

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:**  Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director Development Review & Historical Preservation

**DATE:** June 2, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Commission Case No. 14-01 – Final Report: Consolidated PUD and related Map Amendment from C-M-2 to C-3-C, 1401-1535 New York Avenue (Square 4037, Parts of Lots 0007 and 0804

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**I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) **recommends approval** of Zoning Commission Case No. 14-01, a consolidated PUD request of Jemal’s Hechts (the Applicant) for portions of Lots 0007 and 0804 in Square 4037, with a related map amendment from C-M-2 to C-3-C and the following requested flexibility:

- To provide the required on-site parking spaces off-site (§2101);
- To allow the rooftop structure requirements with varied heights (§411); and
- To vary the number of proposed residential units (+/- 10%);

The requested C-3-C district would support the written elements of the Comprehensive Plan, which addresses the adaptive reuse of historic resources and would not be inconsistent with the Future Land Use and Generalized Policy maps, as explained within the report.

**II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF**

**Location:** The corner of Fenwick Street and New York Avenue, NE; Square 4037, parts of Lots 0007 & 0804; Ward 5, ANC 5D.

**Applicant:** Jemal’s Hechts

**Current Zoning:** C-M-2

**Property Size:** 119,037.9 square feet (PUD site)

**Proposal:** Renovate, reuse, and construct additions to the landmarked 1937 Hecht’s Warehouse as a mixed use building, including 338 residential units on the upper floors; and provide service/retail uses with some offices on the first and second floors. The maximum height would be 98.6 feet. The overall FAR would be 4.6.

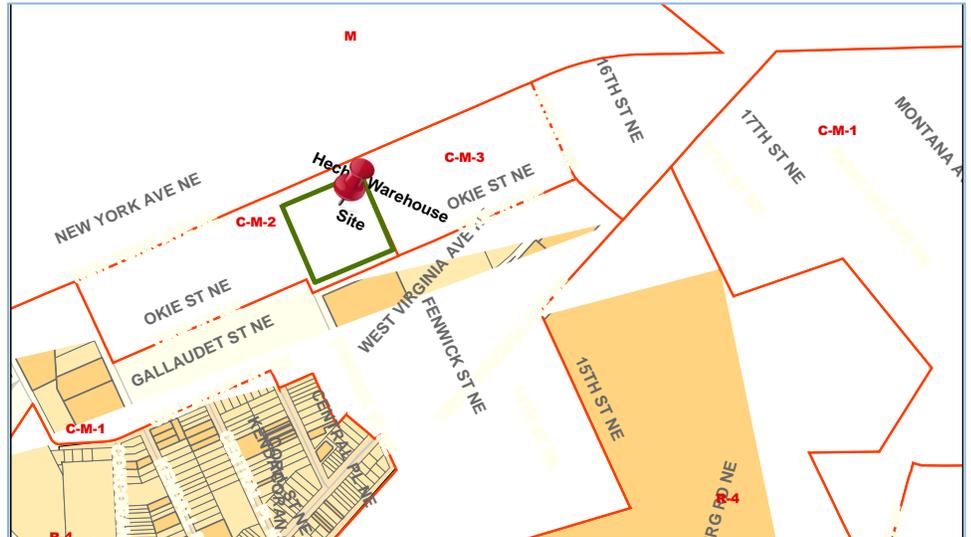
**Relief and Zoning:** Pursuant to 11 DCMR Chapter 24, the applicant is seeking:

1. PUD-related map amendment to C-3-C
2. Flexibility to provide the required on-site parking spaces off-site (§2101)
3. Flexibility from rooftop structure requirements with varied heights (§411)
4. Flexibility to vary the number of proposed residential units (+/- 10%)

### III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is located on the western portion of Square 4037, on a flat rectangular parcel bounded by New York Avenue to the north, Okie Street to the south, 16<sup>th</sup> Street NE to the east and Fenwick Street to the west. The historic warehouse complex known as the Hecht's Warehouse has three contributing portions developed in 1948 and 1961. The warehouse has not been in operation for the past eight years.

