

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director

DATE: May 30, 2008

SUBJECT: Setdown Report - ZC #08-07 (The Curtis Properties)
Consolidated PUD, First Stage PUD and Related Map Amendment

I. APPLICATION

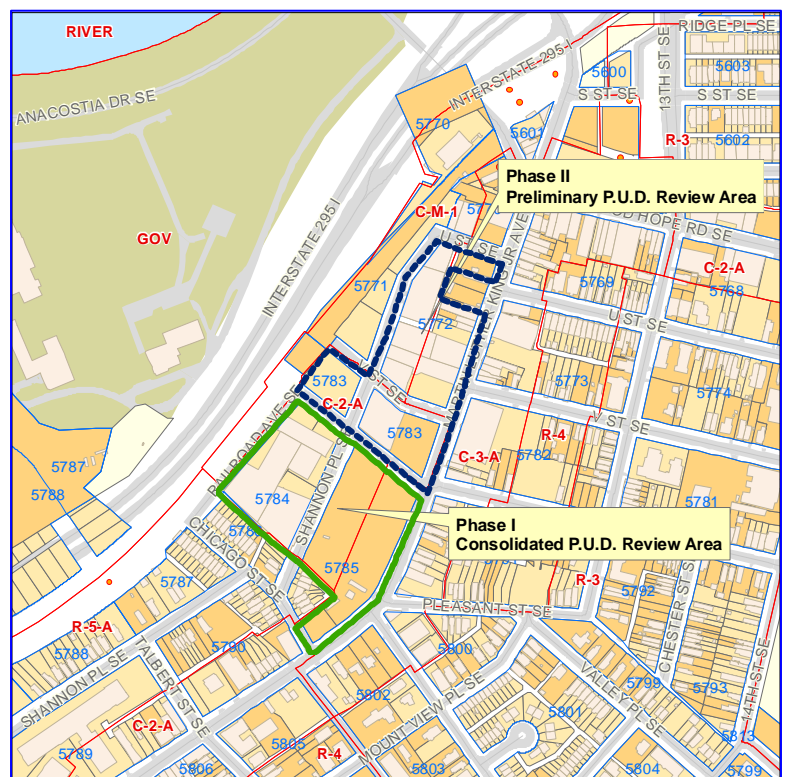
The applicant, Four Points, LLC (applicant) proposes a mixed use development consisting of residential, office and retail uses on the property known as the “Curtis Properties” in Anacostia. The proposal is being reviewed as follows:

1. A Consolidated Planned Unit Development PUD (Phase 1);
2. A First Stage PUD (Phase 2) and;
3. A related map amendment to rezone a portion of the property from the C-2-A and C-M-1 districts to the C-3-A district (portions are currently zoned C-3-A).

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the proposal be setdown for public hearing. The redevelopment would further economic development in a revitalizing Anacostia area and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue corridor. The project includes elements that exceed what could be achieved as a matter-of-right and would help provide the retail corridor anticipated by various plans.

The proposal is not inconsistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan as well, and would further the Anacostia Transit Area Strategic Investment and Development Plan. OP will continue to work with the applicant to resolve the architecture, and recommends that the applicant provide the following prior to the public hearing:



1. Details of how the zoning requirements for each lot are met, with detailed analysis of all zoning relief requested;
2. Justification pursuant to §2405.3 for the 5% increase in non-residential development (FAR of 3.0 permitted; 3.15 proposed);
3. Details of all environmental/green building initiatives proposed;
4. The level of affordability for the proposed affordable units and their location on the floor plans;
5. Details of the flexibility requested for the theoretical lots and a more comprehensive analysis of the theoretical lots against the regulations and standards of §2517.1;
6. Additional detail of the phasing plan, including approximate scheduling and development priorities;
7. Details of the shared parking and loading programs; and
8. Refinement of the architecture, building facades, materials, and landscaping.

III. SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property, located on Square 5772, Lots 827, 829, 831, 880, 984, 1017, and 1019; Square 5783, Lots 829 and 1018; Square 5784, Lots 898-900; and Square 5785, Lots 839 and 906, has a total land area of approximately 340,467 square feet. The site is generally bounded by U Street, SE on the north, Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue on the east, Chicago Street on the south, and the Anacostia Freeway (I-295) on the west. The site topography slopes downward from the southeast boundary at Chicago Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue towards the north and west. The site is currently improved with open off-street parking areas and several warehouse and office buildings.

The site is located in the Anacostia neighborhood of Ward 8 and is zoned C-2-A, C-3-A, and C-M-1¹. The east side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue is zoned C-3-A. Adjacent properties to the south are zoned R-5-A² and C-2-A while properties to the west and north are zoned C-M-1. There is an existing public alley between Shannon Place and Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave. in Square 5772.

