

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



Memorandum

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director

DATE: November 14, 2008

SUBJECT: ZC 08-13 – Marriott Marquis Hotel (Public Hearing Report)

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) **recommends** that the Zoning Commission **approve** the requested consolidated planned unit development and related map amendment subject to clarification of all building features that exceed the 130' height limit, including the height of the proposed mechanical penthouses and glass dome. The proposed project would further an economic development priority of the District by creating a convention center hotel to support the Washington Convention Center. The site has been designated for a convention center hotel for several years, as evidenced by policies and recommendations found within the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and the adoption of the Convention Center Hotel Omnibus Financing and Development Act of 2006. This Act authorized the lease of certain lots in Squares 369 and 370 by the District to a private development team led by Marriott International, Inc., and approved tax increment financing to support the development of the hotel. The Act was later amended to limit the hotel development to be on lots located in Square 370.

PROPOSAL

The applicant, Marriott International, Inc., on behalf of the Washington Convention Center Authority and the District of Columbia, requests approval of a convention center hotel via a consolidated planned unit development in Square 370 in the northwest quadrant of the city. The applicant also requests a PUD-related map amendment to rezone several lots within this square from DD/C-2-C to DD/C-3-C. The applicant proposes to construct a Marriott Marquis hotel across the street from the Washington Convention Center. Finally, the applicant requests approval of the use of public air space in the 9th Street, L Street, and Massachusetts Ave, NW rights of way. This project will require the use of public space above and below grade within these three public streets as well as the closing of an existing public alley currently accessed from 9th Street.

Major components of the project include:

- 1,166 guest rooms in 13 above-ground floors
- Adaptive reuse of the historic Plumbers' building
- 400 valet underground parking spaces
- 100,000 square feet of meeting room space
- 5 ground-level eating establishments including a specialty restaurant, main hotel restaurant, "corner bar", sports bar and grill, and a coffee shop

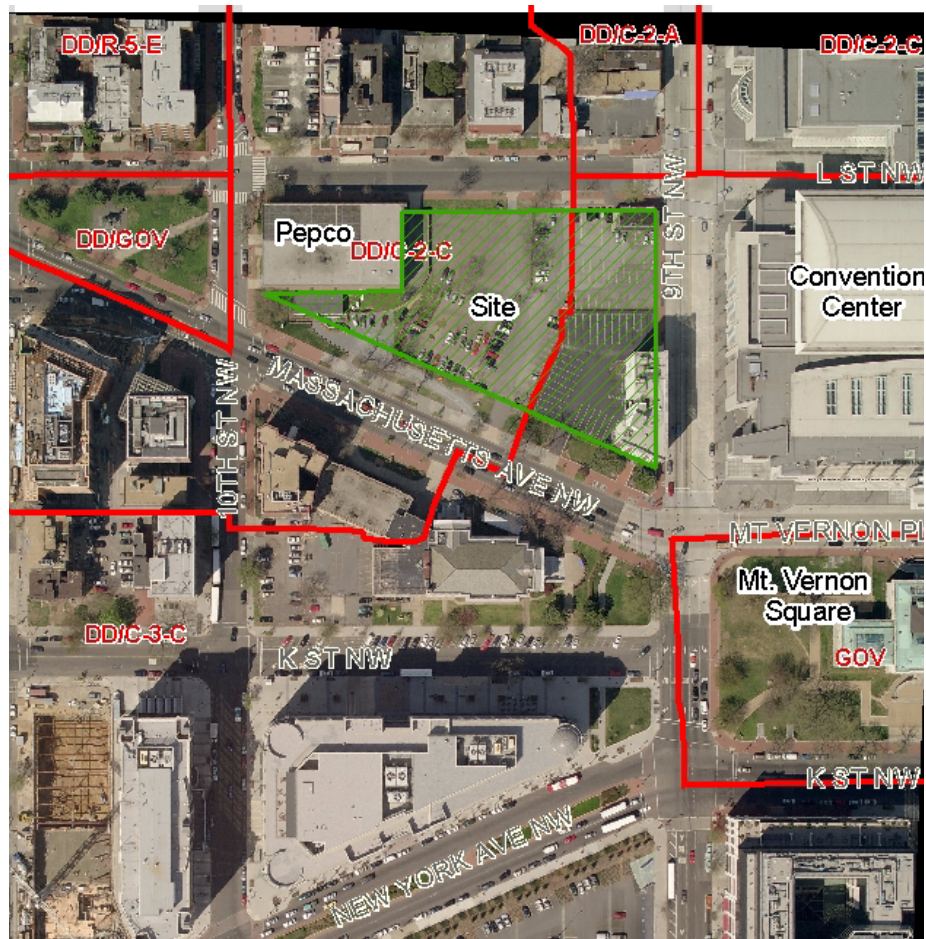
- Underground pedestrian connection to the Washington Convention Center at the ballroom level
- Shared loading access with the convention center