The Zoning Commission recently approved a map amendment from the C-M-2 to C-M-3 district on the eastern portion of the square, including a portion of Lots 804 and 0007. The site is surrounded by parcels which are typically developed with one and two-story buildings that are either vacant or currently underutilized and within the C-M-2 and C-M-3 districts. Residential row homes and small apartment buildings are located within walking distance, south of the square, in the R-4 district.



### IV. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The consolidated PUD and related map amendment, from C-M-2 to C-3-C for a portion of Square 4037 is requested to enable the adaptive reuse of the vacant 545,000 sf warehouse as a mixed-use building, proposed for office, residential and retail/service uses and to permit additions to that building.

The revised plan dated May 23, 2014 proposes up to 175,404 square feet of retail and service space on the first two levels of the building, with adaptive reuse to residential above. The revision also includes the addition of a seventh floor level on the roof of the six-story 1937 and 1948 portions of the building, set back 24 feet on all sides, the equivalent of one structural bay. A two-story addition is proposed atop the four-story 1961 wing, set back 24 feet on New York Avenue and 5 feet on the east and south sides of the wing. The additions would be clad in metal panels and vertical glass panes. Approximately 338 residential units are proposed, consisting primarily of one-bedroom units, with ten percent of the residential units dedicated to residents between 50% and 80% AMI.

After considering many different alternatives, the applicant decided to replace the distinctive but severely deteriorated glass blocks with in-kind replacements using the original molds. The steel windows will be refabricated to allow for double glazing and improved operability, but with the same profiles. On the ground level, the storefront openings will be opened up and restored to their original glazed condition.

Three new light courts would be created in the center of the building extending down to the third floor to allow maximum light into the residential units. Courtyard areas for light and air access to the units are shown provided on all residential floors, third through seventh. (Pgs. 15 – 19).

Vehicular traffic to the site would be provided from a new private street proposed as Hecht Avenue, as shown in the plans. Parking is proposed to be located within an adjacent parking structure currently under construction to the east of the building. Loading facilities would be provided with access from Okie Street. (Site and Circulation Plan, pg 11, May 23, 2014).

### V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

#### Future Land Use Map (FLUM):

The property is designated for PDR (Production, Distribution and Repair) [purple on map], which include a broad range of manufacturing, warehousing, technical, infrastructure, transportation, retail and commercial uses. Unlike most other land use categories, PDR Future Land Use Map designations are not graded by intensity of use

