

ANC 2F COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
June 23, 2004

In attendance:	Helen Kramer, Chair (ANC2F04)	Absent:
	Frona Hall (2F03)	
	Jim Cook (2F02)	Leah Lorber (2F05)
	Kara McCabe (2F01)	Michael Bernardo (2F06)
	Jim Loucks (2F06)	Miriam Trimble (2F03)
	Tom Funk (2F05)	
	Mike Petri (2F04)	
	Jim Richardson (2F02)	
	Brigid Quinn (2F01)	

Helen Kramer called the meeting to order, and had the committee members introduce themselves.

14th and R Streets NW, residential development

Paul Robertson, Robertson Development, had originally received BZA variances for this project but due to changes to the design, they no longer need the variance for the court. He came to tell the CDC and ANC about the changes that now meet zoning requirements. He felt this was a formality, but wanted to make sure that the community knew about it. Loucks moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC accept and approve the revisions. Hall seconded.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

1310 Rhode Island Avenue, NW HPRB review of rear addition

No one was at the meeting to present the plans.

1010 Massachusetts Avenue, residential construction, alley closing

Paul Tummonds presented the plans to close an alley located next to the Cato Institute for a mixed use residential/ground floor retail development. They do not anticipate any zoning variations being requested or needed. The alley bisects the lot, and they would like to close it to use the full frontage of the lot. The closing of an alley requires the approval of Congress so they are starting the process. Funk moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC approve the closing of the alley. Quinn seconded. Kramer made a friendly amendment adding that the developer plans to widen the other alley. Funk accepted the amendment.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

1600 14th Street (1601 Q Street, NW) BZA Application No. 17197

Lindsley Williams, Zoning Consultant to Holland & Knight LLP, presented three zoning requirements from which the developers of this building are requesting relief.

1. A Special Exception is sought from the requirement of section 1901.1 of The Uptown Arts – Mixed Use (Arts) Overlay District zoning regulations that retail or service establishments occupy no less than 50% of the ground floor. The project provides 37 percent of the ground floor for such uses. The first floor of this building is very deep, and the developer argues that it would be difficult to find commercial tenants who would want to have more than 40 feet of space from the 14th Street entrance.
2. An interpretation or Special Exception is sought for section 1901.6, which limits eating and drinking establishments to no more than 25% of the linear foot frontage within the Arts Overlay District. The regulation is ambiguous as to how this limitation is to be measured. The developers do not want to be constrained if the limit is applied on a building-specific basis.
3. A variance is sought from section 773.3, which requires 15% of the gross floor area of a residential building located in a commercial district to be used for recreational purposes. They are providing 6%, including a large community room off the courtyard. The building will have a roof deck, private terraces and private balconies, a total of 4,339 square feet, which do not count toward the zoning requirement. They do not want to count the roof deck as public space because section 773.9 requires that it be accessible to those with mobility limitations, which would require elevator access to the roof. This would necessitate making the mechanical penthouse higher, contrary to the efforts to reduce the building height.

McCabe said that the neighborhood is concerned about the “food service” area becoming a bar that could possibly morph into a nightclub. She asked if they would settle for 50% rather than 100% of the frontage. Williams said he doesn’t want the zoning regulations to become an impediment to leasing the space. Quinn echoed McCabe’s concern. She said a restaurant would be fine, but not a nightclub. Loucks said he’d rather have a nice restaurant than some little “Twinkie” shops. Williams said that a restaurant would require vent stacks, which are not being planned for this building, as they think it would be an undesirable use in a residential building, but they would like to lease to a coffee shop, which might want more than 25% of the window space on 14th Street.

Andrea Doughty said that the neighbors on Q Street do not support the recreational space requirement relief. She said that these spaces provide for social gatherings and group neighborhood activities and that this area is lacking

park space. Joan Ferraris, another Q Street resident, said that Rice and HR57 already are food establishments on that block of 14th Street and if 100% of the first floor retail is dedicated to food service, it will overburden the area. She added that Q Street residents did not want storefront entrances on Q Street, but they do not object to retail uses on Q Street with an entrance on 14th Street.

Kramer suggested that the committee vote on each request individually.

Variance from section 773.3 - Funk moved that the CDC recommend to the full ANC approval of the variance from the 15% recreational space requirement. Hall seconded.

VOTE: Approved 8-1, Quinn opposing.

Special Exception from section 1901.1 - Quinn moved that the CDC recommend not approving the request for a Special Exception to the 50% retail or service use requirement. There was no second. Quinn moved that the CDC not take a stand on this issue. McCabe seconded.

VOTE: Motion failed, 3-5-1.

