

Community Development Committee
April 27, 2005
7:00 pm

In attendance:

Matt Raymond, Chair	(4-0)		
Jim Richardson, 2F02	(3-1)	Mike Shaeffer, 2F05	(2-1)
Jim Cook, 2F02	(4-0)	Helen Kramer- at large	(2-0)
Sandra Biasillo, 2F05	(3-1)	Sam Robfogel, 2F01	(2-1)
Jim Loucks, 2F06	(3-1)		
Kevin Ivers, 2F04	(3-1)	Absent:	
Chris Dyer, 2F03	(3-1)	Kara McCabe, 2F01	(2-2)
Mike Benardo, 2F06	(4-0)	David Rowley 2F03	(3-1)

Chair Matt Raymond called the meeting to order and began with self introductions, then introduced Hal Davitt, President of the Blagden Alley Association. Davitt thanked Sandra Biasillo and Chris Dyer for the wonderful job that they did running a community forum on the charter school proposed at 1234 9th St. NW.

Approval of Agenda

Kevin Ivers moved approval of the agenda. Biasillo seconded.

VOTE: Approved 11-0

Inclusionary Zoning

Eleanor Hart gave an overview of Inclusionary Zoning. An amendment has been submitted for approval. It would cover 63 areas of the city. Developers would be required to have 15% of the residences of a large development for low income families. Low income is defined by the median income level of the city. It would make housing more available for the working class—firefighters and police officers, etc. Developers would be permitted extra density for complying. Raymond asked what the ANC is being asked to do. Hart said that they would like the ANC to draft and send a resolution. A question was asked about resales. The owners of low income units would not be permitted to gain any extra equity for 20 years. If they sell, it would have to be at the same price. Allowances would be made for improvements. Kramer questioned the extra density, saying that Logan Circle has been very strict on height limitations, and that would be the most likely place that developers would look to put extra units. It would be a detriment to the historic district. Hart said that it would not be required in areas in historic district. Kramer said that most of Logan Circle is in an historic district. Hart said that there must be some part of Logan Circle not in an historic district as zoning provided the areas that would be affected. Ivers asked what the goal of this legislation would be. Hart said that it would address the affordable housing shortage and create more mixed housing in the District. There was a question about who or what department would oversee the project, and keep track of the resales, and who would live in them. There is no answer for this at this time. Steve Dickens said that this would work better for rental than for purchased units. Dyer said that he would like to move that the ANC at least ask the zoning commission to hold a hearing on this issue and that the ANC discuss the issue of affordable housing at an upcoming ANC meeting. Biasillo seconded. Raymond said that he thinks that this is something that needs to be addressed but does not think that this handles it, and that this recommendation should be for rental only. Ivers said that he did not feel that the CDC should support this amendment. Dyer said that he

would not accept any amendments to his motion, because he feels that affordable housing needs to be addressed by the ANC. Kramer asked if we could divide the motion, voting first on the proposal at hand, and then take a vote on discussing affordable housing. She suggested changing the motion to state that the CDC recommend that the ANC should take a vote as to whether it should support mandatory or voluntary incentives to developers for affordable housing for rental or sales units. Dyer accepted this motion. .

VOTE: Approved 8-2-1, Schaefer and Ivers dissenting, Loucks abstaining.

Strategic Convention Center Area Development Plan

Sandra Biasillo presented the strategic development plan recommendations of the committee. She is asking for the CDC's support of the committee's recommendations. The committee feels that the area lacks parking that is necessary for the business and residential development, and that the parking exemption for historic properties should be removed. There is also a lack of green space. They would like a publicly owned space set aside for green space and for a dog park, and they would like a neighborhood recreation space. Infrastructure improvements should be done first. The study encourages affordable housing but doesn't identify any ways to do it. The plan lacks discussion on social services agencies. They recommend the redevelopment of the Q Street market. The 11th Street corridor is slated to become a commercial corridor and they feel it is too late to become a commercial corridor. They recommend downzoning on a block by block basis. The committee put together an in-depth report on their recommendations. Benardo said that the Logan Circle review was very much in sync with these proposals.

Kramer said that she had a problem with the block by block downzoning on 11th Street as the BZA has a problem with spot zoning. Davitt said that many retailers do not consider space unless it is of a certain size and ceiling height. Dyer moved that the CDC recommend to the ANC approval of these recommendations with the exception of the downzoning issue. Kramer seconded.

VOTE: Approved 11-0.

