

Memorandum

TO: Roland Driest, DC Surveyor
Matthew LeGrant, Zoning Administrator

FROM: *JL for* Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation

DATE: May 8, 2015

SUBJECT: Office of Planning Report for Large Tract Review Case No. 2015-01
2800 8th Street, N.E. (Square 3643, Lot 822)

I. Summary

On March 2, 2015 Miller submitted and the Office of Planning (OP) accepted an application for Large Tract Review (LTR) on behalf of 2800 8th Street Partners LLC (the “applicant”). The applicant seeks to develop a mixed use building with approximately 872 self-storage units, including the potential to create approximately 3,200 square feet of retail/maker space within the garage in the future within the C-M-2 district on property consisting of 28,168 square feet.

Section 2300.1 (a) of Title 10 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) directs the Office of Planning to “Review, prior to the filing of applications for building or construction permits, ... any commercial or mixed-use commercial development of fifty-thousand square feet (50,000 ft²) or more gross floor area (above grade) and cellar area (below grade);” This otherwise by-right development proposal is subject to Large Tract Review because it is a mixed-use (storage and retail) commercial development of more than 50,000 square feet.

The Office of Planning has completed its review of this application and concludes that for the reasons outlined in this report the application addresses the goals of the LTR regulations as outlined in DCMR Title 10, Chapter 23, § 2300.2. Those goals are:

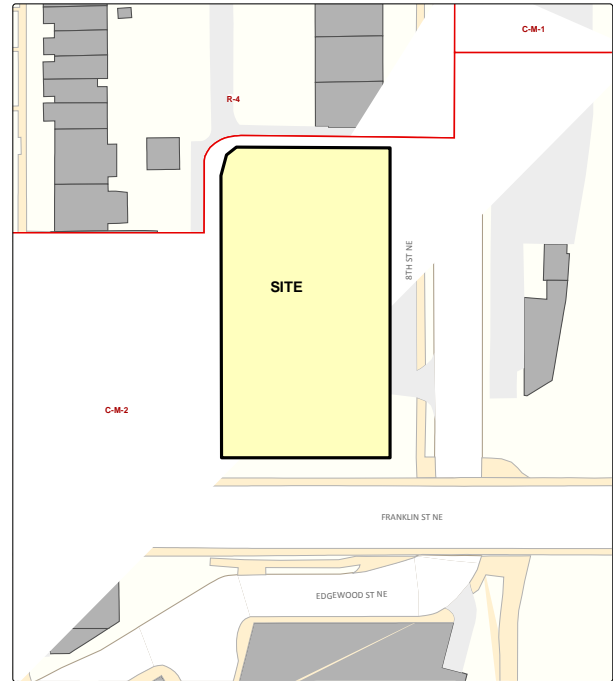
- To minimize adverse environmental, traffic, and neighborhood impacts;
- To avoid unnecessary public costs in terms of new services or facilities required of city agencies;
- To carry out the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

II. Location and Area Description

The subject property is bound by a twelve-foot wide public alley to the north, Franklin Street, N.E. and Edgewood Street, N.E. to the south, 8th Street, N.E. to the east, a twenty-foot wide public alley to the northwest and a church to the southwest.

Across the public alley to the north are two-story four-unit apartment buildings. To the south, beyond the Franklin Street overpass and Edgewood Street, is a one-story building housing High Road Upper School. To the east, across 8th Street, is a two-story industrial building, beyond which are Metrorail and CFX railroad tracks and a five-story industrial building owned by WMATA. To the southwest, adjacent to the subject property, is a church. To the northwest, across the public alley, is a one-story commercial building and two four-unit two-story apartment buildings. The Metropolitan Branch Trail runs to the east of the property, and within 8th Street adjacent to the site.

The Rhode Island Metrorail station on the Red Line is located one-half mile to the southeast, directly accessible via the Metropolitan Branch Trail. The G8 (Rhode Island Avenue Line) bus serves 8th Street and D8 (Hospital Center Line) serves Franklin Street.



III. Site Description

The site is improved with two vacant buildings, a two-story masonry building and a one-story wooden structure on the south side of the lot, and a large asphalt-paved area north of the structures. It was last used as the offices and yard for a construction company. A chain link fence currently encloses the site.



View from 8th Street, N.E.

Vehicular access to the site is via two curb cuts from 8th Street. Franklin Street, on the south side of the site, is elevated as part of a bridge crossing over the Metrorail and CSX railroad tracks to the east, beyond 8th Street. There is no access to the subject property from Franklin Street.