Martin Luther King Avenue SE is generally developed with low scale commercial buildings, often with surface parking lots, in this area. Across MLK Avenue SE, to the east, is the lower density historic Anacostia Neighborhood. The neighborhood, however, is seeing new development proposals. To the north-west, across I295, is Poplar Point, currently undeveloped federal land that is being transferred to the District for development of a new mixed use neighborhood with extensive public opens space along the Anacostia River. Planning for development on the Poplar Point site is currently underway; an application to the Zoning Commission, including the establishment of zoning, will be required. Other major area developments include...

¹ The original application described the site as being zoned entirely C-2-A and C-3-A. OP understands that the applicant is filing a correction to note the properties zoned CM1.

² The Zoning Commission recently set down case 08-12, a proposal to rezone certain R5A parcels in Ward 8 to R4, including the properties to the east of the subject site.

IV. ANACOSTIA HISTORIC DISTRICT

A small portion of the site (Square 5772, Lots 827, 829, 831, 880, and 1017) is within the Anacostia Historic District as are properties to the east of the site, across Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. As part of the redevelopment of the site, the buildings that are within the historic district will require review by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB). However, the lots are within Phase 2 of the development and therefore HPRB review will take place at such time.

V. PROPOSAL

The proposal is to redevelop the Curtis Properties as a neighborhood center. The proposal calls for the development to take place in two phases, with the proposed development for the Consolidated and 1st Stage PUD as follows:

Use	Consolidated PUD	1 st Stage PUD	TOTAL
Residential	152,170 square feet	284,900 square feet	437,070 square feet (308 – 335 units)
Office	505,360 square feet	77,500 square feet	166,200 square feet
Retail	88,700 square feet	369,500 square feet	874,860 square feet
Parking	724 spaces	739 spaces	1,463 spaces

Parking spaces for the proposed uses would be provided below grade with provisions also made for on-street parking. In some cases, the below grade parking would serve multiple buildings to promote shared parking and to allow for an overall reduction in the number of parking spaces provided. Similarly, loading facilities would be provided in a manner that buildings with multiple uses can share the facilities and therefore reduce the area dedicated to loading.

Other significant aspects of the development would be:

- The dedication of 5 feet of property along Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue to allow for a wider pedestrian way and on-street parking.
- The relocation of the “Big Chair” from its existing location at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue and V Street to a more prominent location at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue and W Street in an enlarged plaza.
- The widening of W Street by an additional 20 feet to create a 70 foot right-of-way between Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and Railroad Avenue.
- The relocation of V Street through the property to be in line with the V Street right-of-way to the east of the site.
- Lower building heights along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue to be more in scale with those in the adjacent historic district and lower density residential neighborhood.

The applicant has submitted this as a consolidated PUD for the south portion of the site (Phase I of development) and Stage 1 approval of the north end of the site (Phase II of development). As such, the Commission is being asked to consider issues such as zoning, height, density, overall form of development, and use mix for the entire Curtis Properties site, but to consider detailed building and site design for the consolidated (Phase I) portion only. Following is a breakdown of the proposed development for each building in the Consolidated PUD and the 1st Stage PUD.

Consolidated PUD

The applicant is requesting a Consolidated PUD for the southern portion of the site that is generally bounded by Chicago Street to the south, Railroad Avenue to the west, W Street to the north and Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue to the east, and is bisected by Shannon Place. Currently, the area fronting Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue is being used a parking lot for the warehouses on the western portion of the site. Except for the Curtis Furniture warehouse, all of the other buildings would be demolished and redeveloped, as shown on Sheet 19, Illustrative Site Plan, with eight buildings (Buildings 1 thru 8) to house a combination of residential, retail and office uses (see summary table below).

	Use (sq. ft.)			Building Height		Parking	Other
	Retail	Office	Residential	Feet	Stories		
Building 1	11,760	-	49,250 (38-40 units)	55 ft.	5	103 spaces to serve Bldgs. 1, 2 and 3	
Building 2	-	-	10,400 (4 townhouses)	38 ft.	3	Shared parking with Bldgs. 1 and 3	Common access to parking via entrance under Bldg. 1
Building 3	-	-	49,860 (35-38 units)	53 ft.	5	Shared parking with Bldgs. 2 and 3	Affordable units in this building
Building 4	8,320	45,790	-	65 ft.	6	262 spaces. Shared parking with Bldg. 5	
Building 5	22,900	200,980	-	89.5ft.	8	Shared parking with Bldg. 4.	Building set back over 58.5 ft (above the 5 th floor)
Building 6	43,980	201,920	-	90 ft.	8	257 spaces. Shared parking with Bldgs. 7 and 8	Space for possible grocery store
Building 7	1,740	-	42,660 (30-35 units)	68 ft.	4	Shared parking with Bldgs. 6 and 8	
Building 8	-	56,670	-	37 ft.	3	Shared parking with Bldgs. 6 and 7	Existing bldg. to be renovated and converted to office use.