Interim Use of old Convention Center site

Susan Linsky, and Patricia Zingsheim of the District of Columbia made the presentation. A feasibility study for the site was completed 18 months ago. It is an important emerging location in DC. The District wants it developed in an ecologically sound manner, that it be an events location and that the landscaping can be reused when the site is redeveloped. The site is being restored along the lines of the original L'Enfant design. There will be 1,000 parking places. The vehicular entrance will be off of 9th Street. The southwest corridor would be for events. Part can be used for parking while part is for events. There is a major bank of landscaping on the northern and southern ends of the site. The southern end is also a rain garden. These plans will be available for review on the mayor's website. There is a low wall along the north side that can be used for seating. This is an interim use—plans call for 3 years before the new development would begin. It is a short term parking lot—no monthly parking will be permitted. They are in discussions with the hotels nearby to use the lot for night time employees. There will be security cameras and call boxes in the lot. It will be staffed 24 hours a day. Kramer said that the city and office of planning should be commended for a design that is so good and that could have been really dreadful. There will be a parking operator selected in an RFP process. The reconstruction should be completed in October and ready for parking. It will not be a staging area for buses, but there will be space for 30 tour buses to park.

Furioso asked if the water draining option used in these plans would be available for other developers in the area, as it is not now. He thinks it could be a positive step in the right direction. Linsky said that it should make it easier for that use. There will be discounted parking provided to downtown churches on Sundays only. The CDC voiced unanimous support for the plans.

VOTE: Approved 11-0.

1212 9th Street

This is currently a parking lot. Steven Dickens of Walnut Street Design is proposing a mixed use building with retail on the ground floor and 3 floors of condos above. Ground floor is 100% coverage. It is a masonry building with a metal shingle mansard. The south alley elevation is set back on the penthouse level 8 ft. On the alley side, the building will have facades that make it look more like the one and two story buildings along the alley. There will be 17 parking spaces, one for each of the 11 units and the rest for retail. Dickens said that wasn't enough for a restaurant but that is most likely the use for the first floor. Kramer applauded the building design but asked if the front façade couldn't have more variance on the front wall. He said that the sidewalk was narrower than public space permitted and he wasn't able to do that. Kramer suggested varying the materials on the front. The sidewalk is 11'8" wide and has street lights on it. Furioso said that if a hood (necessary for a restaurant) was not put into the design it would be impossible to add to it later. Dickens said that there is space to locate it in the back where the kitchen would probably be located.

Kramer moved that the CDC recommend ANC send a letter of support to HPRB for conceptual height and massing and that any further refinements be brought back to the ANC for approval. Dyer seconded.

VOTE: Approved 11-0.

917 M Street

This is currently a parking lot. There is an historic garage on the alley that is part of the lot. The proposal is for 43 units and 39 parking spaces. The garage would be retrofitted with glass garage doors that could be open and the space used by artists, etc. There are two versions, (A and C) both designed to look like row houses. It's a fairly deep building. The design tries to break up the building. The building will be 50'. There is an English basement floor, plus 4 floors and a roof penthouse. The building covers most of the site. There will be a BZA issue, for rear yard setback. There is also a lot occupancy issue. It is 88% on the first floor and 62% overall. Legally, it can be 60%. They are also requesting a two story elevator penthouse. The entrance to the garage is off the alley on the west side of the site.

Ed Horvath suggested that the entrance to the garage be off the 30 ft. alley rather than the 15 ft. alley to the west. Dickens said that he would consider that. Furioso said that the lot is C-3-A zoning and if there was retail on the first floor, there would be no lot occupancy issue, although it would not be appropriate. Furioso also said that this development may discourage the charter school. There are 8 600' efficiencies and the largest unit is almost 1400 sq. ft. Neidich said that most developers would not take the time to put together this mix, and have affordable units. Neidich suggested that the ANC require that the money that the developer has to put down as a deposit for repairs to the newly repaved alley must be used for such repairs within one year. If this is not specified, the city may take longer than that to make the repairs.

Dyer moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC approve the height, massing and concept and record a preference for version C. Richardson seconded. Ivers made a friendly amendment that the ANC include that the deposit the developer puts down for repair to repave the alley must be used for such repairs within one year. Dyer accepted the friendly amendment. Furioso said that the developer could also use his own money to make the restorations needed and then ask for the deposit back.

VOTE: Approved 11-0.

1323 Corcoran Street: residential

Chris Weisner and Dan Hazard made the presentation. It will have two 3-bedroom units. A 51' addition will be added. They are working with HPRB to restore some of the historic elements that have fallen into disrepair. The windows will be restored to the original condition. The fence in the front will be aligned with the neighboring fence. The addition will be brick. The building was almost demolished from neglect. The project is going before HPRB tomorrow so there is nothing for the ANC to vote on.

The community Development Committee applauded Matt Raymond for his efforts as Chair of the CDC and wished him luck in the future, as this is his last CDC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.