The Office of Planning finds that the proposed PUD and related map amendment are **not inconsistent** with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The subject property is located in Square 370 which is bounded by Massachusetts Avenue, NW on the south, L Street, NW on the north, 9th Street, NW on the east, and 10th Street, NW on the west. The property is located north of Mt. Vernon Square and immediately west of the Washington Convention Center. The site is located within the DD/C-2-C and DD/C-3-C zone districts and is approximately 82,888 square feet.

As shown in the map to the right, the property is improved with a 7-story office building and surface parking lots. The existing building is a historic structure, the American Federation of Labor Building (“Plumbers’ Building”), which will be preserved and reused as part of this proposal. A Pepco substation occupies the northwest corner of the subject square and is not a part of this development proposal. A mix of high-density residential, office, and retail uses are located in the area immediately surrounding the site. A triangle park is located to the immediate west of the site. Neighboring zone districts a DD/C-2-A district to the north along 9th Street and a DD/R-5-E district to the north and west along 10th Street.



ZONING

The subject property is currently located within two zone districts. Within Square 370, lots 801-806, 830-836, 843, and 845 are zoned DD/C-2-C and are the subject of the requested map amendment. The remaining lots are already located in the DD/C-3-C District. The C-2-C and C-3-C districts are commercial districts that indicate high density mixed-use areas. The C-3-C District accommodates major business and employment centers and provides substantial amounts of employment, housing, and

mixed uses. The DD Downtown Development Overlay District is designed to create a balanced mixture of retail, hotel, residential, entertainment, arts, and cultural uses in the downtown core. The applicant is requesting a PUD-related map amendment to place the entire property within the DD/C-3-C district. A comparison of the regulations of the existing and proposed zone districts and the planned unit development standards relevant to this site are provided in the table below.

	<i>DD/C-2-C</i>	<i>DD/C-3-C</i>	<i>PUD Standards</i>	<i>Proposal</i>
<i>Maximum Lot Occupancy</i>	80%	100%	-	-
<i>Maximum Building Height</i>	90'	90'	130'	130'
<i>Maximum FAR-residential</i>	8.0	9.5	8.0	n/a
<i>Maximum FAR-non-residential</i>	4.5	6.5	8.0	9.3

In addition, a text amendment (ZC 08-05) was recently approved by the Zoning Commission to allow additional flexibility than currently exists within the planned unit development regulations that affect this site. The PUD regulations do not permit the same levels of density and height as provided for in the DD overlay. The amendment allows the Zoning Commission to grant increases in floor area ratio and building height in excess of 5%.

MODIFICATIONS SINCE SETDOWN

The applicant has made some changes to the project since the initial setdown. Many of the changes were in response to concerns and issues raised by the Office of Planning, DDOT, or other District agencies. These changes are as follows:

- ❖ Increase in the number of hotel rooms. The original proposal was for a range between 1,125 - 1,150 hotel rooms. The applicant has revised their floor plans slightly and to include a total of 1,166 guest rooms. The applicant now requests a range between 1,150 and 1,182 rooms.
- ❖ Changes to front entry. The current design includes a modified porte-cochere and entry driveway that have been reduced in size to create a more pedestrian friendly experience along Massachusetts Avenue. The driveway has been reduced in width from 27' to 20' at the entrance and exit and the porte-cochere has been reduced from 30' to 24' wide. As a result, the applicant has been able to create additional opportunities for green space, wider sidewalks, tree plantings, and sidewalk café areas along the Massachusetts Avenue frontage.
- ❖ Design changes. The project design has continued to develop since the initial setdown with the input of a variety of stakeholders and District agencies. Design changes include the addition of a dome feature at the top of the building, refinement of the building facades to complement the existing Plumber's Building, and a reconfiguration of meeting room and amenity space to accommodate additional guest rooms. The current proposal also more clearly defines the underground pedestrian connection between the proposed hotel and convention center, which would take place at the ballroom level in the middle of the block along 9th street.