#### Generalized Policy Map:

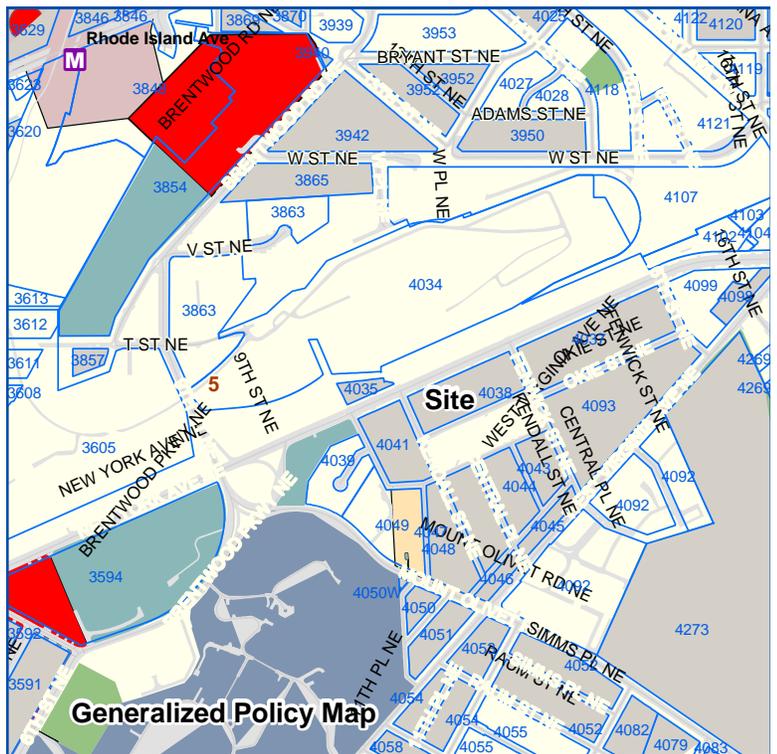
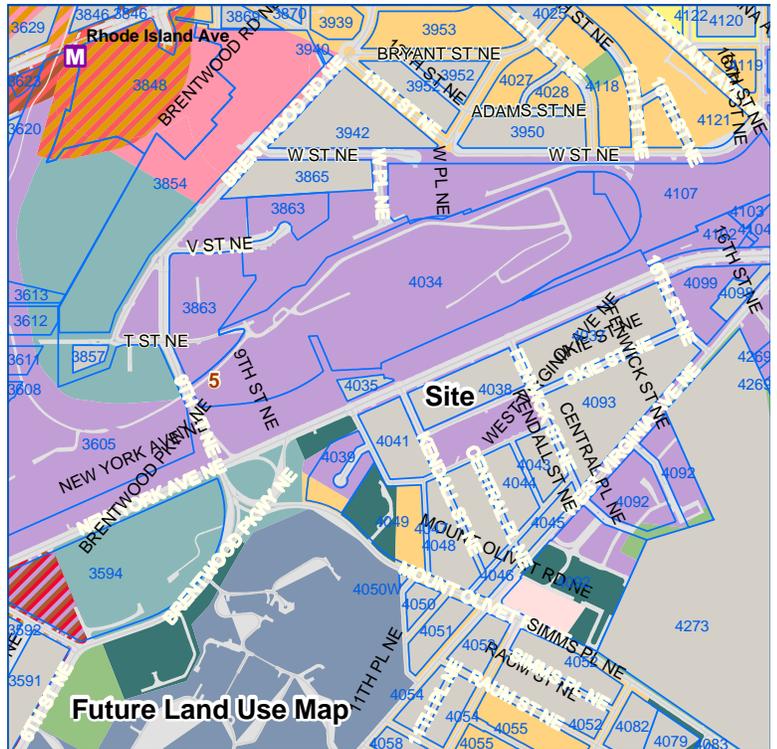
The property is in the Neighborhood Conservation Area (NCA) category [white on map]. Policies for an NCA are intended to maintain or enhance existing land use and neighborhood characteristics, rather than guiding these areas toward significant changes of uses and characteristics.

#### Comprehensive Plan Elements:

As more fully described in the attachment at the end of this report, the requested rezoning is supported by the written elements of the Comprehensive Plan – particularly policies within the Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Urban Design, and Historic Preservation Citywide Elements, and the Upper Northeast Area Element, particularly related to the New York Avenue corridor.

Typically, the Office of Planning would have difficulty supporting a proposal for a residential mixed use development in the PDR land use category. In this case, the exceptional situation of the already developed site, including its existing historic building, FAR and height; its location on a major District avenue; and the changed nature of industrial uses and their requirements support the proposal. The proposal includes the provision of a high level of housing affordability and quality ground floor retail space through the adaptive reuse of a prominent historic vacant building, which would also be supported by the Generalized Policy Map and Comprehensive Plan policy statements.

The requested PUD-related map amendment would not threaten the stability of adjacent PDR uses, nearby residential uses, or other mixed use commercial areas located in the general area.



**VI. ZONING**

The table below compares the existing C-M-2 zoning with the requested C-3-C PUD standards and the proposed development.