Funk moved that the CDC recommend to the ANC that they approve the request. Richardson seconded.

VOTE: Approved 6-3, Quinn, McCabe and Cook opposing.

Special Exception to section 1901.6 – Funk said that he was not comfortable with making a decision on this because he did not understand the zoning requirement, and wanted a clarification on whether this applied block by block or to the entire Arts Overlay District.

Quinn moved that the CDC abstain from taking a stand on this issue. Funk seconded.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

Square 317, Request for closing a portion of a public alley, bounded by K, 11th, I and 12th Streets

Sean Cahill and Robert Braunohler of Louis Dreyfus Property Group and Kyrus Freeman of Holland and Knight presented their reasons for closing part of the public alley. The property fronts I Street, and the alley is off of I Street. It is currently used for parking, not public right-of-way. There will be no vehicular access to the back of the building. There will be a loading dock off of 12th Street. Delivery trucks are completely off street when they deliver. The parking garage entrance and exit is off of 11th Street. Loucks moved that the CDC recommend to the ANC support for the alley closing. Kramer added that the committee sees no adverse impact to the community from the alley closing. Hall seconded.

VOTE: Approved 9-0.

1410 Q Street NW

Jonathan Taylor of Tutt, Taylor and Rankin and Dennis Lee of Capital Design Group presented plans to convert this home into office space for Tutt, Taylor and Rankin. The building is located next to the Barret School. The contractor took a wall down in the back before getting approval and the project currently has a stop work order on it. The addition will be shorter than the existing building. Kramer asked if the addition would be visible from Q Street. Lee said that from the west, you would be able to see where the addition joins the building. Kramer said that the materials presented were insufficient to show what the impact would be on the surrounding historic buildings, and that it would be impossible for the CDC to take a stand on this issue without that information. Loucks asked that they bring a site plan as well.

Michaela Schrader said that she is representing the 6 Barret School condominium owners. She said that the addition would significantly impact the condos on the west side of the building and they would like a shadows study. They are also concerned that plans call for offices for 38 realtors in this building. Taylor said that real estate agents do not spend a lot of time in their office. There will be three parking spaces. Kramer asked where the agents would park when they just pop into the office to check messages. She asked them to appear before the CDC meeting on August 25 with the additional information and drawings, including a site plan.

1529 14th Street – Phaeton on 14th Street, request for tree removal

Doug Besanti and Susan Bentler of Georgetown Restoration presented a tree removal plan for this site. There are three mature trees on 14th Street in front of the site of the project, and they want permission to remove all three of them. They will replace them with 13 trees placed throughout the city. Giorgio Furioso, a resident and developer, said that the trees are beautiful and that they should not be removed. He said that they could construct the building without taking the three trees down. John Grimberg said that the neighborhood is being denuded of trees. We've had trees vandalized in Logan Circle Park, and we don't need to remove trees when they could be saved. Kimbel questioned why the ANC could not have input into where the replacement trees are placed, since Georgetown Restoration said that they were told the replacement trees could be put all over the city and not just in the Logan Circle area. They replied that the ANC could have input, they were just given guidelines and selected sites for approval. Besanti said that while trying to work around the trees, they would cut the roots and they would eventually die anyway. He said that they were trying to do the right thing appearing in front of the ANC, but implied that if they didn't get permission to cut down the trees, they would probably be so damaged they would die without a replacement plan. Furioso suggested that a compromise might be to remove one or two of them and save at least one of them. Besanti

said that all the trees would get damaged. Furioso said that the trees would only be destroyed if the construction company didn't try to take care. Kramer said that the letter from the arborist is rather skimpy on details. Petri said that the arborist needs to look at the utilities, where they will go, and what impact they will have on the roots.

Kramer said that it was clear from all the comments that the community is reluctant to lose these trees. She suggested that they come back to the ANC meeting with more information. Besanti said again that the trees would be destroyed during construction. Furioso said that it depends on the size of the crane, and that with the right sized crane, the trees could be saved.

1125 11th Street-revision

Plans for this building were presented last month, but without much detail on the M Street side. Gail Monplaiser of Taurus Group and Norman Smith, the architect, showed the M Street elevations, along with shadow studies. There are historic row houses to the east along M Street. There are only a few windows in the M Street side, due to fire regulations, which they may be able to work around with a sprinkler system. They also posited that a future HPRB might allow an addition to the low corner building housing a convenience store, and that would block the windows. The committee suggested that the blank wall area be broken up with "fake" windows or some kind of striation to break it up. Funk moved that the CDC recommend that the ANC approve the concept design and massing of the building, with further review later of the articulation of the masonry on the M Street side. Hall seconded.

Vote: Approved 8-0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.