- ❖ Mechanical penthouse and dome height. The revised drawings, dated 11-03-2008, include a new glass dome that ranges in height from 148’6” at the west edge to 160’ at the east edge. However, the section drawing (see page A-004) does not accurately reflect the proposed maximum height of this feature. In addition, the mechanical penthouses, in some places, appear to extend beyond the 148’6” maximum height allowed (see page A-302). OP has asked for clarification of the apparent inconsistencies in the drawings as well as additional information on the penthouse, dome, and any other building elements that exceed 130’ in height. Finally, OP also has questions about the height of the proposed convention center hotel as compared to that of the existing convention center building across the street. While we recognize and are supportive of the design changes and improvements that have been made thus far, OP would like to stress that these features should not detract from the prominence of the Washington Convention Center as the major civic building along this corridor.

PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

On July 28, 2008, the applicant requested joint approval of the PUD, related map amendment, and air space development for the proposed project. As a result, the applicant has submitted a draft lease agreement for the rental of public space as an addendum to this request. The proposed project includes seven levels of underground improvements and the use of public space underneath 9th Street, L Street, and Massachusetts Avenue, NW. Usage of public space is requested for a variety of functions including meeting room and ballroom space, an underground pedestrian passage to the Convention Center, and parking and loading facilities. Proposed above ground public space improvements include the driveway, porte cochere, sidewalk café areas, and landscaping features. Under a separate process, the applicant has also requested the closure of an existing public alley. The alley is accessed from 9th street and dead-ends towards the center of the square. The alley currently serves the existing private parking lot on the site.

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.”

FLEXIBILITY

Due to a recently adopted text amendment (ZC 08-05), the Zoning Commission may grant the project zoning relief to allow a building height and floor area ratio that exceeds the 5% increase normally available for planned unit developments.

Floor Area Ratio

The proposed development would have a FAR of 9.3 or 1.3 FAR above the 8.0 FAR permitted in a C-3-C/PUD and 2.8 FAR above the 6.5 matter-of-right density. Section 2405.3 grants the Commission the authority to increase in the FAR for a convention center hotel on Square 370, provided that the increase is “essential to the successful functioning of the project” and meets PUD evaluation standards.

The requested increase of FAR will allow for the development of the amenities needed to provide a successful convention center hotel. This includes 1,166 guest rooms, 100,000 square feet of meeting and assembly space, and ground level retail. The permitted FAR in the DD/C-3-C district is 9.5 for residential uses and 8.0 for non-residential uses.

Building Height

The applicant proposes a maximum height of 130 feet with an additional 18.5 feet for mechanical structures that are setback a minimum of 18.5 feet from the exterior walls. A maximum height of 90 feet is allowed as a matter-of-right in the DD/C-3-C District. The additional height requested is consistent with the 130 feet maximum height allowed for a PUD in the C-3-C zone district.

In addition to those listed above, the applicant is requesting flexibility for the following:

Location of interior components and parking levels

The applicant would like to be able to vary the location and design of interior components (e.g., including doors, hallways, and mechanical rooms) of the project that do not affect the exterior appearance or design of the building. The applicant also requests flexibility to alter the parking location and arrangement to provide valet parking for the entire development. OP does not object to flexibility being granted for this purpose so long as the location of the off-street parking area remains below grade.

Exterior appearance and building materials

The applicant also requests flexibility to vary the final building materials and colors within a proposed range, in order to account for the availability of materials at the time of construction. This would also include the ability to make minor adjustment to exterior details and any changes necessary to comply with local building codes. OP has no objection to such changes as they are subject to review and approval by the Historic Preservation Review Board.

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 2403.7 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 project is an economic development priority of the District. The applicant requests zoning relief from the height and floor area ratio requirements to be able to provide an appropriate number of rooms that support the existing convention center. In addition, the proposed rezoning of a portion of the property from DD/C-2-C to DD/C-3-C permits a higher FAR, lot occupancy, and building height and precludes the development of a split-zoned property for a single development.