Item	Existing C-M-2	C-3-C (M-O-R)	C-3-C PUD	Proposal	Flexibility
<b>Height</b>	60 ft.	90 ft. max	130 ft.	98.6 ft.	Conforms
<b>Floor Area Ratio</b>	4.0	6.0	8.0 max	4.6	Conforms
<b>Lot Occupancy</b>	No maximum	100 % permitted	100 % permitted	86%	Conforms
<b>Rear Yard</b>	Above 20 feet, 2.5 in. / ft. height, but ≥ 12 ft.	Above 20 feet, 2.5 in. / ft. height, but ≥ 12 ft.	Above 20 feet, 2.5 in. / ft. height, but ≥ 12 ft.	27 ft.	Conforms
<b>Side Yard</b>	None required	None required	None required	N/A	-
<b>Courts</b>	4"/ft. ht. (14.5ft min) no courts existing	4"/ft. ht.	4"/ft. ht.	39' 6" (min)	Conforms
<b>Penthouse heights</b>	18.5 ft. (max) Existing:	18.5 ft.	18.5 ft.	23', 22', 19.5' and 15 ft.	<b>Flexibility requested</b>
<b>Parking Minimum</b>	1/3000 sf commercial (office); 1/1000sf PDR 236 spaces required	1/3000 sf commercial (office); 1/1000 sf PDR 236 spaces required	No spaces required due to historic landmark, §2120	<b>1,067 spaces to be provided in an adjacent parking structure.</b>	<b>Flexibility requested</b>
<b>Uses</b>					
<b>Office, Retail, PDR, Service</b>	Allowed	Allowed except PDR uses	Allowed except PDR uses	<b>Residential, office, retail/service uses</b>	<b>Flexibility requested to vary number of residential units</b>
<b>Residential Uses</b>	Not allowed	Allowed	Allowed		
<b>Loading</b>					
<b>Retail</b>	-	Historic landmark – No requirement	Historic landmark – No requirement	1berths @ 55 ft. deep 1 platform @200 sf	
<b>Residential</b>	-				
<b>Existing Warehouse</b>					1 berth@ 28ft deep 1 platform @ 200sf
	1loading berth @ 30'; 3@ 55' required; 8@ 24' existing 1platform @ 100 sf; 3@ 200 sf. required; 8 @ 200 sf existing)				

## **VII. FLEXIBILITY**

The proposal requires flexibility from the specific zoning regulations listed below.

### **1. PUD-related map amendment**

The height and FAR permitted by the C-3-C PUD regulations is requested to allow the historic resource building is to be repurposed as proposed. A PUD in the existing zone can have a maximum height of 90 feet and maximum FAR of 4.0. The existing building has a maximum height of 87.65 feet and six stories - 27 feet higher than permitted by right in the C-M-2 zone, while the proposed building would have a height of 98.6 feet. The proposed building with the additions would have an FAR of 4.6, approximately the same as the existing building, and only slightly above FAR permitted by-right in the underlying zone.

As a landmarked structure, it is unlikely that the entire building could accommodate PDR uses. The applicant has indicated that since its purchase in 2011, prospective retailers showed interest only in the ground floor of the warehouse, rendering other levels of the building obsolete. The building represents one of only a few District landmarks in an industrial district and the proposed reuse of the upper floors as residential represents a small portion of the overall development potential of the square. OP does not object to the proposed map amendment, as it is based on the exceptional physical attributes of the existing historic resource, including its height and FAR.

### **2. Flexibility from on-site parking requirements (§2101)**

As a landmark structure, providing the required on-site parking for the proposed variety of uses would result in structural difficulty in maintaining the integrity of the historic resource (§ 2120.6). Instead, the applicant is proposing that parking for the future retail and residential uses would be located in a 1,000 space parking structure recently constructed to the east of the site. The provision of on-site bike storage and bike racks would encourage use of the Metropolitan Branch Trail, which can be accessed within a mile to the west of the site, and to provide bike and pedestrian access to metro stations and other parts of the city. OP has no objection to the requested flexibility.

