board of Zoning Adjustment for an addition to the building consistent with the MU-2 zone. The proposal would meet IZ requirements and qualify for the FAR and lot occupancy bonuses. The gas station property owner, PMG Mapp LLC, is not a Petitioner of the map amendment but the petitioner has indicated to OP that the gas station owner is aware of the rezoning and has no objection to being included. The gas station would continue to operate as a nonconforming use in this zone.

In the MU-2 zone, a property owner would need to apply to the Board of Zoning Adjustment for a special exception for a “retail, service (general), and eating and drinking establishment.” Based on the potential rezoning, the Applicant has applied to the BZA for relief to allow 4,500 SF of ground floor retail at 2601 Virginia Avenue (BZA Case No. 19475). The Applicant has also requested the BZA grant a special exception to allow a residents-only café amenity space in the penthouse of the building. That application is scheduled to go to the BZA on April 19, 2017.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS

Future Land Use Map (FLUM)



Definitions of Land Use Categories site

High Density Residential: This designation is used to define neighborhoods and corridors where high-rise (8 stories or more) apartment buildings are the predominant use. Pockets of less dense housing may exist within these areas. The corresponding Zone districts are generally R-5-D and R-5-E¹, although other zones may apply. 225.6

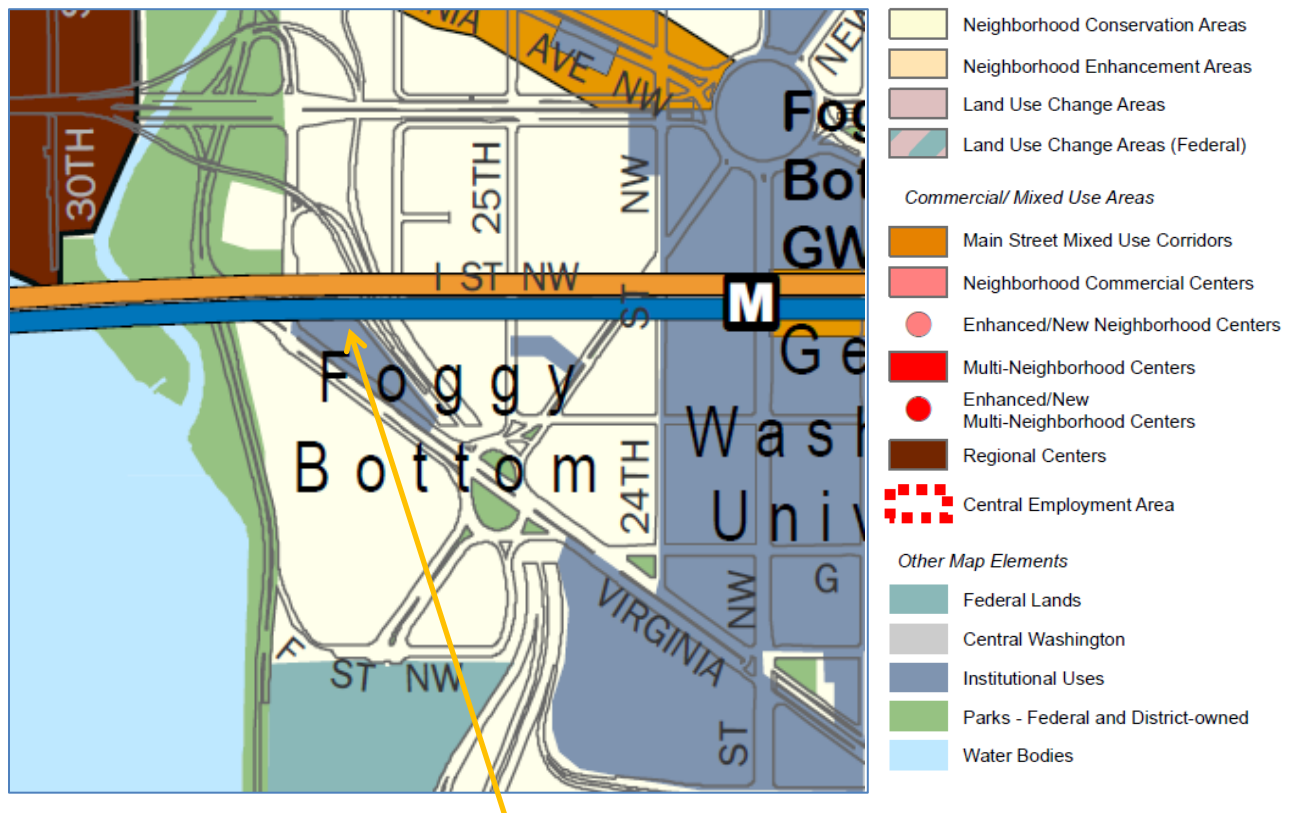
Medium Density Commercial: This designation is used to define shopping and service areas that are somewhat more intense in scale and character than the moderate-density commercial areas. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses. Areas with this designation generally draw