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

Urban Design, Architecture, Landscaping, and Open Space

The proposed project will incorporate a landmark building, the Plumbers’ Building, into a larger, modern hotel building surrounding it. The new building will contain a glass, domed atrium at the center and utilize stone and glass for the exterior materials. Landscaping and streetscape improvements are planned for the perimeter of the site, including areas for outdoor seating and street trees. The building will have two entrances, a main lobby with a porte-cochere along Massachusetts Avenue and a secondary lobby serving as the large group entrance with a bus lay-by on L Street. Grade level retail in the form of several eating establishments and bars will be provided along the Massachusetts, 9th Street, L Street frontage with entrances provided both from the interior of the hotel and from the street. The design of the building was reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB). A copy of the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) staff report describing the design is attached (Exhibit 3).

Site Planning and Efficient and Economical Land Utilization

The site design is impacted by two existing buildings that will remain, the historic Plumber’s Building and the Pepco site. The Pepco site poses additional site development constraints due to the location of an access easement and electrical duct bank. Despite this, the project makes efficient use of the site. Loading areas have been consolidated with those for the existing convention center and a secondary loading area has been located adjacent to the Pepco site, which will be largely shielded from view by the structure. The site design includes an underground pedestrian connection to the hotel to provide a safe, controlled access to the convention center. All off-street parking for the hotel will utilize valet services and will be located below grade.

Historic Preservation of Private or Public Structures, Places, or Parks

The proposed hotel will preserve and reuse an existing historic structure located at the northwest corner of 9th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NW. The Plumbers’ Building is proposed to be converted into a boutique hotel that will connect to the new hotel building on its 1st, 3rd, and roof terrace levels. The proposed boutique hotel will feature approximately 42 guest rooms and a “corner bar” on the ground level.

Employment and Training Opportunities

An employment and training program has been mandated by the New Convention Center Hotel Omnibus Financing and Development Act of 2006 for this project. The Act requires that the program

begin no later than 2 years prior to the completion of the hotel, will hire and train District citizens for permanent positions, and will provide job-specific training for the hotel. The applicant has also indicated they will enter into an agreement to participate in the Department of Employment Services First Source Employment Program (DOES).

Use of Special value to the Neighborhood or the District as a Whole

The proposed project is of particular significance to the District as a whole. The project would allow for the development of lodging and conference facilities that would support the Washington Convention Center and the District's tourism industry. The convention center hotel would develop an underutilized site with a desired use. In addition, the restaurants proposed on the ground level would enhance the continued development of the Mount Vernon Square area and 9th Street retail corridor.

Environmental Benefits

The applicant has submitted a LEED for New Construction (NC) checklist for the proposed project. The applicant is attempting to achieve LEED Silver. OP is very supportive of this initiative. The applicant is also planning to implement a stormwater management system that will have zero discharge to the storm drain during normal conditions. The building design includes collecting stormwater runoff in cisterns and re-plumbing the captured water to the cooling tower for re-use. The District Department of the Environment (DDOE) is also supportive of the applicant's efforts in this initiative.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the majority of the subject property for mixed uses including high density commercial and residential uses. The westernmost part of the site and the remainder of Square 370 are designated as high density residential. Both the DD/C-2-C and DD/ C-3-C districts are considered high density commercial districts that allow as-of-right mixed use development. The proposed **DD/C-3-C designation is not inconsistent** with the future land use(s) of the site, as shown on the Future Land Use Map in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

POLICY MAP

The subject property is designated as a Land Use Change Area in the Generalized Policy Map of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan identifies priorities, policies, and actions to guide the growth and development of Land Use Change Areas. The proposed project supports several land use, economic development, and historic preservation comprehensive plan policies and actions. The following policies, found within the Central Washington area element, are particularly relevant to the proposed convention center hotel project:

