


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

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

DATE: April 8, 2013

SUBJECT: ZC 12-18 - Final Report: Consolidated PUD and related Map Amendment from the R-4 to R-5-B and HS/C-2-B districts for specified lots in Square 858: 600 Block of H Street, N.E.

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval of both alternatives presented by the applicant, including:

- Alternative I
 - A consolidated PUD with 490,000 sf of mixed-use development at 4.84 FAR, with 74,000 sf devoted to retail use and 12,000 sf to loading, with a PUD-related map amendment to rezone the site as follows:
 - Lot 860 from R-4 to R-5-B;
 - Lot 861 from R-4 to HS-H/C-2-B;
 - Lot 864 from split zoned R-4 and HS-H/C-2-B to all HS-H/C-2-B; and
 - Portions of the alley to be closed from R-4 to HS-H/C-2-B
(Submission- December 21, 2012)
- Alternative II
 - A consolidated PUD with 490,000 sf of mixed-use development at 4.84 FAR, 96,548 sf of retail use, including a grocery store and a relocated loading area of 5,517 sf, with a PUD-related map amendment to rezone the site as follows:
 - **Lot 860 (20,834 sf) from R-4 to R-5-B;**
 - **Lot 860 (3,425 sf) from R-4 to HS-H/C-2-B**
 - Lot 861 from R-4 to HS-H/C-2-B;
 - Lot 864 from split zoned R-4 and HS-H/C-2-B to all HS-H/C-2-B; and
 - Portions of the alley to be closed from R-4 to HS-H/C-2-B
(Exhibit B March 27, 2013).

Both proposals are not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan, providing new housing and much needed neighborhood serving retail on the quickly evolving H Street corridor. Both proposals include a request to close and relocate portions of the internal alley system; this application has been filed with the Office of the Surveyor for Council consideration.

II. BACKGROUND

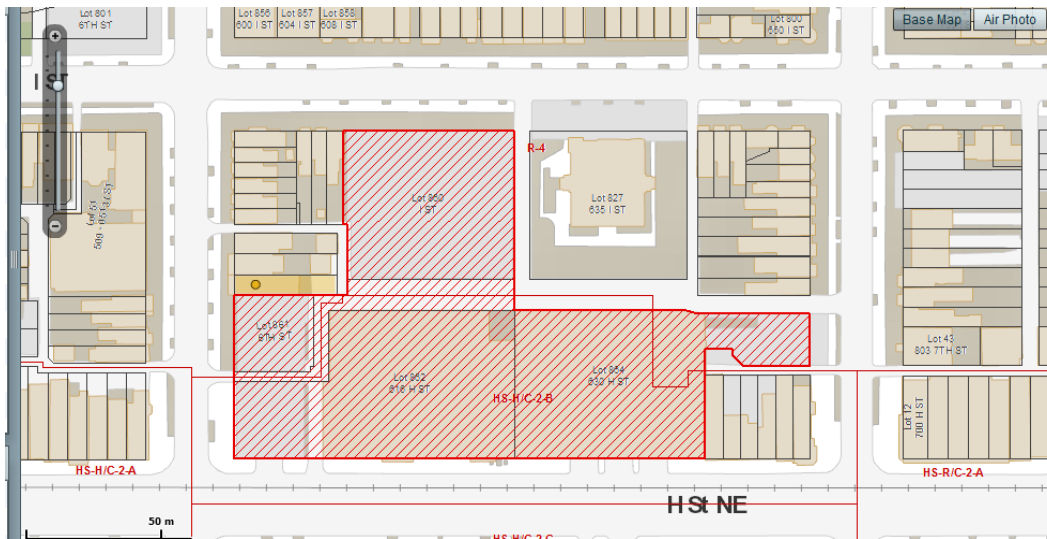
The Commission set down the application on November 9, 2012 and provided comments, generally about the roof plan, requesting additional detail of the roof structures and proposed roof activities. The applicant has since attempted to address the Commission's concerns in its December 28th, 2012 submission.

On March 21, 2013, the applicant met with OP to discuss an alternative plan, which included the ground floor's redesign in the event that a large retail grocery store agrees to occupy a significant portion of the ground floor. In this design, the loading area would be placed in the building's central core to better serve a large retail grocer at the corner of 6th and H Street. This alternative also has its preferred access to the loading area exclusively from 7th Street thereby removing potential traffic related to this development from the north/south alley at

the rear of the residential homes which front on 6th Street NW. Only the residential garage for the first phase would be accessed off 6th Street, NW. The building's overall design, including the gross floor area, height, and massing of the project are not anticipated to be changed. However, the map amendment as it relates to Lot 860 would be affected, as would the roof plans and the loading and circulation plans. These revisions are discussed subsequently in the report.

III. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant	Collectively, USL WDC H Street, LLC and H Street Self Storage, LLC
Location	Between 6 th and 7 th Street, NE, with portions of the combined lots fronting 7 th Street to the east, 6 th Street to the west, I Street to the north and H Street to the south. Ward 6, ANC 6C
Zoning	R-4 and HS/C-2-B (Commercial Residential / H Street Overlay)
Site Area	101,111 sf total (Lot 860= 23,809 sf; Lot 861= 5,660 sf; Lot 862=32,977 sf Lot 864 = 31,462 sf; Portions of the public alley proposed to be closed =7,203 sf)
Existing Development	The site - Lots 860 and 861 are currently developed as surface parking lots; Lot 862 with the well-known Murray's supermarket and accessory parking lot; and Lot 864 is improved with a five-story 122,833 square-foot concrete H Street Storage Facility.
Surrounding Development	The immediate neighborhood is developed with a variety of residential and commercial uses. To the north, is a two-story brick building owned by the District and operated as a community residential facility. To the east of that building, with 7 th Street frontage are residential row dwellings. To the north of Lots 861 and west of Lot 860 are residential row dwellings which front on 6 th Street and I Street. All are in the R-4 district. Across H Street are commercial properties in the HS-H/C-2-C District.
Proposal	Development of a mixed-use residential and retail building with a maximum height of 90 feet on H Street, stepping down to 40 feet on I Street. Two designs are presented, including the initial proposal and a design to include a large grocery retailer.
Flexibility	<p>Pursuant to 11 DCMR §2405, flexibility is requested in Alternative I from the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Loading requirements to provide smaller loading berths (§ 2210.1);2. Roof structure requirement to permit penthouses not meeting the 1:1 setback requirement (§ 411.2 and 770.6(a) and (b)) and having one enclosure (§§ 411.3);3. H Street Overlay street wall requirement to permit a five foot setback from the property line (§ 1324.2); and4. H Street Overlay non-residential FAR limitation to exceed the 0.5 FAR limit (§ 1321.1) <p>In Alternative II, which includes a grocery design, flexibility from the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Loading requirement to provide one less delivery space for the retail component;2. Roof structure requirement to permit penthouses not meeting the 1:1 setback requirement (§ 411.2 and 770.6(a) and (b)) and having one enclosure (§§ 411.3);3. H Street Overlay street wall requirement to permit a five foot setback from the property line (§ 1324.2);4. Lot Occupancy requirement to exceed the 80% maximum to 84.24%; and5. H Street Overlay non-residential FAR limitation to exceed the 0.5 FAR limit (§ 1321.1)



ZONING: Square 858

IV. PROPOSALS

The applicant intends to redevelop the combined parcels as a mixed-use development, including two alternative designs based on potential retail grocer requirements of its ground floor. A comparison of the general features of both alternatives is highlighted in the following table:

	Initial Design (Alternative I)		Grocery Design Alternative II)
	1 st Phase	2 nd Phase	One Phase
Residential units	321	132 453 (total) (404,508 sf)	432+ (388,069 sf)
Retail (sf)	22,879	50,674 73,553 (total)	42,108 (grocery retail) 54,440 (other retail) 96,548 (total)
Parking (spaces)	47 (retail) 161 (residential) 2 levels accessed off 6 th St via the reconfigured alley	101(retail) 66 (residential) 67 (unassigned) 442 (total) 2 levels accessed off 7 th St.	209 (retail) (grocery= 163) 216 (residential) 9-11 (unassigned) 434-436 (total) 2 levels accessed off 6 th St. via the reconfigured alley
Loading (sf)	5,332 Accessed off 6 th St.	6,741 (accessed off 7 th St) 12,073 (total)	5,517 sf (total) Accessed exclusively off 7 th St.
FAR Total		4.84	4.84

In addition to the above, the following differences are noted:

- Change to the penthouse and roof plan (*March 27, 2013 pgs. 1.212, 1.213*);
- parking loading and circulation, (*March 27, pg 016a*);
- lot occupancy (*March 27, 2013 pg 009a*); and
- Split zoning for Lot 860 originally proposed to be rezoned from R-4 to R-5-B to be rezoned in part to HS-H/C-2-B and R-5-B.

Alternative I:

- The building is proposed at a maximum height of 90 feet and a total FAR of 4.84.
- To be completed in two phases – The first phase is anticipated to be completed by 2016; second phase 2021

- 73,000 square feet of ground floor retail space.
- Underground parking in two levels - 442 spaces apportioned to accommodate both retail and residential uses.
- The phases are separated by a firewall that would allow cross-floor connections in the future. Therefore, there would be two elevator cores and separate residential entrances off H Street.
- The H Street entrance for the west wing would serve 321 units for Phase I. An entrance further east would serve Phase II's 132 units.
- Ground floor retail would front H Street and wrap around to I Street. Outdoor seating would be provided for the retail space within two small courts recessed off the H Street frontage. Each retail use would have its own access from H Street and would be able to accommodate outdoor seating, if desired.