Retail would be concentrated on the ground floor along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and W Street, including a potential grocery store in Building 6. The residential uses would be concentrated on the southern portion of the property and would be of a height and density that is compatible to the existing, adjacent residences

A new private street that goes in an approximately east to west orientation would be introduced to provide internal circulation and to take some of the traffic off Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. It also provides access to residential buildings, a drop of area, and access to the offices in Buildings 4 and 5. This phase of the development would also include the widening of W Street by 20 feet to create short term on-street parking, a pedestrian friendly walkway area, exposure

for the ground floor retail, additional landscaping, and an enlarged plaza area for the “Big Chair”.

Stage 1 PUD

The requested Stage I PUD area (Phase II of the development) is generally bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue to the east, W Street to the south, Railroad Avenue and Shannon Place to the west, and U Street to the north and would house another eight buildings (Buildings 9 – 16) – refer to the table below for the proposed uses.

	Use (sq. ft.)			Building Height		Parking	Other
	Retail	Office	Residential	Feet	Stories		
Building 9	5,700	-	126,000 (88-95 units)	90 ft.	8	80 spaces	To be uses as temporary parking during Phase 1
Building 10	27,200	-	109,900 (75-81 units)	86 ft.	8	280 spaces Shared parking with Bldg.11	Building setback at 65 ft.(above the 6 th floor)
Building 11	21,100	118,200	Included in total for bldg 10	80 ft.	7	Shared parking with Bldg. 10	Building setback at 61.5 ft. (above the 5 th floor)
Building 12	2,300	158,900	-	80 ft.	7	342 spaces. Shared parking with Bldgs. 13 and 14	
Building 13	12,100	52,200	-	58 ft.	5	Shared parking with Bldg. 12 and 14	
Building 14	4,500	22,700	-	58 ft.	5	Shared parking with Bldgs. 12 and 13	Within historic district. Retain façade and renovate building.
Building 15	4,600	17,500	-	45 ft.	4	15 spaces	Within historic district. Retain façade and renovate building.
Building 16	-	-	49,000 (38-42 units)	70 ft.	6	30 spaces	

Similar to the development in Phase I, ground floor retail uses would be concentrated along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and W Street. Buildings 9 and 10 along W Street would complement the development in Phase I with its wide sidewalk, landscaping, short term, on-street parking. The upper levels of the building fronting Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue would also be setback to better relate to the buildings in the historic district.

Also as part of the Phase 2 development, the developer would:

- relocate V Street SE through the site to align with the existing right-of-way location on the other side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue;
- Retain and renovate the facades of buildings 14 and 15, which are in the historic district, and renovate the interior for retail and office uses; and

- Close the existing public alleys on the northern portion of the site and dedicate new alleys to improve circulation. Alley access to properties that are not a part of this development would be maintained.

The property is being developed in two phases and the existing commercial uses in the Phase 2 area would remain in operation during the construction of Phase 1. Currently, some of these uses have parking within the Phase 1 area. Therefore, a temporary surface parking lot would be created and dedicated to occupants of Building 9.

VI. ZONING

The site is currently zoned C-2-A, C-3-A and C-M-1³. The C-2-A district is designed for shopping and business needs, housing, and mixed use development. The C-3-A district permits medium density mixed use development. The C-M-1 district is intended for heavy commercial and light manufacturing activities that employ large number of persons and specifically prohibit residential use. The applicant proposes to rezone the C-2-A and the C-M-1 portions of the site to C-3-A, and develop the site utilizing the PUD standards.

Existing zoning would permit approximately 1 million square feet of development on the Curtis Properties; about 675,000 square feet could be non-residential. The following table is a comparison of the C-2-A, C-M-1, C-3-A and the C-3-A/PUD standards and the development proposal for the project:

³ The original application described the site as being zoned entirely C-2-A and C-3-A. OP understands that the applicant is filing a correction to note that some properties are currently zoned CM1.