Policy CW-1.1.10: Central Washington Hotels and Hospitality Services

“Encourage the development of additional hotels in Central Washington, especially in the areas around the new Convention Center and Gallery Place, along Pennsylvania Avenue NW and Massachusetts Avenue NW, in the Thomas Circle area, and in the area east of Third Street NW. A range of hotel types, including moderately priced hotels, and hotels oriented to family travelers as well as business travelers, should be encouraged. Hotels generate jobs for District residents and revenues for the general fund and should be granted incentives when necessary. Retain existing hotel uses by allowing and encouraging the expansion of those uses, including the

addition of one floor, approximately 16 feet in height subject to coordination with federal security needs, to the Hay-Adams Hotel 1608.11.” (emphasis added)

Policy CW-2.4 Mount Vernon District

“Mount Vernon Square itself was designed to be a focal point in Washington’s ensemble of great civic landmarks. Its focus is the 1902 former Carnegie Library building, an elegant historic structure that is now in use by the Washington Historical Society. Facing the north edge of the Square is the 2.3 million square foot Washington Convention Center, completed in 2003. To the southwest, the now vacant site of the former Convention Center is awaiting redevelopment. Immediately northwest of the Square, a major convention hotel is planned. Large-scale office buildings occupy other sides of the Square, framing it as a potentially great public space. 1714.2” (emphasis added)

Policy CW-2.4.3: Convention Center Area Land Uses

“Encourage land uses around Mount Vernon Square which capitalize on the presence of the Washington Convention Center. Such uses include hotels, restaurants, retail, and entertainment uses. Convention related hotel construction should be focused on vacant or underutilized land immediately adjacent to the Convention Center to minimize impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. 1714.8” (emphasis added)

Action CW-2.4-B: Convention Center Hotel

“Develop a major convention center hotel in close proximity to the Washington Convention Center. The hotel should be sited and designed to complement adjacent uses and add activity and aesthetic value to the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood. 1714.14”

SMALL AREA PLANS

The proposed convention center hotel site has been the subject of two small area planning studies, which are summarized below.

CONVENTION CENTER AREA STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This planning study, adopted in 2006, is for the area bounded by New York Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, 12th Street, Vermont Avenue, U Street, Florida Avenue, and New Jersey Avenue. The purpose of the plan was to accomplish three main objectives: (1) strengthen neighborhood businesses, (2) generate quality housing, and (3) improve the public realm. Relevant findings with respect to the convention center hotel site are listed below:

Retail

- *Establish a hierarchy of retail that includes primary and secondary commercial areas, as well as corner stores*
 - *Locate Convention Center headquarters hotel at 9th and Massachusetts Avenue as the southern anchor of the retail corridor.*
- *Develop a retail corridor that will attract convention goers, tourists and residents from other parts of the DC metropolitan area*
 - *Create safe, on-street pedestrian connection between the Convention Center and the headquarters hotel.*
 - *Ensure that the pedestrian scale and main street character of the historic buildings are retained or sensitively incorporated into new development.*

Public Realm

- *Reinforce a clear street hierarchy that differentiates between residential streets and commercial streets*
 - Study 6th, 7th, 9th, and 11th streets to determine current levels of traffic and necessary number of travel lanes, and make recommendations to improve use of public right-of-way.
 - Develop, maintain, and enforce standards for different street types that address sidewalks, streets, tree boxes, and public right-of-way.
 - Improve appearance of gateway intersections.

The proposed project will help meet these planning goals by preserving and reusing the existing Plumbers' Building and suggesting changes to the traffic patterns along 10th and L streets to improve traffic conditions. While the applicants have developed a below-grade connection from the hotel to the convention center, improvements are also planned for the site, which should enhance the street-level pedestrian connection. The proposed improvements include outdoor sitting areas, street trees, planters, and decorative pavers along the Massachusetts Avenue, 9th Street, and L Street frontage.

MOUNT VERNON SQUARE DESIGN WORKBOOK

This document was created by the Office of Planning in 2004 to provide a design framework for the Mount Vernon Square District, defined as the area between M Street, NW on the north and H Street, NW on the south and 5th Street, NW on East to 12th Street, NW on the west. The workbook discusses the convention center hotel site and its potential to help define the Mount Vernon Square District. Massachusetts Avenue is shown as an important avenue providing vehicular access to the Square while 9th Street is designated as one of the primary retail corridors in the area. The workbook includes proposed renderings of future development, one of which includes street level retail on the 9th Street side of the convention center hotel.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The proposed project was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Review Board on June 26, 2008 and July 24, 2008. HPRB was generally positive about the project but expressed concerns about the appearance of the mass of the building, particularly the Massachusetts Avenue frontage, the building height and its impact on the skyline, and the provision of additional green space on the site. These issues have been resolved with the HPO staff.