### **3. Flexibility from the rooftop structure requirements (§411)**

The zoning regulations require that the walls of a rooftop structure all be of equal height. In this case, the existing resource has multiple structures of varying heights, including 23 ft.; 22 ft. and 19.5 ft. An additional roof structure would be added at 15 ft. in height, which would not exceed the 18.5 ft. maximum. A single enclosure would be impractical due to the locations of the elevators and mechanical penthouse. If all rooftop structures were enclosed in one wall it would increase the visibility of the rooftop structure from the surrounding neighborhood and would detract from the historic character of the landmark structure. OP does not object to the flexibility requested from the roof structure requirements of § 411.

The applicant has also requested flexibility in the number of units to be provided, to continue refinement of the interior design for the residential program. The applicant was encouraged to explore the allocation of some live/work rental units for District residents, as expressed by the community in its responses to the 2013 Ward 5 Industrial Study. The applicant subsequently revised previous plans and included an addition to the roof above the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, extending the fifth and sixth floors. This resulted in an increase in the unit count from 270 units to 338 units. The unit mix now includes 10 units at 50% AMI and 24 units at 80% AMI, distributed from the third through the seventh floor. Five units within the 50% AMI category are two-bedroom units, as are 7 within the 80% AMI category.

## **VIII. Purpose and Evaluation Standards of a PUD**

The purpose and standards for Planned Unit Developments are outlined in 11 DCMR, Chapter 24. The PUD process is “designed to encourage high quality developments that provide public benefits.” Through the flexibility of the PUD process, a development that provides amenity to the surrounding neighborhood can be achieved.

The application exceeds the minimum site area requirements of Section 2401.1(c) to request a PUD. The applicant is requesting a consolidated PUD and a first stage PUD, and both with a related map amendment. The PUD standards state that the “impact of the project on the surrounding area and upon the operations of city services and facilities shall not 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” (§2403.3).

### **IX. Public Benefits and Amenities**

In its review of a PUD application, §2403.8 states that “the Commission shall judge, balance, and reconcile the relative value of the project amenities and public benefits offered, the degree of development incentives requested, and any potential adverse effects according to the specific circumstances of the case.” 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***

As noted by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) report:

*“The Hecht Company Warehouse is one of the finest examples of Streamline Modern design in the country, embodying the machine age aesthetic of the 1930s. When completed in 1937, it was heralded for its pioneering design and is now nationally recognized for its early, innovative and extensive use of glass block. With its rounded corners, prismatic tower, glazed black and buff colored brick alternating with glass block, the building was a striking addition to the light industrial area where it was constructed.” (Dec 19, 2013)*

The building would retain its character and the proposed replacement of damaged glass block, steel windows, and recreation of the missing storefront windows was evaluated by the HPRB as consistent with the Board’s standard for landmark buildings. Replacement materials to be used on the façade of the building would be similar to the original design. The proposed upper floor additions have received concept approval by the HPRB.

The building’s design and layout makes it ideal for the adaptive reuse for housing on the upper floors, while still providing ample accommodations for commercial uses on the first and second floors. Proposed courtyards within the building would allow sunlight to units that would not front New York Avenue or surrounding streets. The subject property would be easily accessible from Fenwick Street via New York Avenue heading east, Okie Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Street NE. A private street, Hecht’s Avenue would be opened to provide another access point between New York Avenue and Okie Street.

#### ***Parking and Transportation Demand Management***

Parking for both residential and commercial uses would be satisfied by the 1,000 parking spaces designed into the new parking structure proposed across Hecht Avenue. Bicycle parking would be provided within and outside of the building. The subject property is not within short walking distance to the nearest Metro Station, but there are bus routes along New York Avenue. The Applicant proposed to incorporate the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to encourage transportation alternatives:

- Covered and secured bike parking/storage facilities for retail employees and residents;
- Unbundling of parking costs from the cost of lease or purchase of residential units;
- Provision of a transit screen in the residential lobby to inform on carsharing, bikeshare and other non-auto related services;
- Provision of website links on property management websites;
- Provision of a contracted shuttle service for residents to connect with the NoMa/Gallaudet Metro Station;
- Identification of a TDM leader for the project (for planning construction and operations);
- Provision of a transportation kiosk in the residential lobby. (*Traffic Study May 5, 2014*)

DDOT will submit comments on the adequacy of these measures independent of this report.