	C-2-A Standards	C-M-1 Standards	C-3-A Standards	C-3-A PUD	Proposal
Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	15,000 sq. ft.	329,924 total 189,077 – Phase I 140,847 – Phase II
Height	50 ft	40 ft/3 stories	65 ft.	130 ft.	Ranges from 38' to 90'
FAR	2.5 (total) (1.5 for non residential use)	3.0 (residential use not permitted)	4.0 (2.5 for non-residential use)	4.5 (3.0 for non-resid'l) = 1,484,658 sq.ft. max 989,772 sq.ft. non-res'l max.	4.5 for entire site (3.0 for non-residential uses): 1.32 (437,070 sq.ft.) res'l 3.16 (1,041,060 sq.ft.) non-res'l 4.48 (1,478,130 sq.ft.) total 3.95 in Phase I 5.24 in Phase II
Lot Occupancy	60% for residential 100% for commercial	N/A	75% for residential 100% for commercial	75% for residential 100% for commercial	Overall – 80% 70% - Phase I 92% - Phase II
Rear Yard	15 feet	2.5 in./ft. of height or 12 feet, whichever is greater	2.5 in./ft. of height or 12 feet, whichever is greater	2.5 in./ft. of height or 12 feet, whichever is greater	Varies throughout
Side Yard	If provided, must be a min. of 2 in./ft. of height or 6 feet, whichever is greater	3 in./ft of height or 8 ft., whichever is greater - <u>only when abutting Res. district</u>	If provided, must be a min. of 2 in./ft. of height or 6 feet, whichever is greater	If provided, must be a min. of 2 in./ft. of height or 6 feet, whichever is greater	Varies throughout
Open Court	4 inches per foot of height	4 inches per foot of height	4 inches per foot of height	4 inches per foot of height	Varies
Parking	<u>Residential:</u> 1 per 2 du <u>Retail:</u> In excess of 3,000 sq.ft, 1 per 300 sq.ft of gfa and cellar area. <u>Office:</u> In excess of 2K; 1 per 600 sq.ft, of GFA and cellar area	<u>Retail:</u> In excess of 3,000 sq. ft., 1 per 300 sq.ft of gfa and cellar area. <u>Office:</u> In excess of 2K ss. Ft, 1 per 800 sq. ft. GFA and cellar area	<u>Residential:</u> 1 per 2 du <u>Retail:</u> In excess of 3,000 sq.ft, 1 per 300 sq.ft of gfa and cellar area. <u>Office:</u> In excess of 2K; 1 per 600 sq.ft, of GFA and cellar area	<u>Residential:</u> 1 per 2 du <u>Retail:</u> In excess of 3,000 sq.ft, 1 per 300 sq.ft of gfa and cellar area. <u>Office:</u> In excess of 2K; 1 per 600 sq.ft, of GFA and cellar area	Total Required = 2,108 Total Proposed = 1,463 724 – Phase I 739 – Phase II
Loading	<u>Residential:</u> 1 loading berth @ 55 ft. 1 loading platform @ 200 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Retail:</u> 2 loading berths: 1 @ 30 ft. + 1 @ 55 ft 2 loading platforms: 1 @ 100 sq. ft + 1 @ 200 sq. ft. 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Office:</u> 3 loading berths @ 30 ft; 3 loading platforms @ 100 sq. ft.; and 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	<u>Residential:</u> 1 loading berth @ 55 ft. 1 loading platform @ 200 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Retail:</u> 2 loading berths: 1 @ 30 ft. + 1 @ 55 ft 2 loading platforms: 1 @ 100 sq. ft + 1 @ 200 sq. ft. 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Office:</u> 3 loading berths @ 30 ft; 3 loading platforms @ 100 sq. ft.; and 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	<u>Residential:</u> 1 loading berth @ 55 ft. 1 loading platform @ 200 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Retail:</u> 2 loading berths: 1 @ 30 ft. + 1 @ 55 ft 2 loading platforms: 1 @ 100 sq. ft + 1 @ 200 sq. ft. 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Office:</u> 3 loading berths @ 30 ft; 3 loading platforms @ 100 sq. ft.; and 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	<u>Residential:</u> 1 loading berth @ 55 ft. 1 loading platform @ 200 sq. ft 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Retail:</u> 2 loading berths: 1 @ 30 ft. + 1 @ 55 ft 2 loading platforms: 1 @ 100 sq. ft + 1 @ 200 sq. ft. 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft. <u>Office:</u> 3 loading berths @ 30 ft; 3 loading platforms @ 100 sq. ft.; and 1 service/delivery space @ 20 ft.	<u>Total Required:</u> <u>Berths</u> 15 @ 30 ft., 3 @ 55 ft. <u>Platforms</u> Info not provided <u>Service/Delivery Spaces</u> Phase I – 6 spaces Phase II – 5 spaces <u>Total Proposed:</u> <u>Berths</u> 8 @ 30 ft., 4 @ 55 ft. <u>Platforms</u> 3 @ 300 sq. ft., 5 @ 200 sq. ft., 3 @ 100 sq. ft. <u>Service/Delivery Spaces</u> Phase I – 7 spaces Phase II – 6 spaces

* Information provided by the applicant. There were minor discrepancies in the application; some of which OP understands the applicant intends to rectify in an additional filing prior to setdown. OP will continue to work with the applicant to rectify any remaining inconsistencies and to identify all zoning regulation relief required. A more detailed breakdown and analysis of the zoning requirements for each building would be provided as part of the analysis for the final report.