Comments received from the District Department of the Environment indicate their support of the project's decision to seek LEED Silver status. In addition, DDOE expressed positive feedback regarding the applicant's proposed stormwater recycling system and reuse of an existing building.

The DC Fire and EMS Department has no objection to this proposal as long as its construction is compliant with the International Fire Code and all relevant D.C. Laws.

As of the date of this report, formal comments have not been received from the District Department of Transportation. However, staff is aware of several meetings that have taken place between the applicants and DDOT staff regarding this proposal. The applicant has submitted a supplemental transit

impact study and transportation management plan in response to the comments received from DDOT thus far.

Finally, the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development and the Washington Convention Center Authority submitted comments in support of the request.

RECOMMENDATION

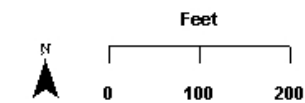
OP concludes that the hotel proposal for the site would be of benefit to the Mount Vernon Square neighborhood as well as the District overall. The Office of Planning **recommends** the Zoning Commission **approve** the requested consolidated planned unit development and related map amendment subject to clarification of all building features that exceed the 130' height limit, including the height of the proposed mechanical penthouses and glass dome. OP supports the DD/C-3-C designation which is not inconsistent with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use designation for high density residential and commercial uses and the District's desire to develop a convention center hotel.

JLS/ayj
Arlova Jackson, Case Manager

Attachments: Exhibit 1 – Base Map
 Exhibit 2 – Future Land Use Map
 Exhibit 3 – HPO Staff Report



Exhibit 1
ZC 08-13 Marriott Marquis - Base Map



*** Government of the District of Columbia
 Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor

Office of Planning ~ November 14, 2008

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.

Legend

- Zoning Districts
- Property Squares
- Buildings
- Tax Lots
- Record Lots
- Roads
- Street Centerlines



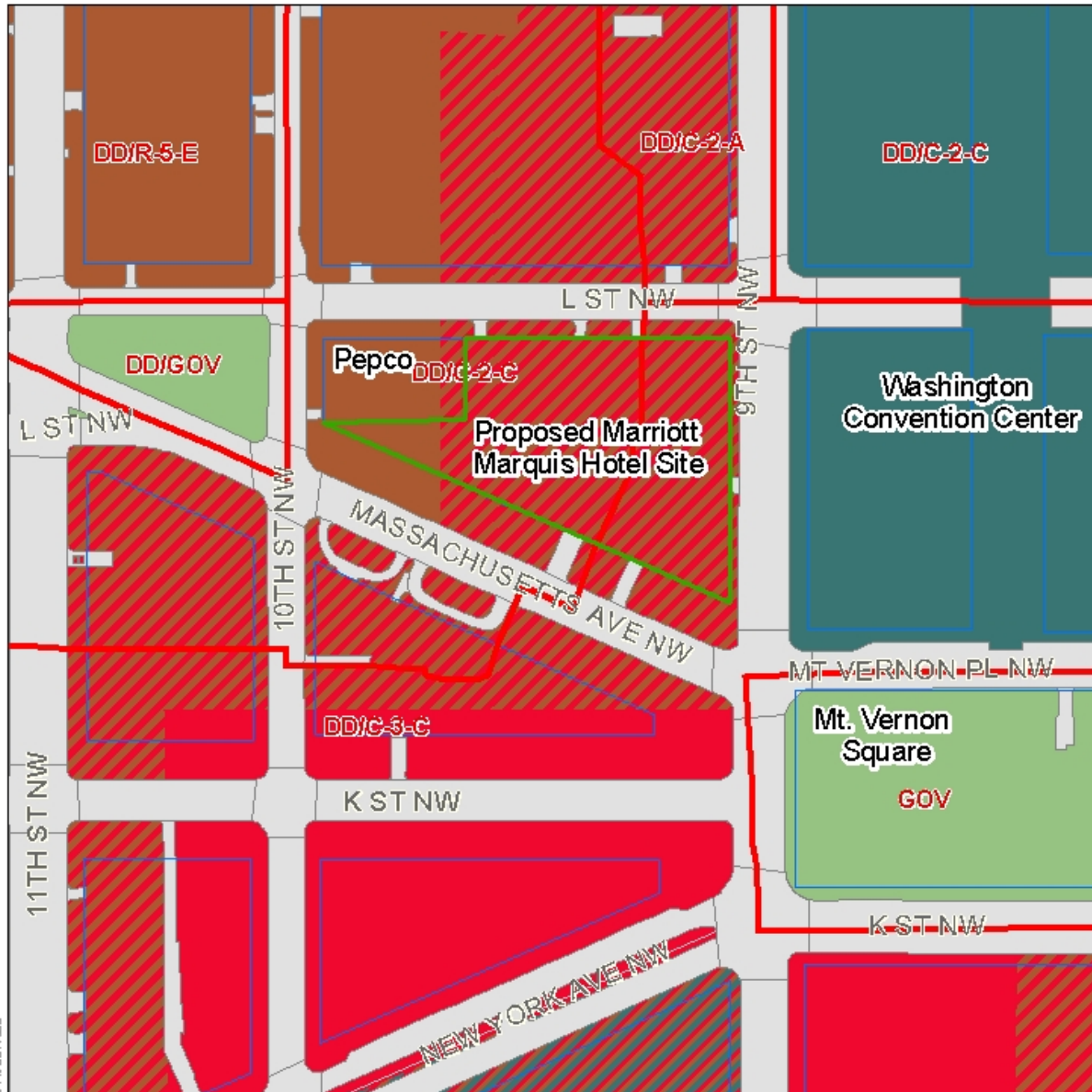
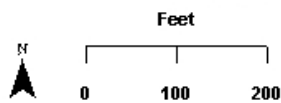


