



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission
FROM: *JL for* Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review and Historic Preservation
DATE: January 30, 2015
SUBJECT: **ZC 14-24: Map Amendment from the R-4 to R-5-B for Square 2848, Lots 39, 40, 72, and 838**

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

On December 23, 2014, 11th Street NW LLC (“Applicant”) filed a petition requesting the Zoning Commission to rezone Square 2848, Lots 39, 40, 72, and 838 from the R-4 zone to the R-5-B zone. The property is within ANC-1A. Although there is C-3-A zoning located to the west of the site, OP supports R-5-B zoning for these properties, to serve as a buffer with the lower density residential neighborhood to the east, similar to the R-5-B zoned land on squares to the north of this site (which were also rezoned from R-4 in Zoning Commission case 10-25). Therefore, OP recommends that the Zoning Commission **set down** for a public hearing the request to rezone these properties from R-4 to the R-5-B zone.

II. SITE & PROJECT DESCRIPTION

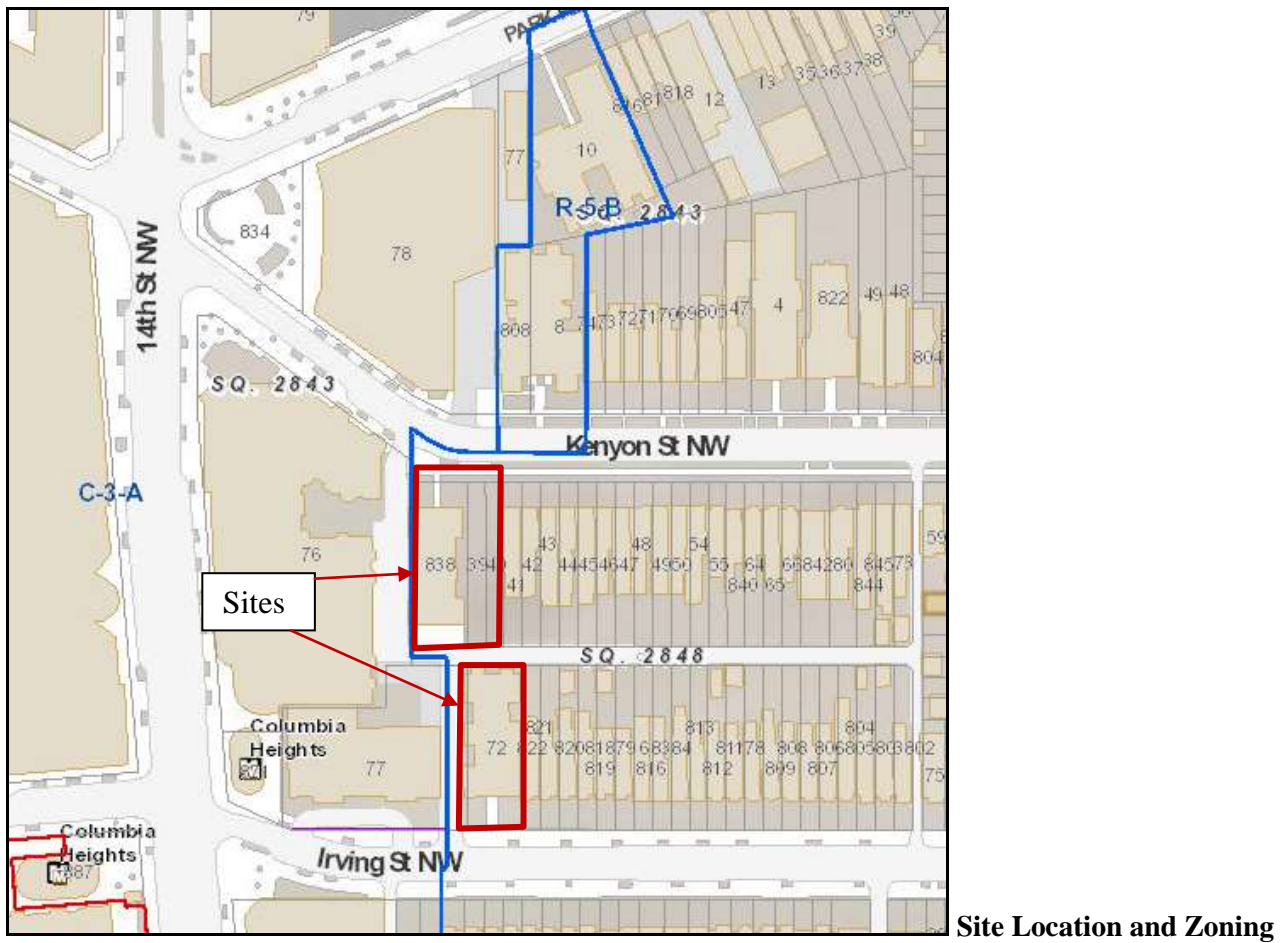
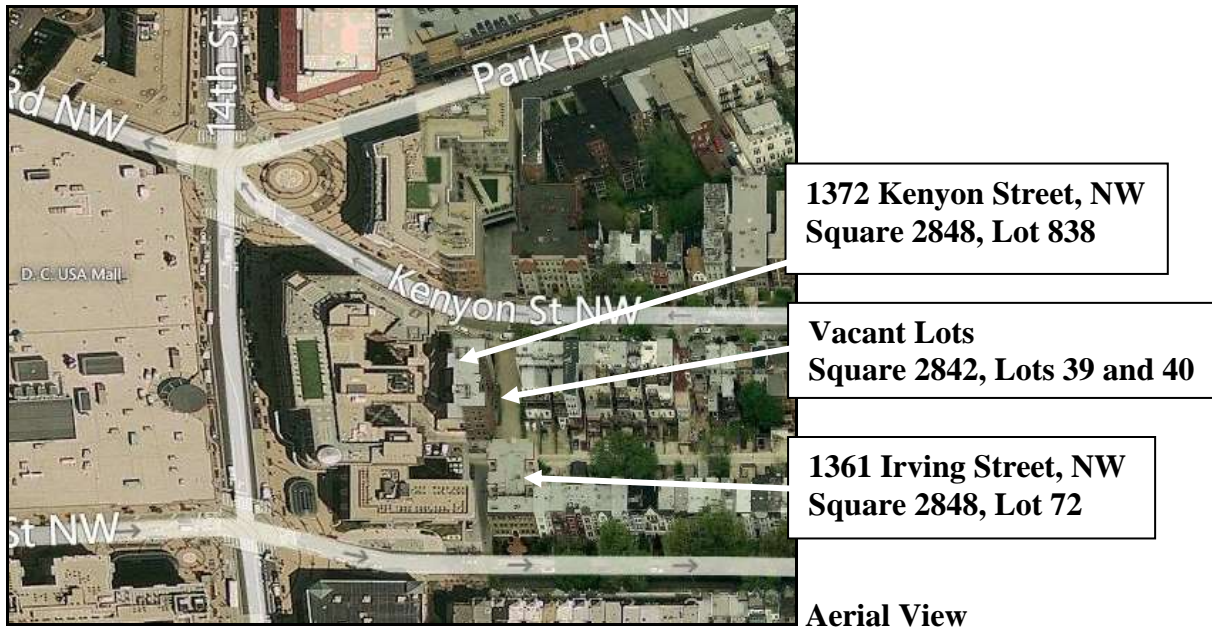
The properties proposed for rezoning are Lots 39, 40, 72, and 838 in Square 2848 and combine for a total of 19,768 square feet of land area. Lots 39 and 40 are vacant; Lot 72 is improved with a four story, 16 unit apartment building (Irving Station Condominiums), built in 1910 at 1361 Irving Street; and Lot 838 is improved with a four-story, 18 unit apartment building (The Kenyon Street Yes We Can Cooperative), built in 1910 at 1372 Kenyon Street, NW. The properties are all within the R-4 zone and the buildings are all currently occupied.