VII. FLEXIBILITY

As seen on the table above, there are areas where the proposal does not meet the zoning requirements and the applicant is requesting flexibility.

Roof Structure

As shown on Sheet 25, Roof Plan, a number of the buildings would not meet the requirement of Section 411 that all roof structures should be within one enclosure and setback a distance equal to the height from the exterior walls. Details of the Phase 1 roof structures on Sheets 53 and 54 show that Buildings 5 and 6 have multiple structures that are not within a single enclosure, while the roof structures on Buildings 1 and 3 are not setback a distance equal to the height from an exterior wall. The multiple structures result from the mix of uses and the desire to minimize the massing on the roof. The reduction in the required setback is the result of constrained building width and the internal configuration of the buildings. The proposed deviations would not impact the light and air of adjacent building as the structures have been designed to limit visibility. The roof structure requirements for Buildings 9 to 16 would be analyzed at the Stage 2 PUD review.

Rear Yard

Building 9 does not have a rear yard and therefore flexibility is required. The reason for this deviation was not described in the applicant's submission, and should therefore be addressed in the applicant's pre-hearing statement.

Lot Occupancy

The overall lot occupancy for the consolidated PUD is 70%. However, Buildings 6 and 8 exceeds the maximum permitted lot occupancy of 75%. Phase 2 development has a lot occupancy of 92% with a number of buildings over the maximum 75%. The overall development would be at 80% lot occupancy. The applicant should provide an analysis of the lot occupancy relief needed in their pre-hearing statement.

Parking and Loading

The applicant has requested a reduction in the number of parking spaces. The overall development would require a total of more than 2,100 spaces. However, the applicant is requesting relief to provide a total of 1,463 spaces. Currently, traffic and parking in the area are problematic. The applicant asserts that the proposed number of spaces would be adequate to serve the development while minimizing traffic impacts on surrounding streets. All of the required parking would be underground in a number of parking garages serving multiple buildings and uses. OP has requested that the applicant provided a more detailed analysis of the shared parking program.

Concurrent with the reduction in parking would be improved pedestrian ways, bicycle parking, and encouragement of transit use. The Anacostia Metro Station is within walking distance of the development and metro buses travel along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue. Additional discussions with DDOT and OP, prior to the hearing, regarding the overall traffic and parking management program is encouraged.

The applicant is also requesting a reduction in the loading requirements. Many of the buildings have multiple uses which can feasibly utilize the loading facilities at different times, and therefore appropriate arrangements can be made for sharing the loading facilities.

OP is generally supportive of reduced parking and loading facilities on the site if the applicant, the community, and DDOT determine that no adverse impacts would accrue to the immediate neighborhood.

Multiple Buildings on a Single Lot

Building 2 and Building 3 are located on one lot that would be divided into two theoretical lots that need to meet the requirements of Section 2517.1. However, the theoretical lots would not meet all of these requirements as they are within 25 feet of a residence district, and due to design and massing features, the new private street, and the desire to provide open space. OP supports the spatial development as proposed, since it breaks up the massing on both lots, and provides open space for light and air to the buildings. Therefore, multiple buildings on the subject lots are preferred to massive, denser structures which are not ideal to accommodate the varied uses. However, a more comprehensive review by the applicant of the proposal against the requirements and standards of §2517.1 is needed prior to the public hearing.

Phasing of the development

Sheet 12, Phasing and Staging Plan, indicates that the proposal would be developed in two phases, i.e., the Consolidated PUD portion, Stage 1 and the Preliminary PUD, Stage 2. The application indicates the project would be phased but it does not include the phasing priorities of various elements of the proposal. OP expects the applicant to provide additional information, which may include approximate scheduling and development priorities. While OP does not object to phasing, OP believes this information is important in addressing expectations regarding the site's redevelopment.

Variation in the number of residential units

The application proposes a range of 308 to 335 units for the total development. OP has no objection to potential changes in the number of units or in the unit assignments of the development, on condition that affordable units would continue to be provided according to the inclusionary zone standards anticipated by Chapter 26, 11 DCMR at a minimum.

VIII. PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. Section 2400.1 states that a PUD is “designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.” In order to maximize the use of the site consistent with the zoning regulations and to utilize opportunities for additional FAR the applicant is requesting that the proposal be reviewed as a consolidated PUD. This would allow the utilization of the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2.

The overall goal is to permit flexibility of development ands other incentives, such as increased building height and density; provided, that the project offers a commendable number of quality public benefits and that it protects and advances the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience.”

Section 2403 further outlines the standards under which the application is evaluated.