Exhibit 2

ZC 08-13 Marriott Marquis - Future Land Use Map



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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	American Federation of Labor (New Convention Center Hotel)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	901 Massachusetts Avenue NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	July 24, 2008	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	08-281	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Date Received:	4/24/08	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subdivision
Staff Reviewer:	David Maloney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conceptual Design

Marriott International, Inc. requests review of the concept design for the proposed Washington Marriott Marquis, the convention center hotel to be built on land owned by the Washington Convention Center Authority and the District of Columbia. The hotel will be attached to the American Federation of Labor building situated at the corner of 9th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NW. This structure is a National Historic Landmark, and is also listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places.

As a District government undertaking, the project is also subject to the new provision in Section 9b of the preservation law (D.C. Official Code §6-1108.02). This section requires the responsible District agency to take into account the effect of the undertaking on any property listed in or eligible for listing in the D.C. Inventory, and to consult with and afford the SHPO a reasonable opportunity to comment. The SHPO considers the HRPB review of the project, and the advice given to the SHPO, to constitute part of the consultation process through which the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and Washington Convention Center Authority fulfill their responsibilities under this provision.

The Board heard an informational presentation on this project at its June 26th meeting, and provided some initial reactions. The convention center hotel will consist of about 765,000 square feet of gross floor area and 1,125 to 1,150 hotel rooms, with about 340 parking spaces. The building will incorporate the landmark AFL building as a stand-alone “boutique hotel” connected to the main hotel at selected levels, yet retaining its physical independence. The hotel will occupy the remainder of the block except for the Pepco substation at the corner of 10th and L Streets. It will rise to 130 feet in height, with penthouses and the atrium roof rising above that level as allowed by D.C. zoning regulations. Architects for the project are the Cooper Carry – TVS Collaborative.

American Federation of Labor

The American Federation of Labor building was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974. The building was constructed for the AFL in 1916 and served as its headquarters until 1956. In the words of AFL founder Samuel Gompers, the imposing seven-story building served to symbolize the Federation's growth from "a weakling into the strongest, best organized labor movement of all the world." President Woodrow Wilson delivered the chief address at the dedication. The building symbolized the achievements of Gompers and the AFL, as well as the labor movement in general, and was sometimes referred to as the national “labor temple.”

The AFL building retains a high degree of integrity, although the interiors have been modernized, the original windows have been replaced, and the spandrels painted an unflattering bright white.