### ***Housing***

The proposed development would provide up to 338 residential units. As an existing historic structure, where the gross floor area was not increased by 50% or more, IZ regulations are not required. However, 10% of the units would qualify as IZ units if this were a new development and would exceed the IZ requirements. The housing affordability was improved through the provision of 10 units at 50% AMI, which would be located on the third, fifth, sixth and seventh floors. Half of the number within this category would be two-bedroom units. Twenty-four units would be made available for residents within the 80% AMI category.

The proposed unit breakdown is as follows:

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Total/addition</b>		<b>Total w/out addition</b>	
Micro	3	0.9 %	0	0.00%
Studio	56	16.6 %	52	18.3%
Jr. One Bedroom	100	29.6 %	85	29.9%
One bed	68	20.1 %	56	19.7 %
One bed./den	7	2.1 %	7	2.5 %
Two bed.	98	29.0 %	82	28.9 %
Two bed/den	0	0.0 %	0	0.0%
Three bed.	4	1.2 %	0	0.00%
Three be./den	2	0.6 %	2	0.7 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>100%</b>

*from applicant*

### ***Green Elements, Landscaping and Streetscape Design***

The proposal would incorporate sustainable features into the development and the building would be reengineered to target LEED silver equivalent (pg 27). Green roof would be provided, although the specific square footage has not been provided on the plans (Roof Plan, pg. 20). Landscaping of the area around and within the development (courtyards) is would consist of large deciduous trees along the streets. As streetscape design is currently lacking in this area along New York Avenue this would be considered an amenity. New street lights would be included as part of the street furniture for the new street and around the building. The applicant should provide the area devoted to green roof and provide the green area ratio for the redeveloped site (§ 3400).

### ***Local Business Opportunities and First Source Agreements***

New employment opportunities would be generated from the redevelopment of the site and the Applicant states that they would enter into a Certified Business Enterprises (CBE) agreement with the District of Columbia Local Business Opportunity Commission and execute a First Source Employment Agreement with Department of Employment Services (DOES). The Applicant should provide signed agreements to implement the programs prior to final action.

### ***Use of Special Value***

The proposed development would be of special value to the community as it would serve to continue the revitalization of the neighborhood and provide new homeownership opportunities as well as contribute to the improvement of the community at large. The return of this large property back into productive use would contribute to the stability of the area. Based on additional discussion with the community, the applicant agreed to provide \$50,000 towards improvement of the park located on Capital Avenue and Kendall Street NE. Specifically, the improvement would include new playground equipment, repair of broken concrete and fencing, and clean-up of landscaped areas within the park. The attractiveness of New York Avenue would be furthered as it is unlikely.

**Public Amenities and Project Amenities**

Amenity package evaluation is partially based on an assessment of the additional development gained through the application process. In this case, the PUD-related map amendment to C-3-C with a maximum building height of 130 feet and an overall FAR of 8.0 would realize the gain of twenty-eight feet in height. The proposed FAR is well below the 6.5 FAR permitted as a matter-of-right for the proposed zone. The table below is OP's categorization of the proposed items.

Requirement	Existing	C-M-2 (M-O-R)	C-3-C PUD	Proposed
FAR	4.6	4.0	6.5 (M-O-R); 8.0 max (PUD)	4.6
GFA	546,593 sq.ft.	476,151.6 sq.ft.	952,303.2 sq.ft. maximum (PUD)	542,315.7 sq.ft.
Building Height	87.7 feet	60 feet (max.)	130 ft. (PUD Max.)	98.6 ft.
Lot occupancy	86%	No max.	100%	86%

Applicant's Amenities/Benefits	Required	Mitigation	Public Benefit	Project Amenity
New Housing			X	X
Affordable Housing	X		X	X
Affordable Housing 50% AMI			X	X
\$50,000 for neighborhood park improvement			X	X
Connectivity (new street)			X	X
Bike Parking	X	X	X	X
Landscaping	X	X	X	X
Green roof and LEED elements		X	X	X
Employment Opportunities	X		X	X

The site's redevelopment would include affordable housing where none could exist as a matter-of-right, inclusion of sustainable features and employment and training opportunities for the residents and local businesses. It is particularly strong in the efficient land utilization, urban design and uses of special value to the neighborhood categories. OP requests that the Applicant provide more details and provide additional analysis of the proposed benefits, amenities, and mitigation prior to the public hearing.