2403.3 *The impact of the project on the surrounding area and the operation of city services and facilities shall not be found to 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.*

IX. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

The objectives of a PUD are to permit flexibility of development in return for the provision of superior public benefits, provided the PUD process is not used to circumvent the intent and purposes of the Zoning Regulations, or results in an action inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Public amenities are defined in Section 2407.3 as including “one type of public benefit, specifically a functional or aesthetic feature of the proposed development that adds to the attractiveness, convenience or comfort of the project for occupants and immediate neighbors”.

The proposed redevelopment targets an under-utilized site in an important emerging mixed-use corridor. The amenity package evaluation is partially based on an assessment of the additional development gained through the application process. The proposal requests a PUD related change in the zone designation to C-3-A to permit a 4.5 FAR and to utilize the height benefit permitted by the C-3-A zone on the portions of the site that are closer to the freeway. OP estimates the following density and height increases would be achieved through this PUD:

	Existing Zoning ⁴	Proposal	Difference
Total square footage	1,029,000 sq.ft.	1,478,030 sq.ft.	449,130 sq.ft.
Non-residential square footage	675,000 sq.ft.	1,041,060 sq.ft.	366,060 sq.ft.
Height	40 to 65 ft. max.	38' to 90'	varies, up to about 40 ft.

In addition, the proposed rezoning of a portion of the property from C-M-1 to C-3-A permits a broader range of uses on those lots, including residential development.

The applicant has listed a number of areas which they feel contribute towards their amenity package:

Urban Design, Architecture and Site Planning

The site’s design with multiple buildings varies in its architectural expressions and scale. As stated in the plans, the buildings along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue are intended to relate to the historical context of the buildings in the historic district, and to create storefronts on the lower floors. The heights of the building along the corridor have been lowered with the upper floors significantly set back.

The buildings fronting on Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue would be a mixture of brick veneer and aluminum to be compatible with the historic district. However, the building style and materials would become more contemporary as one moves towards the western portion of the site. The applicant has requested flexibility to vary the materials at final design and OP will

⁴ Exact square footages are difficult as some of the existing properties are split zoned.

continue to work with the applicant to refine and improve the design and materials of the buildings.

The improvement to and the dedication of land for public right-of-way would lead to a significant improvement in pedestrian circulation and vehicular traffic around and through the site. The applicant has met with DDOT at through a preliminary design review meeting (PDRM) and will continue to have discussions regarding the public realm elements of the proposed development.

Housing

As part of the overall development, the applicant is proposing 8 percent or 36 units to be dedicated to affordable housing. The applicant did not specify at what level of AMI the proposed affordable units would be – clarification of this item, including the AMI level, the location of affordable units is needed prior to a public hearing. OP further notes that the Zoning Commission has approved an inclusionary housing (IZ) program, although this program is not yet in effect. The affordable housing proposed on this site would be expected to meet or exceed those requirements.

Retail

The provision of new retail space would improve the urban fabric and increase pedestrian activity to create a livelier and inviting streetscape experience for residents and visitors to the site. New retail, especially a grocery store, would be of benefit to the new residents and the surrounding neighborhood. OP will continue to work with the applicant to clarify the retail provision. The proposals to provide new retail opportunities, particularly along MLK Jr. Avenue SE, and to improve the pedestrian experience along that important neighborhood street, would be consistent with plans to improve MLK Avenue SE as an important neighborhood retail corridor.

Local Business Opportunities and First Source Agreements

By entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the District of Columbia Local Business Opportunity Commission, the applicant agrees to include participation by small, local and disadvantaged businesses in the contracted development costs in connection with the design development, construction, maintenance and security of the project.

By working with the Department of Employment Services, the applicant will agree to use DOES as its first source for recruitment, referral and placement of new hires for employees whose jobs are created by the PUD and would hire fifty-one (51) percent of District's residents for all new jobs in connection with the project construction.

Additional Considerations: Green Elements and Transportation Demand Management

The developer proposes to include a number of environmentally sensitive elements including alternative energy sources, methods to reduce stormwater runoff, green engineering, and green roofs. Bike parking spaces would also be included along in the parking garages as well as along the sidewalks. Potential for a car-share parking space on-site and transportation demand management strategies (TDM) to reduce the reliance on car ownership and automobile use in the neighborhood should also be considered and discussed with DDOT.

The applicant has submitted a LEED for New Construction (NC) checklist for each building within Phase 1 (Sheets 59-67). OP is very supportive of this initiative; additional detail of the proposed sustainable and traffic management features of the development are needed prior to the public hearing.

X. 2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposal is not inconsistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use and Generalized Policy maps. The Future Land Use Map designates portions of the site for moderate density residential and mixed moderate density commercial / medium density residential. The portions of the site currently zoned C-M-1 are no longer designated for industrial uses – land use change is anticipated. The portion of the site with frontage along Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue is further identified in the 2006 Generalized Policy Map as a Commercial Mixed Use Area, specifically a Main Street Mixed Use Corridor, described as *“Traditional commercial business corridors with a concentration of older storefronts along the street....they have a pedestrian oriented environment with traditional storefronts. Many have upper story residential or office uses. Conservation and enhancement of these corridors is desired to foster economic and housing opportunities and serve neighborhood needs. Any development or redevelopment that occurs should support transit use and enhance the pedestrian environment.”*

The proposed development also meets or furthers many of the policies of the Comprehensive Plan as outlined below.