According to the application, the Applicant intends to subdivide Lots 39 and 40 into a single Record Lot of approximately 4,942 for development purposes. The R-5-B zoning would accommodate a small multifamily building on the now vacant lots and would bring the existing buildings into greater zoning conformity.

III. AREA DESCRIPTION

The area around the properties is improved with a range of commercial and residential uses. The 14th Street commercial corridor is half a block to the west and the Columbia Heights Metro Station entrance is approximately 800 feet west of Lot 72. Directly west of the site is a seven story, apartment building, and a second seven story apartment building with ground floor retail fronting on 14th Street in the C-3-A zone. To the north is a six-story residential building with ground floor retail opening onto a public plaza along 14th Street and zoned C-3-A. The property is across from a four-story apartment building in the R-5-B zone. To the east of the site, along Kenyon Street, are single-family and multi-family residences, three and four-stories in height and sprinkled with a few retail uses, in the R-4 zone. The properties which border Lots 39 and 40 directly to the east are three and four-story residential row dwellings.





IV. ZONING

The Applicant has requested R-5-B zoning for these properties. The R-4 zone is designed to include areas developed primarily with row dwellings, but it also permits the conversion or expansion of existing buildings provided there is a minimum of 900 square feet of lot area for each dwelling unit. The R-5-B zone is designed to provide flexibility of residential building types, including multi-family residential buildings of moderate height and density. The R-5 zones are multifamily residential zones and density is calculated by Floor Area Ratio (FAR) with no minimum lot size requirement for each dwelling.