¹ The corresponding ZR16 zone names are R-5-D =RA-4 and R-5-E =RA-5

from a citywide market area. Buildings are generally larger and/or taller than those in moderate density commercial areas but generally do not exceed eight stories in height. The corresponding Zone districts are generally C-2-B, C-2-C, C-3-A, and C-3-B², although other districts may apply. 225.10

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) shows the subject properties striped for Mixed Use - High Density Residential and Medium Density Commercial uses. The proposed map amendment to MU-2 would be consistent with these land use designations and would allow for commercial uses in this location, which would not be permitted under the current RA-5 (R-5-E) zoning. The permitted height is the same in both zones, and the FAR and lot occupancy could increase with the Inclusionary Zoning bonus if applicable. The MU-2 zone is mapped on the Watergate site directly across Virginia Avenue with the same FLUM designation.

Generalized Policy Map



The Generalized Policy Map shows the subject properties as Institutional Uses, which reflects the previous ownership and use by George Washington University. The Comprehensive Plan states that “much of the institutional land on the map represents colleges and universities; change and infill can be expected on each campus consistent with campus plans. Other institutional sites likewise may see new buildings or facilities added. Policies in the Land Use Element and Educational Facilities Element address the compatibility of such uses with surrounding neighborhoods.”

Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan states “The Map does not show density or intensity on institutional and local public sites. If a change occurs in these sites in the future..., the new

² The corresponding ZR16 zone names are C-2-B =MU-5, C-2-C=MU-6, C-3-A=MU-7, and C-3-B=MU-8

designations should be comparable in density or intensity to those in the vicinity...” George Washington University no longer owns one of the properties and the other is a gas station. The Applicant proposes a map amendment to a medium-high density, mixed use zone, which is not inconsistent with the policies in the Comprehensive Plan or the uses and density anticipated on the Future Land Use Map.

VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES

The Property is located in the Near Northwest Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan. There are policies within the Near Northwest Area Element, as well as policies in the Citywide Framework which encourage optimal land use, transit-oriented development, mixed use development, neighborhood-serving retail, housing, and economic development. A review of the proposal against Comprehensive Plan policy statements is provided in the OP Setdown Report (Exhibit 10).

IX. AGENCY REFERRALS

OP consulted with the District’s Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) during the review of the proposed map amendment.

DHCD provided OP with comments stating that they have no objection to the map amendment and noting that Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) is not applicable to the existing zoning district (RA-5) but IZ would be applicable to the new district (MU-2) so a development after the map amendment would require IZ.

DDOT filed a report of no objection to the proposed map amendment (Exhibit 19).

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2A filed a report in support of the application (Exhibit 11).

The Applicant has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the West End Citizens Association (WECA) and WECA has filed a request for Party Status in support of the proposed map amendment and development (Exhibit 16).