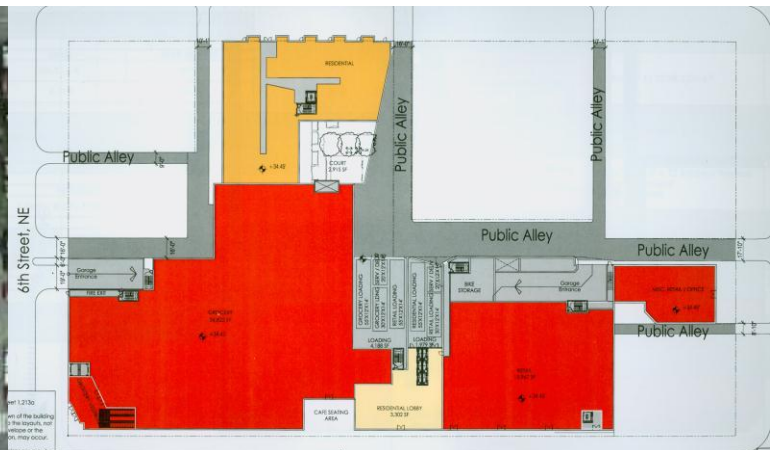
The residential use would occupy approximately 404,508 square feet of space and accommodate 453 residences consisting of 1- and 2-bedroom units. The 90-foot tall building would step down in height to about 40 feet at the rear and would resemble three-and-a-half story residential units, in character with the residential row homes on I Street. The residential units would have access to passive outdoor recreation space including a courtyard off the north/ south alley, and to a green roof, green terraces, a roof-top pool and communal space.

Alternative II

- The building is proposed at a maximum height of 90 feet and a total FAR of 4.84;
- The applicant indicated to OP that a single phase is anticipated with all residential and retail completed. However, Page 008a of its most recent submission seems to indicate that up to 82,596 sf retail would be completed in a first phase, with a second phase (on the far east portion of the site on 7th Street) including up to 13,952 square feet of office/retail use (no timing was provided for completion of that phase.);
- 96,548 square feet (total) of ground floor retail space;
- Underground parking in two levels - 438 spaces with 163 spaces allocated to the grocery;
- There would be a main residential lobby with one residential entrance off H Street.
- Ground floor retail would front H Street and wrap around to I Street. Outdoor seating would be provided for the grocery retail space identified as a café seating area in the plans. (Page 1.203)
- Space allocated for loading would be increased, but would be centrally located with main access from 6th street.



Site Plan – Ground Floor (Initial Design)



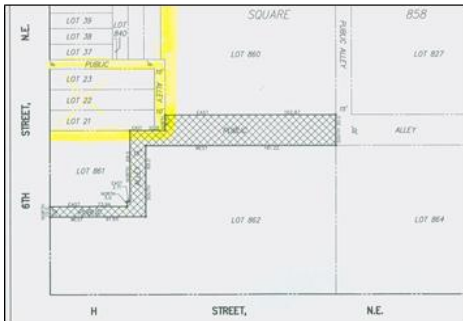
Site Plan – Ground Floor (Grocery Design)

Alley Closure

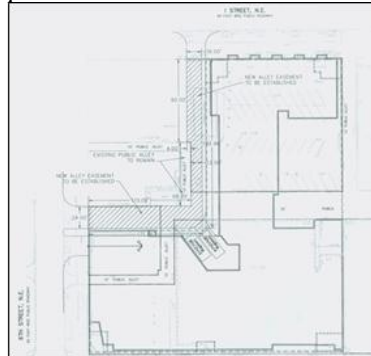
Phase I development includes portions of the existing alley which are proposed to be closed and the remaining alley system reconfigured. As shown in the applicant's diagram below, the existing east-west alley between 6th and 7th Streets would be removed to accommodate the north wing of Phase I. The north-south and east-west

portions of the alley abutting the Murray's parking lot would be removed to accommodate the west wing of Phase I. A new 24-foot wide dedicated public alley easement would connect 6th Street to I Street. It would be widest at 6th Street at 24 feet and emerge at I Street 16 foot in width. However, the alley width of the new north south portion, abutting the residential Lots 21-23 would be at least 22 feet wide. Thus, the reconfigured alley would increase the existing widths to serve existing residents and to provide the required turning radii for vehicles entering the alley to access Phase I's loading and parking areas in the initial design. The alley reconfiguration requires approval by DC Council. Any condition of approval by the ZC would be conditioned on the applicant receiving this approval.

Proposed Alley Closure



Repositioned curb cut and widened alley



VI. ZONING AND PUD RELATED MAP AMENDMENT

The proposed map amendment would rezone Lot 860 within the R-4 district to the PUD-related R-5-B district. Lot 861 fronting 6th, a portion of Lot 864 fronting on 7th Street, as well as portions of the existing alley proposed to be closed, all currently within the R-4 district are requested to be rezoned to HS-H/C-2-B. In the alternate design in support of the grocery store, a portion of Lot 860 would be split between the R-5-B and the HS/C-2-B District.

The R-5 residence districts permit flexibility of design in all types of urban residential development, provided they conform to the established height, density and area requirements. R-5-B permits development with moderate height and density.

The C-2-B district is designated to serve commercial and residential functions with residential and mixed uses. These districts are typically compact and located on arterial streets, in uptown centers, and at rapid transit stops.