Chapter 3 - Land Use Element

Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development

Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern.

Policy LU-1.4.2: Long-Term Vacant Sites

Facilitate the reuse of vacant lots that have historically been difficult to develop due to infrastructure or access problems, inadequate lot dimensions, fragmented or absentee ownership, or other constraints. Explore lot consolidation, acquisition, and other measures which would address these constraints.

Policy LU-2.1.3: Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods

Recognize the importance of balancing goals to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with parallel goals to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment. The overarching goal to “create successful neighborhoods” in all parts of the city requires an emphasis on conservation in some neighborhoods and revitalization in others.

Policy LU-2.4.1: Promotion of Commercial Centers

Promote the vitality of the District’s commercial centers and provide for the continued growth of commercial land uses to meet the needs of District residents, expand employment opportunities for District residents, and sustain the city’s role as the center of the metropolitan area. Commercial centers should be inviting and attractive places, and should support social interaction and ease of access for nearby residents.

Policy LU-2.4.5: Encouraging Nodal Development

Discourage auto-oriented commercial “strip” development and instead encourage pedestrian-oriented “nodes” of commercial development at key locations along major corridors. Zoning and design standards should ensure that the height, mass, and scale of development within nodes respects the integrity and character of surrounding residential areas and does not unreasonably impact them.

Policy LU-2.4.6: Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses

Ensure that new uses within commercial districts are developed at a height, mass, scale and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas.

Policy LU-3.1.2: Redevelopment of Obsolete Industrial Uses

Encourage the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive industrial sites, such as vacant warehouses and open storage yards, with higher value production, distribution, and repair uses and other activities which support the core sectors of the District economy (federal government, hospitality, higher education, etc.).

Chapter 5 - Housing Element

Policy 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.

Action H-1.1.A: Rezoning of Marginal Commercial Land

Perform an evaluation of commercially zoned land in the District, focusing on the “Great Streets” corridors, other arterial streets, and scattered small commercially-zoned pockets of land which no longer contain active commercial land uses. The evaluation should consider the feasibility of rezoning some of these areas from commercial to residential districts, in order to ensure their future development with housing.

Policy H-1.2.3: Mixed Income Housing

Focus investment strategies and affordable housing programs to distribute mixed income housing more equitably across the entire city, taking steps to avoid further concentration of poverty within areas of the city that already have substantial affordable housing.

Chapter 6 - Economic Development Element

Policy ED-2.1.5: Infill and Renovation

Support the continued growth of the office sector through infill and renovation within established commercial districts to more efficiently use available space while providing additional opportunities for new space.

Policy ED-2.2.3: Neighborhood Shopping

Create additional shopping opportunities in Washington’s neighborhood commercial districts to better meet the demand for basic goods and services. Reuse of vacant buildings in these districts should be encouraged, along with appropriately-scaled retail infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Promote the creation of locally-owned, non-chain establishments because of their role in creating unique shopping experiences.

Policy ED-2.2.6: Grocery Stores and Supermarkets

Promote the development of new grocery stores and supermarkets, particularly in neighborhoods where residents currently travel long distances for food and other shopping services. Because such uses inherently require greater depth and lot area than is present in many commercial districts, adjustments to current zoning standards to accommodate these uses should be considered.

Chapter 9 - Urban Design Element

Policy 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.

Chapter 18 - Far Southeast and Southwest Area Element

Policy FSS-1.1.7: Retail Development

Support additional retail development within the Far Southeast/Southwest, especially in Historic Anacostia, and in the neighborhood centers at Malcolm X/Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and South Capitol/Atlantic. Projects which combine upper story housing or offices and ground floor retail are particularly encouraged in these three locations.

Policy FSS-1.1.8: Supermarkets and Services

Attract additional supermarkets, family-style restaurants, full-service gas stations, and general merchandise stores to the Far Southeast/Southwest. The area's larger commercial sites should be marketed to potential investors, and economic and regulatory incentives should be used to attract business. The upgrading and renovation of the area's existing auto-oriented shopping centers is strongly encouraged.

Policy FSS-2.1.1: Historic Anacostia Revitalization

Encourage the continued revitalization of Historic Anacostia as a safe, walkable, and attractive neighborhood, with restored historic buildings and compatible, well-designed mixed use projects. New development should serve a variety of income groups and household types and should restore needed retail services to the community.