Other Affected Properties

From the standpoint of reviewing the District undertaking, other affected historic properties include the Shaw Historic District immediately to the north and northwest, the Central Public Library in Mount Vernon Square, the Mount Vernon Square United Methodist Church and Tudor Hall apartments on the opposite side of Massachusetts Avenue, and elements of the Plan of the City of Washington (the L'Enfant Plan). These elements include Massachusetts Avenue and the grid streets, Mount Vernon Square, and the twin federal reservations (Reservations 68 and 69) at Massachusetts Avenue between 10th and 12th Streets. Reservation 69 has been designated as Samuel Gompers Memorial Park and includes the 1933 monument to Gompers that was recently listed as a historic landmark in the D.C. Inventory.

Proposed Project

The Marriott Marquis is being constructed in partnership with the District of Columbia and will become the flagship hotel for the Washington Convention Center. The building will incorporate the landmark AFL building as a stand-alone element connected to the hotel at selected levels, yet retaining its physical independence. The hotel will occupy the remainder of the block except for the Pepco substation at the corner of 10th and L Streets. It is proposed as a Planned Unit Development requiring review by the Zoning Commission.

Evaluation and Recommendations

As discussed at the June HPRB meeting, the Marriott Marquis is a key development project supporting the Washington Convention Center and offering substantial benefits to the city's economic development. The building will fill a major gap along Massachusetts Avenue, one of the city's prime historic boulevards, and provide the opportunity for a first-class restoration of a National Historic Landmark.

Along with these opportunities, however, are significant design challenges. The building will be by far one of the largest along Massachusetts Avenue, and its apparent size will be exaggerated by an oddly shaped lot, which creates a long prow at the western end extending the avenue frontage. The height of the building also exceeds that of the adjacent convention center, which is both symbolically and functionally the dominant civic building with pride of place on the 8th Street axis. While the hotel is clearly an adjunct to the convention center, every effort should be made to temper its massive scale and integrate it seamlessly as part of the city fabric around the focal public structure.

From the standpoint of adverse effects on surrounding historic resources, the primary concerns are visual effects from the size and scale of the new building, which tends to overshadow and reduce the prominence of the smaller and more delicate historic structures.

Since the Board's informational presentation in June, the architects have made significant positive revisions in response to the Board's comments. The plans are still at the concept stage, but are further developed. Several of the cornices and building elements have been lowered to emphasize the 90-foot cornice typical along Massachusetts Avenue, and to relate to the scale of

the AFL building. The atrium roof has been lowered, the penthouse configuration refined, and façade proportions adjusted.

The staff encourages the project team to continue in this direction as the treatment of key elements like the atrium roof and penthouses continue to be studied. Some further adjustments could include: 1) pulling back the outer bays of the colonnaded upper cornice on Massachusetts Avenue in order to emphasize a vertical centrality around the main entrance, 2) limiting the width of the entrance canopies along Massachusetts Avenue for similar reasons (preferably to 3 bays), and 3) continuing to study and develop the appearance of the hotel as seen from the parks to the west.

The treatment of the public space along Massachusetts Avenue continues to be a concern. Numerous policies in the Comprehensive Plan promote the preservation of the design character and open green quality of the public space along the city's L'Enfant Plan streets, including *Policy HP-2.5.4: Landscaped Yards in Public Space*, which reads:

Preserve the continuous and open green quality of landscaped front and side yards in public space. Take special care at historic landmarks and in historic districts to protect this public environment from intrusions, whether from excess paving, vehicular access and parking, high walls and fencing, or undue disruption of the natural contours or bermed terraces.

The extent of paving for vehicular entry, drop-off, and garage access in this plan greatly exceeds the norm for other hotels and buildings along L'Enfant Plan streets. The extended driveway and curved garage ramp is particularly anomalous along a major boulevard. While some greater flexibility may be appropriate given the size and nature of this hotel and the constraints of the site, the project team should continue to seek ways to minimize the amount and visual effect of paving in consultation with all of the relevant review agencies.

The staff recommends that the Board support the proposed project concept and urge the project team to continue refinement of the plans in consultation with the SHPO staff, Board, and other review agencies.

The staff further recommends that the project team continue to develop the preservation treatments of the AFL building consistent with the the preservation stewardship responsibilities of the D.C. government and the purposes of the preservation law which include “to encourage the restoration of historic landmarks.”