Section 1320 of the Regulations outlines the purpose of the HS Overlay District as follows;

- (a) *Implement the policies and goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the H Street, N.E. Strategic Development Plan as approved by the Council of the District of Columbia on February 17, 2004 (R15-460);*
- (b) *Encourage residential uses along the H Street, N.E. corridor, particularly provisions of affordable units and reuse of upper floors;*
- (c) *Encourage the clustering of uses into unique destination districts along the corridor, specifically a housing district from 2nd Street to 7th Street, N.E.; a neighborhood-serving retail shopping district from 7th Street to 12th Street, N.E.; and an arts and entertainment district from 12th Street to 15th Street, N.E.;*

The following table compares the zoning requirements for the existing matter-of-right and proposed PUD zones of both proposals.

Table 1

	R-4 M-O-R	R-5-B MOR	HS-H/C-2-B/ R-5-B PUD Required	Alternative I	Alternative II	COMPLIANCE
Min. Lot Area § 400.1 § 2401.1	1,800 sf	1 acre (PUD)	15,000 sf.	101,111 sf	101,111 sf	Complies
FAR § 1321.1 § 2405.2	N/A	1.8	R-5-B PUD = 3.0 C-2-B PUD = 6.0 H St. non-res = 0.5	4.1 residential H St. non-res = 0.7 Total = 4.84	3.8 residential 1.04 non res. Total = 4.84	Complies Flex. Requested for H St. req'mt (Alternative I&II)
Lot Occupancy § 403 §772	40%	60%	R-5-B = 60% C-2-B = 80% (res) 100% (non-res)	Total = 79.65%	Total = 84.25%	Proposal I Complies Proposal II requires flexibility
Height § 2405.1	40 ft	50 ft.	R-5-B = 60 ft. C-2-B = 90 ft	40 ft 89 ft. 7"	40 ft 89ft. 7"	Complies
Parking § 2101.1	1/ 2 du	<u>Residential</u> 1 per 3 du.	<u>Residential</u> 1 per 3 du. = 151 <u>Retail</u> 1/750 sf. gfa >3,000sf = 95 <u>Total</u> = 246	<u>Residential</u> 1 per 2 = 227 <u>Retail</u> 1/500 sf = 148 67 unassigned <u>Total:</u> = 442	<u>Residential</u> <u>1 per 2 =</u> <u>Retail</u> 1/500 sf = 11	<u>Residential</u> Complies <u>Retail</u> Complies
Bike Parking § 2119.1			5% total auto spaces = 13	120 (Phase I) 50 (Phase II)	No Change	Complies
Loading § 2201.1		<u>Residential</u> 1 @ 55 ft. deep 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 service space @ 20 ft.	<u>Residential</u> 1 @ 55 ft. deep 1 platform @ 100 sf 1 service space @ 20 ft. <u>Retail</u> 1 berth @ 30' & 55' 1 platform @ 100 sf. & 200 sf 1 service space @ 20 ft.	<u>Shared</u> 4 @ 30 ft. deep 2 platform @ 100 sf 1 platform @ 200 sf	Meets all the requirements for berths, platforms and service delivery spaces except for 1 service /delivery space for the other retail use which would be shared with the grocery	Flexibility requested for both proposals
Roof Structure §§ 411.3,770.6(a)		One	One	3		Flexibility requested
Roof Structure Setback §§ 411.2 770.6(b)		1:1 setback from exterior walls	1:1 setback from exterior walls	Setbacks less than required in places		Flexibility requested for both proposals
Enclosure height § 411.5		Uniform height	Uniform height	Unequal heights		Flexibility requested
IZ requirements (2603.2)		8% of residential space	8% of residential space	8% of residential space (32,000 sf)		Both proposals comply

Flexibility

As highlighted on the table above, the Applicant has requested flexibility from several zoning requirements under the provisions of § 2405.7.

Loading

The Applicant requests flexibility in its initial design to provide 4, 30-foot berths rather than the required 55-foot berth based on prior experience within the District that the proposed uses would not require a 55-foot berth. The proposed location of the loading facilities and widening of the alley for both designs would accommodate the project's loading requirements, including the turning radii for delivery trucks and other service vehicles. The grocery alternative would satisfy the main requirements for the loading berths and platforms but would require flexibility to provide one less delivery space at 20 feet for the retail component, which would be shared with the proposed grocery delivery space. DDOT has indicated its support to OP regarding the loading access, particularly the access off 7th Street. The grocery design is preferred as it would remove all truck movements from 6th Street through the wider alley off 7th Street.

Multiple Roof Structures with less than the 1:1 setback ratio and with unequal heights

Sheets 1.212 and 1.213 of the architectural drawings represent the penthouse and roof plans respectively in the original and grocery designs. Both proposals show that one penthouse would house communal recreational spaces, and three others would house mechanical equipment for the building. The height of the enclosures has been reduced to an appropriate height relative to the system they enclose. The roof structures to the center and furthest to the east do not meet the setback requirement to minimize their visibility from public space to the greatest extent possible.