**X. AGENCY REFERRALS**

Comments were requested from District agencies, including:

- The District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- The District Department of Environment (DOES)
- The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); and
- DC Water

The applicant has been working with DDOT, including its review of the applicant's Traffic Impact Study. DDOT's report would be submitted under separate cover. No other comments were received to date from the contacted agencies.

#### **XI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

The site is located in ANC 5D, which has submitted a report recommending approval of the proposal (exhibit 24). OP is aware of no community opposition to the proposal.

#### **XII. COMMISSION REQUESTS**

In its April 1, 2014 Prehearing Statement submission (Exhibit 17 of the record) the applicant provided a chart in response to the Commission's concerns expressed at setdown. The applicant revised its original submission and included a completed project traffic impact analysis, additional details about the allocation of residential units, and additional information on a recently agreed to project benefit, as discussed prior (May 23, 2014).

#### **XIII. SUMMARY**

OP recommends approval of the application to restore this long vacant site and prominent historic building to accommodate a mix of commercial space and affordable residential units where none would exist as a matter-of-right. Due to the unique circumstances of this property, as outlined in this report, this proposal and the related map amendment would not be a precedent for future amendments within the PDR zone, but represents an exceptional situation. The proposal, when viewed against the maps and policy statements, would be not inconsistent Comprehensive Plan.

JS/kt  
Karen Thomas, Case Manager

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - WRITTEN ELEMENTS**

The requested rezoning is supported by the written elements of the Comprehensive Plan – particularly policies for Industrial Land, the Upper Northeast Element, the New York Avenue corridor, and Historic Preservation.

### **a. Land Use**

*The efficient use of land resources to meet the long-term neighborhood, citywide, and regional needs; to help foster other District goals; to protect the health, safety, and welfare of District residents and businesses; to sustain, restore, or improve the character and stability of neighborhoods in all parts of the city; and to effectively balance the competing demands for land to support the many activities that take place within District boundaries. (10A DCMR §300.2)*

#### **Policy LU-2.2.3 Restoration or Removal of Vacant and Abandoned Buildings**

*Reduce the number of vacant and abandoned buildings in the city through renovation, **rehabilitation**, and where necessary, demolition...*

#### **Policy LU-3.1.1 Conservation of Industrial Land**

*Recognize the importance of industrial land to the economy of the District of Columbia, specifically its ability to support public works functions, and accommodate production, distribution, and repair (PDR) activities. Ensure that zoning regulations and land use decisions protect active and viable PDR land uses, while allowing compatible office and retail uses and development under standards established within CM- and M- zoning. Economic development programs should work to retain and permit such uses in the future.*

#### **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.).*

The development as proposed would revitalize a site that has been without a productive use for a decade, while preserving the majority of the square within the C-M-3 district.

### **b. Housing Element.**

#### **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. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long-term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for higher-density housing. 503.4*

#### **Policy H-1.2.7 Density Bonuses for**

*Affordable Housing - Provide zoning incentives to developers proposing to build low- and moderate-income housing. Affordable housing shall be considered a public benefit for the purposes of granting density bonuses when new development is proposed. Density bonuses should be granted in historic districts only when the effect of such increased density does not significantly undermine the character of the neighborhood. 504.14*

The proposal would include the addition of new residential development, including a significant number of affordable units, on a major DC corridor, without resulting in the loss of any existing housing units.