Topography of the site generally slopes from west to east.

IV. Application and Project Description

The applicant proposes to construct a five-story self-storage building with approximately 872 individual storage units, including 28 units accessible to people with disabilities. The first floor would include parking and loading within the northern two-thirds of the building; the southern third would be devoted to storage units and accessory office space.



Approximately 3,200 square feet of space in the northeast corner of the first floor of the building, initially proposed to be laid out as parking, is designed with three storefront windows to facilitate its conversion to retail or maker space, should the applicant determine that the market would support retail use along 8th Street in the future.

Pedestrian access to the building would be from 8th Street, providing direct access into the office. To the north of that entrance would be vehicular access to the garage via a twenty-four foot wide entrance from 8th Street. The building would be set back from the north property line to effectively widen the public alley to 28 feet for most of the depth of the property. This would facilitate the egress of vehicles from the building and out onto 8th Street, including fifty-five foot trucks, and provide for two compact parking spaces west of the vehicle entrance. Fresh air would be provided to the garage via six gray metal screens on the north side of the building and a ground floor opening on the west side of the building that would be secured with a black aluminum fence. The self-storage use would consist of 97,919 square feet of gross floor area, and 33 off-street parking spaces, including thirteen that would be compact. One thirty-foot and one 55-foot loading berth would be provided within the garage.

The building would be primarily faced with white insulated metal panels framed with gray metals panels along the edges of the building, with a base of red brick masonry block. White framed aluminum windows would be installed on floors two through five at the corner of 8th Street and Franklin Street, with eight windows per floor facing 8th Street and six per floor facing Franklin. These windows would allow for sunlight to enter the corridors of the building and for pedestrians to see activity within the building. An 18,167 square-foot vegetated green roof would be installed, with most of the remainder of the roof devoted to either condenser units or an elevator override. The building is proposed to be designed to LEED Silver standards.

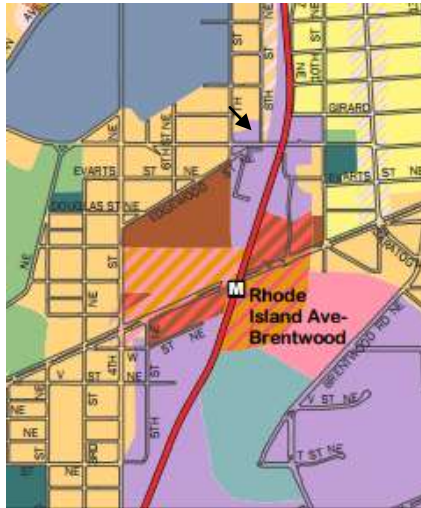
V. Comprehensive Plan

The proposed development would not be inconsistent with the written elements of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Environmental Protection and Economic Development elements, and the Upper Northeast Area Element.

The **Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map**, shown on the next page to the left, located the subject property within the “Production, Distribution, and Repair” land use category, which is defined as areas “*characterized by manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale and distribution centers...*” The proposed building would be primarily devoted to storage use, with the potential to convert the ground floor to commercial use in the future.

The **Generalized Policy Map**, shown on the next page and to the right, identifies the subject property as “Neighborhood Conservation Area.” “*Neighborhood Conservation Areas that are designated for Production, Distribution, and Repair uses on the Future Land Use Map are expected to retain their mix*

industrial, office, and retail uses they have historically provided.” The proposed use would continue the industrial use of this property, previously used for automobile repair.



Future Land Use Map



Generalized Policy Map

The proposal would further the following policies of the Comprehensive Plan:

Environmental Protection Element:

Policy E-1.1.2: Tree Requirements in New Development

Use planning, zoning, and building regulations to ensure that trees are retained and planted when new development occurs, and that dying trees are removed and replaced. If tree planting and landscaping are required as a condition of permit approval, also require provisions for ongoing maintenance. (§ 603.5)

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-5.1.1: Low Impact Development and Green Building Methods for the District

Strongly encourage the use of low impact development (LID) methods and green building design methods and materials in new construction and major rehabilitation projects undertaken by the District of Columbia government. (§ 627.3)

Economic Development

Policy ED-2.5.1: Industrial Land Retention

Retain an adequate supply of industrially zoned land in order to accommodate the production, warehousing, distribution, light industrial, and research and development activities which sustain the local economy, support municipal services, and provide good employment opportunities for District residents. (§ 711.5)

Upper Northeast Element

Policy UNE-1.1.5: Vacant and Abandoned Structures

Reduce the number of vacant, abandoned, and boarded up structures in Upper Northeast, particularly in the Ivy City and Trinidad areas. (§ 2408.6)

VI. Analysis of Compliance with 10 DCMR, Chapter 23, Large Tract Review Procedures

Because this proposal is for the development of a mixed-use building consisting of storage and potentially retail space in the future, it is subject to the submission requirements and review standards of Sections 2301.3 and 2302.1.