Street Wall Requirement

The H Street Overlay requires that the building be designed so that not less than 75% of the street wall to a height not less than 25 feet be constructed to the property line abutting the right-of-way (§ 1324.2). In this case, the street frontage along H Street has been set back 5 feet along the entire building frontage in order to provide additional pedestrian area. OP supports this flexibility as it provides additional area to effectively widen the pedestrian sidewalk which tends to be narrow along some sections of H Street.

FAR

The FAR in the HS-H Sub-district may not exceed 0.5 FAR for non-residential uses. The project proposes either 0.7 FAR or in the alternative grocery plan 1.04 FAR to retail uses (§ 1321.2). The additional retail space would support the proposed retail options beneficial to the neighborhood. OP supports this minimal increase in the original plan as the FAR with either alternative is not increased but is reallocated in Alternative II.

Lot Occupancy (Alternative II)

Flexibility is also requested to increase the lot occupancy above the 80% maximum to 84%. This would facilitate the necessary space for the grocery's back-of-house operations. OP has no objections to this request.

H Street Overlay Design Requirements § 1324

The redevelopment proposal satisfies the design standards of the section, except where flexibility has been requested for the street wall requirement as noted above.

V. PUD EVALUATION STANDARDS

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

“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.”

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 development 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 to allow the utilization of the flexibility stated in Section 2400.2. 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.” Section 2403.9 outlines “Public benefits and project amenities of the proposed PUD may be exhibited and documented in any of the following categories”:

Urban Design and Site Planning

Elevation and section drawings of all sides of the building are provided (Sheets 1.101 to 1.117). The elevations clearly project the proposed development’s height and bulk in relation to its surrounding structures. The building’s design is composed of brick, aluminum and glass and its height and scale are compatible with contemporary buildings within the neighborhood. The ground floor’s H Street front would be setback from the property line and articulated to provide additional space for pedestrian activity. The three story north wing on I Street would provide entry and exit points for some units and would resemble the existing row homes along the street. All parking, loading and trash functions are designed away from the adjacent streets in both proposals.

Landscaping and Streetscape Design

At-grade plantings and possible storm water management areas to buffer the building from activity along the sidewalk are proposed along H Street and 6th Street adjacent to the building. The public space around the building is proposed to be improved with at-grade planted areas, street trees, street lights, a seating area, benches, a bike rack, a relocated bus shelter and trash receptacles. Easy pedestrian movements on H and 6th Streets are accommodated in an 11-foot wide sidewalk, sandwiched between a 4-foot wide amenity zone and planting and seating areas along the sidewalk. The layout and design of tree boxes, sidewalk scoring, and landscaping would be designed to the H Street streetscape standard and to DC standards as currently designed.

No vaults are shown within public space. The proposed alley closure and other public space issues, if any, would be highlighted in DDOT’s report. OP received no objections from the Public Space Committee.

Transportation and Parking

The Applicant has submitted a traffic impact study which includes the project’s trip generation. Parking for the residents exceeds the number of spaces required by zoning, with an additional 67 spaces shown as “unassigned”. OP does not accept residential parking at such high a ratio as a benefit of the project, especially as the project is located where there are a variety of transit options. The location is 0.7 miles from the No-Ma metro station stop and 0.8 miles from the Union Station Metro stop. The latter is a hub for major regional bus and train transportation and is also well positioned along the District’s first soon to be revived street-car line. Five spaces have been proposed for use by car sharing services. A TDM plan has been included in the applicant’s transportation plan to DDOT to encourage alternative modes of transportation, including restricting tenants from the residential parking permit program (RPP) and the visitor guest passes.

Housing

The breakdown of the number of units within each unit type is shown on Sheet 008. The proposed number of residential units in both designs would increase the housing stock to support vitality of the commercial interests along the H Street corridor. Both alternatives would satisfy IZ’s requirement that 8% of the residential square footage be assigned to affordable housing (32,000 sf).

Retail

Both alternatives provide a large square-footage of retail space on the ground floor. OP is very supportive of neighborhood serving retail uses, including a large retail grocer as it would provide additional options for immediate residents and improve the offerings in this section of the District.

Green Elements

The Applicant proposes an environmentally sensitive building that would include a number of elements which focus on energy efficiency and improving air and water quality (Sheet 10). The building would have an extensive green roof system and green terraces to help capture rain water, reduce run-off and the heat island affect. The Applicant is also exploring ways to optimize energy performance through the use of the most efficient methods of providing heat, ventilation, and air conditioning. The project components would total up to 51 LEED points and the Applicant has committed to LEED Silver certification, which is considered a basic expectation for new development. Electrical outlets for electric vehicles would also be provided.

OP is supportive of the many ways in which the building would be environmentally sensitive, including the expansive green roof and supports working with DDOT to include a green alley system.

Public Benefits and Amenities

Benefits and amenities evaluation are based on an assessment of the additional development gained through the application process.