**c. 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. Promote the creation of locally-owned, non-chain establishments because of their role in creating unique shopping experiences. 708.7*

The proposal also includes the provision of a significant amount of new retail, to serve local residents, DC residents, and commuters.

**d. 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. 906.6*

The proposed refurbishment and reuse of this prominent historic building would help to improve the character of New York Avenue, a major corridor in the city.

**e. Historic Preservation Element.**

***Policy HP-2.4.2 Adaptation of Historic Properties for Current Use***

*Maintain historic properties in their original use to the greatest extent possible. If this is no longer feasible, encourage appropriate adaptive uses consistent with the character of the property.*

The applicant owns all of the land in Square 4037 and has begun development on the eastern portion of the square in order to help secure financing for the restoration and adaptation of the vacant warehouse landmark. The project has been reviewed by the Historic Preservation Board to assess the appropriate nature of development within the warehouse, and the Board agreed that as proposed "*the majority of the floor assemblies would remain intact and the extent of removal would not compromise important character-defining features of the building*". The Board has also given concept design review of the proposed new residential floors on top of the existing building. The proposed residential use on the upper floors would help preserve the integrity of the historic structure over and above other commercial uses.

**f. Upper Northeast Area Element**

***Planning and Development Priorities:***

*"The area's major thoroughfares need to be improved. New York Avenue is the gateway to the Nation's capital for over 100,000 vehicles a day and provides the first impression of Upper Northeast (and the District of Columbia) for many residents, commuters, and visitors. Its motels and fast food joints, used car lots, chop shops, strip clubs, salvage yards, and warehouses do not project a positive image. ... The community wishes to see these corridors upgraded, without diverting traffic to other thoroughfares and residential streets nearby."*

***Policy UNE-1.1.8 Untapped Economic Development Potential:***

*"Recognize the significant potential of the area's commercially and industrially-zoned lands, particularly along the New York Avenue corridor ... to generate jobs, provide new shopping opportunities, enhance existing businesses, create new business ownership opportunities, and promote the vitality and economic well-being of the Upper Northeast community. The uses, height, and bulk permitted under the existing M and CM-1 zones are expected to remain for the foreseeable future."*

***Policy UNE-1.1.9 Production, Distribution, and Repair Uses:*** *Retain the existing concentration of production, distribution, and repair (PDR) uses in Upper Northeast, but encourage the upgrading of these uses through higher design standards, landscaping, and improved screening and buffering. Emphasize new uses, including retail and office space, that create jobs for Upper Northeast area residents, and that minimize off-site impacts on the surrounding residential areas.*

***Policy UNE-2.3.2 Production, Distribution, and Repair Land Uses:***

*Retain a significant concentration of production, distribution, and repair (PDR) land uses in the New York Avenue corridor...*

***Policy UNE-2.3.3 Infill Development:***

*Support infill development and redevelopment on underutilized commercial sites along New York Avenue. Particularly encourage large-format destination retail development that would provide better access to goods and services for residents, and sales tax dollars for the District.*

***Policy UNE-2.3.1 New York Avenue Corridor***

*Improve the appearance of New York Avenue as a gateway to the District of Columbia. Support road design changes, streetscape improvements, and new land uses that improve traffic flow and enhance the road's operation as a multi-modal corridor that meets both regional and local needs.*

The requested map amendment and proposed development strike an appropriate balance between increasing the attractiveness of new PDR development on a portion of the Square, and minimizing pressure on replacing potential PDR uses with mixed uses on the rest of the Square, or on other parts of the corridor. It would also permit repurposing of an existing landmark with a height and density consistent along a major gateway corridor like New York Avenue.

Much of the District's industrially-zoned land is in the northeast quadrant, adjacent to rail tracks or New York Avenue, which is also a principal entrance to the city for visitors and commuters from the northeast. Accordingly, improving both the viability of the industrially-zoned land, and the appearance of the gateway street have been major objectives of the District for over three decades. The objectives reflected in these policies are more likely to be achieved with the requested map amendment.