



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

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

DATE: February 18, 2011

SUBJECT: **MODIFICATION REQUEST** – ZC Order 08-08A, 3901 Georgia Avenue, NW

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval of the requested minor modification to allow the installation of a mural on the south elevation of the proposed building at 3901 Georgia Avenue, NW. In order to achieve this, ZC Order No. 08-08, Condition 2 would be modified to read:

- “2. The project shall include the mural included as Exhibit -- and, after five (5) years, the Applicant shall have the flexibility to replace or substitute this mural with a different piece of artwork of similar size and material to be mounted in the same location of the building without seeking subsequent approval by the Commission.”***

II. BACKGROUND

In ZC Case 08-08, submission dated July 3, 2008, Revised architectural Plans, Sheet 2 of 3 the applicant proposed a 17 feet by 21 feet “temporary ad location for permanent art installation”. The Commission was uncertain as to whether the proposal was an ad or artwork and whether it would be temporary or permanent. Further, the Commission expressed concerns regarding its size and character and stated that that additional information was needed. However, in order to not delay the project, the Commission recommended that Sheet 2 of 3 not be approved as part of the PUD and recommended that when the applicant was certain as to the design and the permanency of the proposal they could petition the Zoning Commission to have it reviewed as a minor modification.

III. PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

In submissions dated February 4, 2011 and February 14, 2011 the applicant requested modifications to the approved Order including:

1. Modification to Condition 2 which states:

“The PUD project shall not include the “temporary ad location or permanent art installation.”

2. Modification to Sheet 2 of 3 to show a depiction of the proposed mural, its location and size.

IV. OP ANALYSIS OF THE MODIFICATIONS

In their submission, the applicant showed the proposed installation of a public artwork mural on the south elevation of the building (Exhibit D, Sheet A4-4). Subsequent to the February 4, 2011 application, the applicant has clarified that the proposed mural would be a piece of artwork and not an advertisement. The size of the mural has been reduced from an area of 375 square feet to 288 square feet addressing the size concerns expressed by the Commission. The proposed size of the



mural is important so that it can be viewed from afar but not be intrusive. The mural will be on UltraFlex 13 ounce Matt Vinyl and would be permanently mounted and affixed to the wall with grommets at all corners. The mural would be illuminated from above with goose neck down light fixtures which project one foot out. The lighting would not affect or intrude into the residential windows of the building.

To address OP's concern regarding the lifespan of the mural the applicant has stated that the material is durable, tear and fade resistant. Further, the applicant has proposed that the mural would be in place for at least five years at which time it would be replaced with a different artwork. OP supports the requested flexibility to replace the artwork as needed with the condition that the size and materials remain the same and that it would be reviewed by the relevant ANC and if applicable the Commission of Arts and Humanities.

The building incorporates special environmental features such as green roof and green screen panels on the front of the building and inside the internal courtyard. The mural will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Elements:

Policy LU-2.2.4: Neighborhood Beautification

Encourage projects which improve the visual quality of the District's neighborhoods, including landscaping and tree planting, façade improvement, anti-litter campaigns, graffiti removal, improvement or removal of abandoned buildings, street and sidewalk repair, and park improvements.

The proposed mural would be supportive of this policy as it will help to give the neighborhood an identity and would add visual quality to the building and the area.

The requested modification does not materially affect the facts upon which the PUD was approved and therefore OP recommends approval of the requested modifications.

JS/mbr

Maxine Brown-Roberts - Case manager