- 2301.3 Applicants for commercial and mixed-use commercial development projects of fifty thousand square feet (50,000 ft.²) or more shall submit... the following documents:
- (a) A completed certification form;
Complies.
 - (b) The name, address and signature of all owners, or their authorized agent, and of property included in the area to be developed. If there is an agent, the applicant shall provide written authorization and the extent of the agent's authority;
Complies.
 - (c) A map showing location of the proposed project and the existing zoning of the site;
Complies.
 - (d) A statement indicating the contribution of the project toward implementing city and community goals and policies;
Complies. The applicant's statement indicates the application's contribution toward implementing the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Upper Northeast Area Element.
 - (e) A statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development to the objectives of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital;
Complies. See also Section VI, Comprehensive Plan, below.
 - (f) A general site and development plan, indicating the proposed use, location, dimensions, number of stories and height of building;
Provided. Drawings A0200 and A0201 prepared by the applicant's architect, Butz-Wilbern Ltd, Elevations, depict the building's dimensions, height and number of stories. Dwg. A0002, dated January 22, 2015 indicates the use and location of the building.
 - (g) A general circulation plan, including the location of vehicular and pedestrian access ways, other public space and the location and number of all off-street parking and loading spaces, loading berths and service delivery spaces;
Provided. Attachment B of the transportation study prepared by the applicant's transportation consultant, Wells & Associates and dated February 24, 2015, is a General Circulation Plan depicting the location of off-street parking and loading spaces, and

pedestrian and vehicular access to the building. Drawing A0101, revised February 13, 2015, prepared by Butz-Wilbern Ltd, and titled "1st Flr Plan", also depicts parking, loading and vehicular and pedestrian access to the building.

- (h) A typical floor plan;

Complies. Drawings A0101 through A0105, prepared by Butz-Wilbern Ltd and revised February 13, 2015, depict the floor plans for each level of the building.

- (i) A general statement of the approximate schedule of building construction;

The "Statement of Approximate Construction Schedule" submitted with the application indicates that the applicant anticipates beginning construction at the end of the second quarter of 2015, with construction lasting between eleven and thirteen months.

- (j) Vehicular trip generation, trip assignment and before and after capacity analysis and level of service at critical intersections; and

The transportation study prepared by the applicant transportation consultant, Wells & Associates, dated February 24, 2015, indicated that the number of trips generated by the proposal would be less than the 25 directional trip threshold required by DDOT for a capacity analysis.

- (k) Any other information needed to fully understand the final building proposed for the site.

The application includes elevations of each facade, floor plans of all levels of the building and an architectural site plan of the proposed building.

2302.1 The scope of review to be used by District departments and agencies in assessing projects under this chapter shall include the following:

- (a) Consistency with laws in the District of Columbia, including the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and regulations enacted pursuant thereto;

The proposed self-storage building is in conformance with the Zoning Regulations and the provisions of the C-M-2 district, an industrial zone, and application indicates that no variance or special exception approvals from the Board of Zoning Adjustment would be necessary for its construction. As a storage facility, a use permitted as a matter-of-right within the C-M-2, the development would be consistent with the Production, Distribution and Repair recommendation of the "Future Land Use Map," and would contribute to the site retaining its industrial character as recommended by the "Generalized Policy Map."

As a mixed-use structure capable of being modified to accommodate retail or maker space on the ground floor should market support such uses, the proposed building would create permanent jobs for not only the operation of the self-storage facility, but also may support retail or other service commercial positions in the future.

- (b) Potential traffic, neighborhood and design impact; and

The application included a transportation study dated February 24, 2015. That study concluded that the proposed development would not generate sufficient traffic to require a full traffic impact study by DDOT. The site design would include widening the public alley to the north from twelve to thirty feet for the most of the length of the lot to facilitate

use of the alley and to accommodate 55-foot trucks exiting the building. Although vehicular access to the building would be from 8th Street because large trucks would not be able to navigate the alley to access the building, the number of curb cuts on 8th Street to the subject property would be reduced from two that exist today to one, minimizing pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and improving the pedestrian experience. The building would also include storefront windows on the north end of the building facing 8th Street in support of future retail or service commercial uses on the ground floor of the building. The addition of this building would eliminate a largely asphalt paved property, eliminating a gap in the urban fabric and return the site to active use.