The proposal would also further specific goals and objectives of the **ANACOSTIA TRANSIT AREA - Strategic Investment and Development Plan**:

Planning Principles:

- 3. Strengthen Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue***
Strengthen the Martin Luther King Jr. corridor by restoring two-way traffic, locating active retail uses at the ground floor along the sidewalk's edge, improve pedestrian quality and streetscape elements and attract additional retail to the corridor.

The proposed development would have ground floor retail uses along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue and has dedicated property to widen the sidewalk in order to accommodate pedestrian movements and provide additional landscaping. As part of the development, the applicant is proposed the restoration of two-way traffic along Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue.

W Street Node:

W Street is a critical crossroad as the link from the commercial main street to the historic heart of Anacostia – Cedar Hill, the home of legendary abolitionist and editor Fredrick Douglass. An extended W Street reaches beyond a future light rail station and across the highway to provide a prominent link into the new Poplar Point Park and the expanded amenities there. The node is a transition between the retail center at the gateway and the transportation hub of the Metro station. It offers new and diverse housing options including condominiums, apartments, restored historic homes, artist studios, and live-work units complementing the existing office resources. Studios and workshops for artists, architects, authors and others drawn and inspired by the area's rich heritage are accommodated in new and former light industrial spaces. Groceries and national retailers line the sidewalk edge bookending and supporting the diverse boutique offerings of the main street district against additional anchor retail at the gateway site. Enhanced public space around the Big Chair provides an important community gathering place and highlights the importance of this historic crossroad. The current expansive parking lot of Curtis Properties' is redeveloped as a mixed-use development including national retailers and a number of upper floor residential units with commanding views of the Washington skyline.

The proposed development includes the W Street node and would include many of the elements articulated above.

Curtis Properties Site(s):

Curtis Properties controls a number of sites between U Street and Chicago Street along the Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue main street. Added together, roughly 3.2 acres of these sites are currently used as surface parking. Redevelopment, possible under current zoning, could accommodate a number of new market-rate housing units above larger floor-plate retail spaces attractive to national retail chains and/or grocers. Substantial parking for the area as a whole could also be accommodated in above-grade structured parking located along the rail tracks. Two different scenarios demonstrating alternate physical configurations of the sites yield similar products –between 200 and 230 market-rate residential or live-work units and 63,000 – 66,000 square feet of ground floor retail space – enough for a moderate sized grocery store and several anchor retailers. A highlight of the site is a new and enhanced public space showcasing the Big Chair and providing places for residents, shoppers, and workers on lunch break to sit and gather, play chess, or just people watch in the busy center.

The proposal highlights the development envisioned above and is consistent with these recommendations.

XI. AGENCY COMMENTS

The application will be referred to the following agencies for comments:

1. District Department of Transportation;
2. Metropolitan Police Department;
3. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department;
4. Department of Public Works, Tree and Landscape Division;
5. District of Columbia Public Schools.
6. District Department of the Environment.

XII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The property is within ANC 8A and will be submitted to them for formal review and recommendation. The applicant has indicated to OP that they have had preliminary discussions with the ANC.

XIII. RECOMMENDATION

OP concludes that the redevelopment proposal for the site would be of benefit to the District and to the immediate neighborhood. It would further economic development in revitalizing Anacostia and on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue corridor. The project includes elements that be an improvement over what could be achieved as a matter-of-right, including the placement of all parking below ground; the relocation of the “Big Chair” in a more appropriate setting; the provision of affordable housing; the provision of new retail, including space for a possible grocery store; the dedication of land for the widening of W Street; the introduction of a new private street to better serve site development and to create multiple active street frontages; and achieving the Main Street retail corridor anticipated by various plans.

The proposal is not inconsistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use and Policy maps, and furthers many important policies for the Anacostia area. The proposal also would further the Anacostia Transit Area, Strategic Investment and Development Plan

OP recommends that the Commission setdown the requested proposal for a public hearing. Op will continue to work with the applicant and other District agencies to ensure coordination of this PUD with other area planning initiative, including those for Poplar Point, and to ensure that the following issues are more fully addressed by the applicant prior to the public hearing:

1. Details of how the zoning requirements for each lot are met, with detailed analysis of all zoning relief requested;
2. Justification pursuant to §2405.3 for the 5% increase in non-residential development (FAR of 3.0 permitted; 3.15 proposed);
3. Details of all environmental / green building initiatives proposed;
4. The level of affordability for the proposed affordable units and their location on the floor plans;
5. Details of the flexibility requested for the theoretical lots and a more comprehensive analysis of the theoretical lots against the regulations and standards of §2517.1;
6. Additional detail of the phasing plan, including approximate scheduling and development priorities;
7. Details of the shared parking and loading programs; and
8. Refinement of the architecture, building facades, materials, and landscaping.