A comparison of certain existing characteristics of the subject buildings, and the corresponding bulk requirements for the existing and proposed zoning districts is provided below:

	Lot 72 (Existing)	Lots 838 (Existing)	Lots 39 & 40 (Vacant)	R-4 (Existing)	R-5-B (Proposed)
Height / Stories	50 ft./4 stories	50 ft./4 stories	N/A	40 ft. max./3 stories max.	50 ft. max., no story limit
FAR	2.7	2.9	N/A	N/A	1.8 max.
Units	16	18	N/A	900 sf/apartment min.	Not regulated
Lot Occupancy	70%	74%	N/A	60% Row dwelling or flat	60%

Under the existing R-4 zoning, for the highlighted features, the buildings on Lots 72 and 832 are currently non-conforming to the zone standards. Under the proposed R-5-B zoning, both buildings would remain non-conforming to FAR and lot occupancy; they would be allowed to be retained as existing non-conforming structures although and future building changes or additions may require some form of zoning relief, as is the case with the current R-4 zoning. However, the R-5-B zone would allow a conforming building to be constructed on Lots 39 and 40. The R-5-B zone is prevalent in the area, and typically covers similar apartment buildings located in a transitional area between the higher density development along 14th Street to the west, and the rowhouse development to the east. While there is also C-3-A zoning along 14th Street, this zone on the subject lots would allow considerable additional density, as well as commercial uses.

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan (Attachment 1) designates the properties for a mix of moderate density residential and medium density commercial. The proposed R-5-B zone is not inconsistent with this designation. As noted above, C-3-A is also located adjacent to the subject sites and within this Comprehensive Plan designation. However, given the context and existing zoning pattern, the use and density permitted by R-5-B is considered a more appropriate zone. The Comprehensive Plan states:

Moderate Density Residential: This designation is used to define the District’s row house neighborhoods, as well as its low-rise garden apartment complexes. The designation also applies to areas characterized by a mix of single family homes, 2-4 unit buildings, row houses, and low-rise apartment buildings. In some of the older inner city neighborhoods with this designation, there may also be existing multi-story apartments, many built decades ago when the areas were zoned for more dense uses (or were not zoned at all). The R-3, R-4, R-5-A Zone districts are generally consistent with the Moderate Density Residential category; the R-5-B district and other zones may also apply in some locations. 225.4

The existing multistory apartment buildings within the site area were constructed prior to the 1958 zoning designation and are recognized as appropriate for the Moderate Density Residential designation. The vacant parcels could be constructed to meet the proposed R-5-B zone and the moderate density residential standards. OP estimates that nearly half of all R-5-B zones in the District have a Residential Moderate Density designation and therefore R-5-B zone is appropriate for this location

The Generalized Policy Map (Attachment 2) designates the property within a Neighborhood Conservation Area. The proposal would be consistent with this recommendation as the existing buildings are a part of the existing neighborhood character and R-5-B zone would allow the vacant lots to be developed at a complementary scale and character.

The Comprehensive Plan also provides the following policy guidance with which the proposal would not be inconsistent:

Policy LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations: *Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance. Ensure that development above and around such stations emphasizes land uses and building forms which minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas. 306.11*

Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development: *Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create "gaps" in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern. 307.5.*

Policy LU-1.4.3: Zoning of Infill Sites: *Ensure that the zoning of vacant infill sites is compatible with the prevailing development pattern in surrounding neighborhoods. This is particularly important in single family and row house neighborhoods that are currently zoned for multi-family development. 307.7*

Policy LU-2.1.8: Zoning of Low and Moderate Density Neighborhoods

"Discourage the zoning of areas currently developed with single family homes, duplexes, and rowhouses (e.g., R-1 through R-4) for multi-family apartments (e.g., R-5) where such action would likely result in demolition of housing in good condition and its replacement with structures that are potentially out of character with the existing neighborhood. 309.13

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. 503.2*

Policy MC-1.1.1: Neighborhood Conservation: *Retain and reinforce the historic character of Mid-City neighborhoods, particularly its row houses, older apartment houses, historic districts, and walkable neighborhood shopping districts. The area's rich architectural heritage and cultural history should be protected and enhanced. 2008.2*

Policy MC-1.1.2: Directing Growth: *Stimulate high-quality transit-oriented development around the Columbia Heights, Shaw/Howard University, and U St./African American Civil War*

Memorial/Cardozo Metrorail station areas, as well as along the Georgia Avenue corridor and the North Capitol Street/Florida Avenue business district. Opportunities for new mixed income housing, neighborhood retail, local-serving offices, and community services should be supported in these areas, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Policy-Map and Future Land Use Map. 2008.3