(c) Quality of life and environmental impact.

The applicant informed OP that the building would be designed to LEED Silver standards, and the plans submitted with the application propose an 18,167 square-foot vegetated green roof, which would reduce stormwater runoff from the site. The applicant is encouraged to consider installing vertical shading on the south side of the building facing Franklin Street, and consider the use of solar panels to reduce the demand the building would place on the electric grid.

Redevelopment of this property would return it to active use, potentially creating a deterrent to the dumping that now takes place.

VII. Departmental Responses

Application materials were distributed to the following District departments for review and comment:

- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
- Department of Employment Services (DOES)
- District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
- District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS)
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

In addition to direct meetings between the applicant, OP and DDOT, the Office of Planning hosted an interagency meeting on April 20, 2015 on the application. Agencies in attendance included the following:

- Office of Planning;
- District Department of the Environment;
- District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority; and
- Metropolitan Police Department

District Department of the Environment (DDOE):

At the interagency meeting DDOE suggested the applicant install vertical shading devices on the south side of the building and consider installing solar panels, a potential tax credit opportunity for the applicant.

The applicant agreed to consider the installation of solar panels.

District Department of Transportation (DDOT):

In a memorandum to OP dated April 23, 2015 DDOT concluded:

- The building setback from the public alley on the north side of the property would improve circulation;
- There is no handicapped accessible route from the public sidewalk to the building lobby;
- Applicant should coordinate planned public space improvements with DDOT and OP; and
- The proposed use would not adversely impact the transportation network.

The applicant agreed to coordinate public space improvements with DDOT and OP, and provide a handicapped accessible route from the public sidewalk to the lobby.

Metropolitan Police Department (MPD):

Following the interagency meeting MPD recommended to OP that the applicant provide enhanced exterior lighting and provide closed circuit television monitors.

The applicant agreed to provide the lighting and monitors.

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)

At the interagency meeting DC Water stated that it had no comments.

No other agencies commented on this application.

VIII. Community Review

The Office of Planning provided a copy of the application to:

- ANC 5E;
- Woodridge Interim Library to be made available for review by the public.

Notice of the application was distributed to the following for review and comment:

- Property owners within 200 feet of the site;
- Brookland Neighborhood Association; and

- Edgewood Civic Association.

ANC 5E: The site is located within the boundaries of ANC 5E01. The single member district commissioner for ANC 5E01 informed OP by telephone on May 7, 2015 that the application had been reviewed by the ANC at its regularly scheduled meeting of April 21, 2015, and that the ANC has no issues with the proposed development. The SMD Commissioner indicated that the neighborhood does not currently have a storage facility and looks forward to the retail uses being offered at a discounted rate for start-up businesses for a limited period of time along 8th Street.

Two community residents submitted comments on the proposed development, including:

- The building will not fit into the neighborhood, will overshadow existing development and not conform to the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan;
- The currently vacant site is an attractive location for dumping;
- There should be a commercial or entrepreneurial incubator on the first floor; and
- There should be significant greenery and a building aesthetic that is warm and traditional to the neighborhood.

No other comments were received.

IX. LTR Application Findings

The project proposed by this Large Tract Review Application is generally consistent with the purposes and goals of the LTR regulations, and is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Office of Planning appreciates the applicant's willingness to discuss and address issues, particularly the addition of retail or maker space within the building. OP recommends that the applicant consider the following modifications:

- Install vertical shading devices on the south side of the building and consider installing solar panels, a potential tax credit opportunity for the applicant, and
- Address resident comments by maximizing the plantings of new trees or other vegetation.

The applicant will be required to continue to work with all District agencies to resolve all outstanding issues prior to the issuance of building permits.

cc: Robert Dinkelspiel, 2800 8th Street Partners LLC
Brian McDermott, DCWater
John Boryschuk, DCWater
Jay Wilson, DDOE
Samuel Zimbabwe, DDOT
Essray Taliaferro, MPD

JS/sjm^{AICP}
Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Project Manager

Attachment: Memorandum from DDOT dated April 23, 2015