Zone	Existing M-O-R Height	Existing M-O-R Density	Proposed Height and Density	Difference Height and Density (over m-o-r)
C-2-B	70 feet (6.5 with IZ plus additional 5 feet per §1324.13)	<u>Residential</u> : 3.0 FAR (190,479 gsf) <u>Retail</u> : 0.5 FAR (31,747 gsf)	Height: 89 ft 7ins <u>Residential</u> : 4.1 FAR 404,508 gsf <u>Retail</u> : 0.7 FAR (73, 553 gsf)	17 ft. 5 inches <u>Residential</u> : 1.45 FAR 146,317 gsf <u>Retail</u> : 0.2 FAR 41,806 gsf
R-4	40 feet 3 stories	1.8 FAR or 67,712 gsf Retail in R-4 not permitted	40 feet 1.8 FAR	0 feet
HS-H/C-2-B (PUD)		<u>Overall site</u> 3.5 FAR (222,226 gsf) (max)	<u>Overall site:</u> 4.8 FAR or 490,134 sf	1.3 FAR

*Overall Site area = 101,111sf. Area within the R-4 district = 37,618 sf.

Original Design

The total FAR in the project does not change with Alternative II. The only difference is the allocation of the gross floor area within the project. The Applicant has listed a number of areas which they believe contribute towards the project’s benefits and amenities. While certain items may not qualify as “amenities” they could be considered benefits as they exceed what could result as a matter-of-right.

The table below is OP’s categorization of the proposed items.

Applicant’s Amenities/Benefits	Required	Mitigation	Public Benefit	Project Amenity
New Housing and retail	X		X	X
Extensive Landscaping		X	X	X
Reconfigured alley system		X	X	
Contextual Arch/Urban Design	X		X	
Environmental Benefits, including LEED-silver	X		X	
Transportation Services Coordinator		X		X
More bicycle spaces than required			X	X
Outdoor bike racks			X	X
Restricting RPP participation		X	X	
SmarTrip card		X	X	
Electric car charging station			X	X
Parking for church use on Sunday without charge			X	X
Construction Management Plan		X		
Loading Management		X		
H Street Clean and Safe Program			X	
Streetscape and landscape improvements to Blair House			X	X
Green Alley System		X	X	X

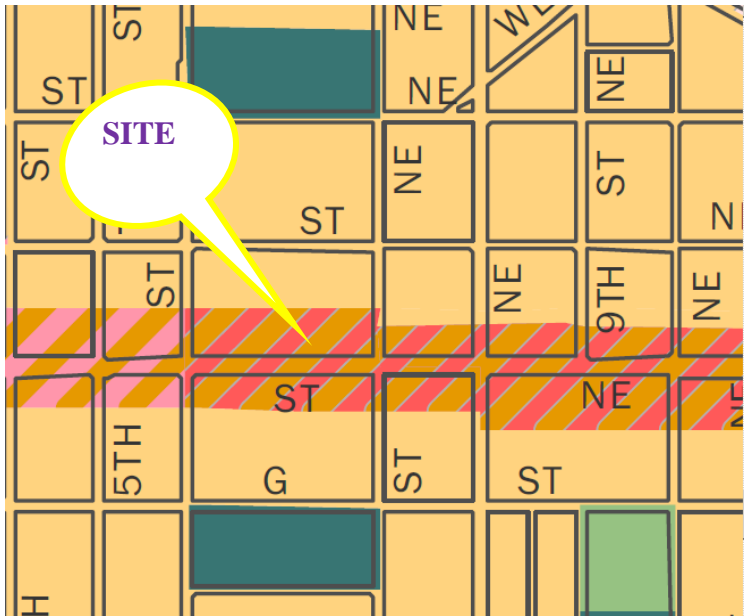
On April 3, 2013, OP met with the affected property owner of 819 6th Street, located north of lot 861. The owner expressed concerns regarding the loading dock’s location presented in the initial plan and contends that should this plan be approved, certain mitigation measures should be forthcoming, including:

- Provision of a handicap lift at the rear of the residence to serve disabled clients of her property which is used as a community based residence facility;
- Provision of sound-proof windows to mitigate noise from truck traffic entering and leaving the alley;
- Provision of bollards or some form of protection along her lot’s south facing property line; and
- Any other measures that may be included in the construction plan to mitigate potential damage to the home.

The property owner expressed preference to the grocery design, since it would remove all truck traffic from the realigned alley proposed next to her property.

OP supports any measures agreed to between the applicant and the affected property owner to mitigate the concerns regarding potential adverse impacts to the property, including a construction management plan prior to the Commission’s final decision.