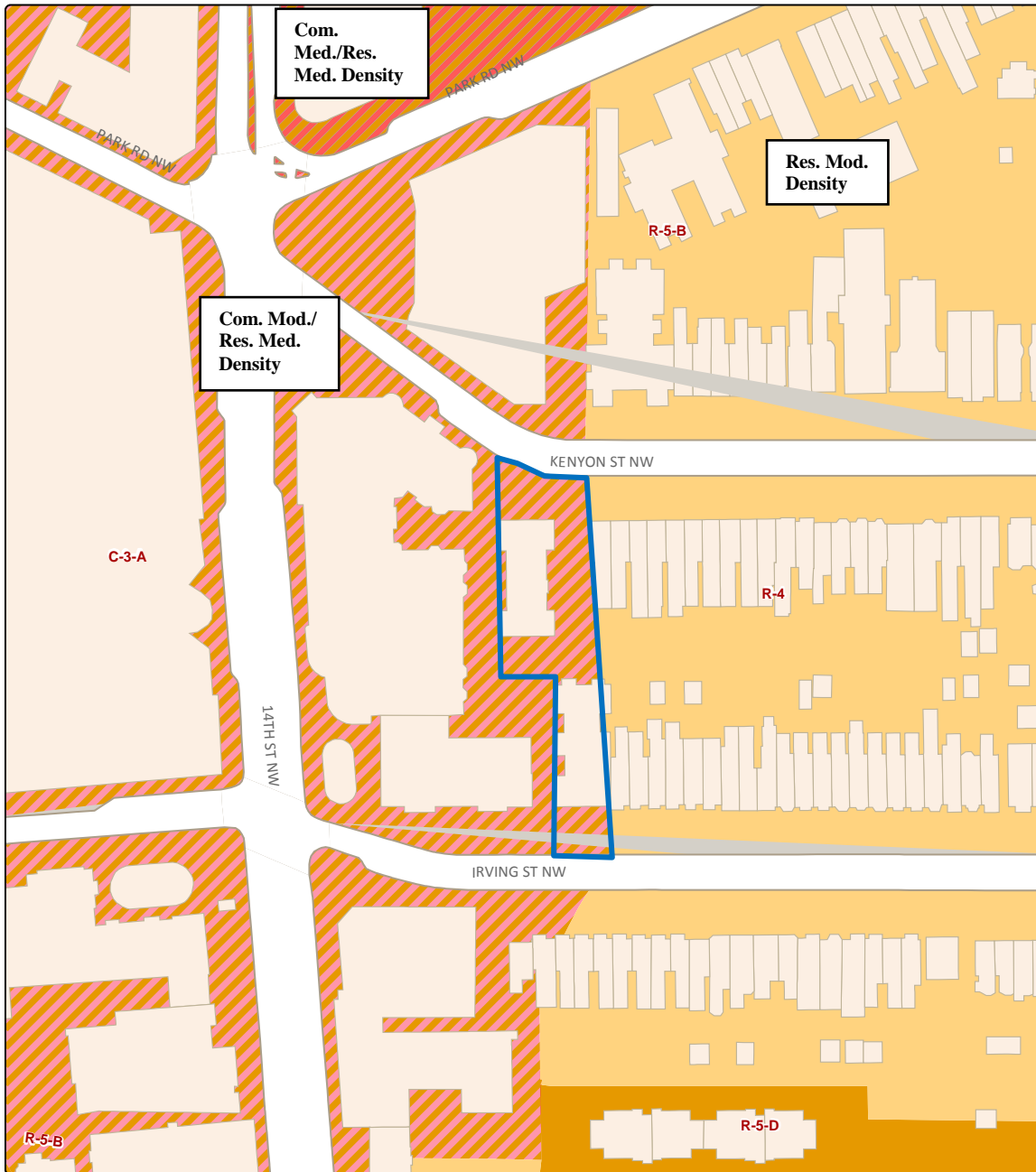
Policy MC-2.2.1: Columbia Heights Metro Station Area Development: *Develop the Columbia Heights Metro Station area as a thriving mixed use community center, anchored by mixed income housing, community-serving retail, offices, civic uses, and public plazas. Strive to retain the neighborhood's extraordinary cultural diversity as development takes place, and place a priority on development and services that meet the needs of local residents. 2012.7*

VI. CONCLUSION

The proposed map amendment would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use and Generalized Policy Maps. The Office of Planning recommends that the proposed Zoning Map amendment be **set down for public hearing**.

JLS/mbr

ATTACHMENT 1 – Future Land Use Map



ATTACHMENT 2 – Generalized Policy Map