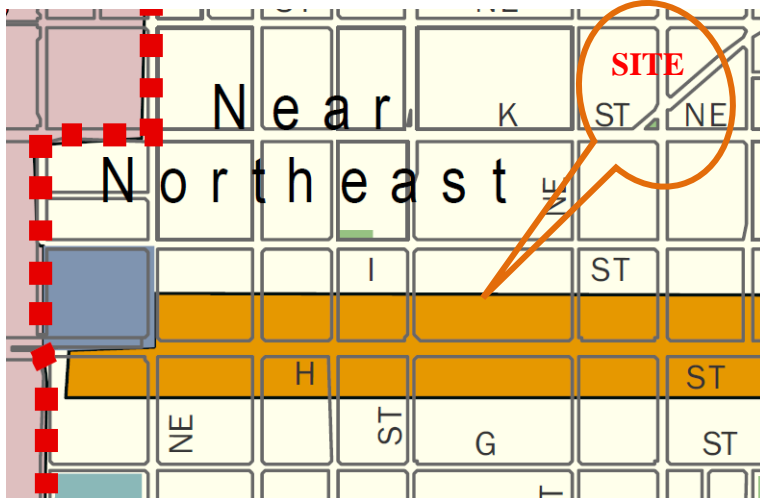
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Generalized Future Land Use Map

Along I Street to the north the site is designated for moderate density residential where 2-4 unit buildings, row dwellings and low rise apartment buildings are the predominant uses, and the proposed R-5-B zoning is not inconsistent with that designation. The east and west wings along H Street would be primarily within a mixed medium-density residential and commercial land use category, where apartment buildings and commercial buildings are predominant. The PUD requests HS-H/ C-2-B zoning for this portion of the site which would not be inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map.



2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY MAP

Generalized Policy Map

The North portion of the site is within a Neighborhood Conservation Area intended to:

“conserve and enhance established neighborhoods. Limited development and redevelopment opportunities do exist within these areas but they are small in scale. The diversity of land uses and building types in these areas should be maintained and new development and alterations should be compatible with the existing scale and architectural character of each area. Densities in Neighborhood Conservation Areas are guided by the Future Land Use Map...”

The remainder of the site is within a Mixed –Use Corridor (H Street) where *“their common feature is that they have a pedestrian-oriented environment with traditional storefronts...Any redevelopment that occurs should support transit use and enhance the pedestrian environment”*

The site’s redevelopment proposal is not inconsistent with its split designation.

Comprehensive Plan City-Wide Elements

The Comprehensive Plan provides a considerable number of policy guidance applicable to the proposal.

Land Use Element:

Policy LU-2.1.10: Multi-Family Neighborhoods

Maintain the multi-family residential character of the District's Medium and High-Density residential areas. Limit the encroachment of large scale, incompatible commercial uses into these areas, and make these areas more attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and transit accessible.

The proposed residential building is proximate to two transit stations and many Metro bus routes as well as along a future street car line. The multifamily building would add new residents to support existing smaller scale commercial businesses, as well as new business opportunities which are locating to this vibrant corridor.

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 redevelopment of the site would add to the beautification of the neighborhood by improving the H Street design and character, including sidewalk repairs and planting of new street trees.

Transportation Element

Policy T-2.3.3: Bicycle Safety

Increase bicycle safety through traffic calming measures, provision of public bicycle parking, enforcement of regulations requiring private bicycle parking, and improving bicycle access where barriers to bicycle travel now exist.

The proposed building would have secure bicycle parking areas in the garage including bike racks and shower facilities for employees of the retail space.

Housing Element

Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support

Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives.

The proposed residential and retail development is consistent with the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map.

Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth

Strongly encourage the development of new housing on surplus, vacant and underutilized land in all parts of the city.

The proposal would include over 450 new residential units where there are currently none. No one would be displaced by this development.

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.

The subject property is located in a walkable location and is well served by various forms of transportation. Its walk score is 94 out of a possible 100 points, defined as “*Walker’s Paradise, Daily errands do not require a car.*”¹

Environmental Protection Element

Policy E-2.2.3: Reducing Home Heating and Cooling Costs

Encourage the use of energy-efficient systems and methods for home insulation, heating, and cooling, both to conserve natural resources and also to reduce energy costs for those members of the community who are least able to afford them.

Policy E-3.2.1: Support for Green Building

Encourage the use of green building methods in new construction and rehabilitation projects, and develop green building methods for operation and maintenance activities.

The applicant is proposing a LEED Silver building that would include extensive green roofs and green terraces as well as water and energy efficient systems that would benefit both the residents of the building and community as a whole. LEED Silver is considered “base” in the District. OP will continue to work with the applicant to refine and potentially improve this aspect of the design.

Urban Design Element

Policy UD-2.2.1: Neighborhood Character and Identity

Strengthen the defining visual qualities of Washington’s neighborhoods. This should be achieved in part by relating the scale of infill development, alterations, renovations, and additions to existing neighborhood context.

The proposed density, height and sculpting of the massing of the development are consistent with new development in the neighborhood. The applicant has attempted to address the lower density row dwellings by reducing the height of the building on the I Street frontage to 40 feet consistent with the height of the existing row homes.

Policy UD-2.2.5: Creating Attractive Facades

Create visual interest through well-designed building facades, storefront windows, and attractive signage and lighting. Avoid monolithic or box-like building forms, or long blank walls which detract from the human quality of the street.

The development has a visually appealing design of glass and metal which would complement the newer buildings of similar scale. OP will continue to work with the applicant to provide refined drawings and detail as may be requested by the Commission.

Policy UD-2.2.6: Maintaining Facade Lines

Generally maintain the established facade lines of neighborhood streets by aligning the front walls of new construction with the prevailing facades of adjacent buildings. Avoid violating this pattern by placing new construction in front of the historic facade line, or by placing buildings at odd angles to the street, unless the streetscape is already characterized by such variations. Where existing facades are characterized by recurring placement of windows and doors, new construction should complement the established rhythm.

¹ <http://walkscore.com>

Generally, the building maintains established façade lines at the pedestrian level and complements the established rhythm along the street. Although the zoning requires a street wall at the property line and the applicant is requesting flexibility, this is to provide a better pedestrian experience on an otherwise narrow sidewalk.

Policy UD-3.1.5: Streetscape and Mobility

Ensure that the design of public space facilitates connections between different modes of travel, including walking, public transit, bicycling, and driving. Bus shelters, benches, bicycle parking, safe pedestrian connections, and clear way-finding signage should be provided to facilitate multi-modal travel.

The Applicant proposes to enhance the adjacent public space to accommodate pedestrians through a wider sidewalk to improve pedestrian movement, bicycle parking areas and tree planting. All parking and loading areas would be located so as not to conflict with pedestrian movements.

Policy UD-3.1.7: Improving the Street Environment

Create attractive and interesting commercial streetscapes by promoting ground level retail and desirable street activities, making walking more comfortable and convenient, ensuring that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic, minimizing curb cuts and driveways, and avoiding windowless facades and gaps in the street wall.

The development would have ground floor retail uses with clear glass with the possibility of outdoor seating areas that would not conflict with an eleven-foot wide pedestrian right-of-way.

Economic Development Element:

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.

Policy ED-3.1.1: Neighborhood Commercial Vitality

Promote the vitality and diversity of Washington's neighborhood commercial areas by retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and improving the mix of goods and services available to residents.

The proposal would develop an underutilized site with a mixed-use building providing new housing, 73,000 sf of modern retail spaces directly accessible from the sidewalk, and below-grade parking to serve both retail and residential uses. Many green components are incorporated into the design of the building, including the planting of new street trees and other improvements to the adjacent streetscape which would enhance the commercial vitality of H Street.

Capitol Hill Area Element

The Comprehensive Plan places the property within the Capitol Hill Area Element and describes the area as being developed with a mix of residential and small scale commercial uses. It anticipates that future development be directed to the H street corridor which is already zoned for commercial use and where redevelopment could reinforce the fabric of the neighborhood and provide needed housing and retail services. The policies generally recommend that residential use be retained and enhanced by new housing. The proposed development is not inconsistent with the area element.

Policy CH-1.1.3: Upgrading Commercial Districts:

Reinforce and upgrade the major commercial districts of Capitol Hill, including the H Street and Benning Road corridors.

Policy CH-1.1.9: Conversion of Non-Residential Structures:

Allow the conversion of obsolete or vacant non-residential structures (including schools, churches, warehouses, and institutional uses) to housing, provided that important architectural resources are conserved and the resulting development is consistent in density with surrounding uses. 1508.1

Policy CH-2.1.2: Clustering of Retail

Recognize that the existing supply of retail space on the H Street NE corridor may exceed demand, and that retail development should therefore be clustered on the 700-1100 blocks. 1511.7

This project would support these policies through the anticipated upgrade of this important commercial district, enabling the conversion or redevelopment of current underutilized non-residential structures and significantly adding valuable retail square footage within one development.

VI. AGENCY REFERRALS AND COMMENTS

OP held an interagency meeting on February 27, 2013 to discuss aspects of the development and solicit comments from the following agencies:

1. District Department of the Environment (DDOE);
2. District Department of Transportation (DDOT) ;
3. District Department of Public Works (DPW);
4. DC Water;
5. Fire and Emergency Management (FEMS); and the
6. Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

The agencies were generally supportive of the development proposal. DC Water and FEMS would continue to coordinate with the applicant throughout the building permit phases. The District Department of Transportation and the Department of the Environment would submit their comments under separate cover to the Commission.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 6C voted unanimously to support the project as originally presented and has submitted its comments to the Commission in its letter dated January 16, 2013. Since the alternative grocery design has been offered, the applicant has submitted this proposal to the ANC and OP anticipates that comments regarding this alternative would also be submitted to the Commission.

OP also notes that the affected property owner at 819 6th Street met with OP and the concerns have been discussed prior hereto regarding mitigation measures to address the property owner's concerns.

VIII. CONCLUSION

OP supports the alternatives presented for the site's redevelopment as it would increase the residential units along the corridor and expand the retail opportunities for residents in Ward 6, although OP prefers both the retail and loading strategy of Alternative II. OP encourages the applicant to continue working with the affected property owner to address concerns prior to and during construction, as well as providing a construction management plan to the Commission prior to final approval.