

May 27, 2011

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Anthony Hood, Chairman
Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: **Z.C. Case No. 06-11C/06-12C**
GW Foggy Bottom Campus Plan / PUD -- Square 39
School of Public Health and Health Studies
Supplemental Pre-Hearing Statement of the University

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

Pursuant to 11 DCMR Section 3013.1, The George Washington University (“University”) hereby files its supplemental pre-hearing statement for the above-referenced case.

Background

The property that is the subject of this application is located in the northwest corner of the Foggy Bottom Campus, and includes the entirety of Square 39, which is bounded by K Street on the north, 24th Street on the west, Washington Circle on the northeast, and New Hampshire Avenue on the southeast (Square 39, Lot 803) (“Property”). The Property consists of approximately 21,456 square feet of land area, and is located in the R-5-E Zone District.

The Property is part of the University’s 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan, which was approved by the Zoning Commission in Order No. 06-11 / 06-12. In conjunction with the approval of the Campus Plan, the Commission also approved a first stage PUD, which identified 16 development sites on the Campus for future improvements (together, “Campus Plan / PUD”). The Property was designated as a future development site for either commercial / investment or academic / administrative / medical use.

On December 27, 2010, the University filed an application for second stage approval of a PUD in order to permit the construction of a new School of Public Health and Health Services (“SPHHS”) on the Property. The proposed seven-story SPHHS will contain a mix of uses consistent with the Property’s academic / administrative / medical designation under the Campus

Plan. The proposed SPHHS will also contain two levels of below-grade program space. Pursuant to the approved Campus Plan / PUD, the University also requested further processing approval for the Project.

The Zoning Commission set the application down for a public hearing at its public meeting on February 7, 2011 and requested additional changes or information to certain aspects of the Project. The University addressed many of these comments in its initial pre-hearing statement, which was filed on March 30, 2011.

Project Changes

Since the filing of the initial pre-hearing statement, the University has continued to refine the design and operation of the Project in response to comments from the Commission, Office of Planning, DDOT, ANC 2A, and community representatives including WECA. The additional changes are discussed below.

1. Refinement of Building Design

The University's design team has continued to refine the building design in line with the comments and direction offered by the Commission at setdown. Attached as Exhibit A is a full set of updated plans, including revised elevations and perspectives, which illustrate changes to the building facades and ground floor design that were made in response to the Commission's concerns. The updated plans also reflect the elimination of the loading dock and other changes to the streetscape design that were made in consultation with the Office of Planning, DDOT, ANC 2A, WECA, and other interested stakeholders.

Samples of the proposed materials and a model will be provided at the hearing in order to further clarify the design and function of the proposed Project. At the hearing, the design team will explain the design concept, including the geometry of the Washington Circle façade and rationale for the use of an arcade at the building entrance, both of which were specifically selected based on the unique characteristics of this irregularly-shaped lot.

2. Bicycle Parking

The University has increased the number of bicycle spaces, so that the project will provide a total of 81 spaces. In response to a request from DDOT, 15 of these spaces are located within the building, on the ground floor. University students, faculty, and staff will also be able to utilize the shower and changing facilities that are part of the Exercise Science Department's exercise rooms within the building.

3. *Service and Loading.*

In response to the Commission's request as well as input from DDOT, ANC 2A, and WECA, the University restudied its proposed loading dock. Based on this input, the University has agreed to replace the proposed loading dock with a 60-foot curbside loading zone on 24th Street. While the loading zone will result in the removal of three on-street parking spaces, the overall number of on-street parking spaces lost around the perimeter of the site will only be one space because of the elimination of existing curb cuts.

The proposed on-street loading zone will successfully balance loading needs with pedestrian safety and a pleasing streetscape. For example, the loading zone will minimize pedestrian and vehicular conflicts that could occur if trucks back-in to loading docks or block the sidewalk when parked.

Aesthetically, the removal of the loading dock also provides a more welcoming façade and streetscape. The new design requires only a set of double doors—rather than overhead garage doors—to accommodate service and delivery activities. The streetscape design will include a three- to four-foot service ramp for wheeling carts that enter and exit the building.

To accommodate the elimination of the loading dock, the University requests additional flexibility from the Zoning Regulations in order to eliminate the requirements under 11 DCMR 2201.1 for loading berths, loading platforms, and service/delivery spaces.

Community Outreach and Changes

The Project was presented to ANC 2A on September 15, 2010 and again on May 18, 2011. The ANC unanimously voted not to object to the application subject to two conditions, which the University has agreed to include as conditions of approval. The University has presented this Project to the Advisory Committee on multiple occasions, and representatives of the University also met with representatives for WECA and the Jefferson House condominium to discuss and solicit feedback on the Project. Community concerns generally included three areas: loading and service operation, the proposed park and related tree canopy, and pedestrian safety. As is discussed below, the University has worked with the community to address these concerns. Also included below is information that responds to other issues raised by ANC 2A in its report.

1. *Loading and Service Operation*

Again, the University has modified the design to eliminate the proposed loading dock and replace it with an on-street loading area. This will allow trucks to service the building while minimizing potential conflicts between trucks and pedestrians or other vehicles.

In addition, the University has agreed to further limit the hours for loading activity in direct response to ANC 2A's concerns, and proffers the following condition memorializing this commitment for the zoning order:

All vendors, suppliers, and service providers will be instructed that service or delivery activity shall not be permitted through the 24th Street service entrance between 10:00 PM and 9:00AM and between 5:00 PM and 7:00PM, Monday through Friday. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the University shall be permitted to use the 24th Street service entrance for catering and other food service delivery from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM, Monday through Friday.

The University notes, however, that certain deliveries such as FedEx and UPS cannot typically be scheduled.

2. Proposed Park and Tree Canopy

The University has agreed to improve and expand the public park located at the intersection of 24th Street and New Hampshire Avenue as a part of this Project. Furthermore, as noted in the initial pre-hearing submission, the University agrees to use segmented benches in the park given the site's proximity to the campus periphery.¹

The proposed park is depicted on pages L02 and L04 of the attached plans, and the University proffers the following condition memorializing this commitment in the zoning order:

Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the Project, the University shall demonstrate that it has:

Constructed the streetscape improvements as shown on the approved plans;

Constructed the park at the intersection of 24th Street and New Hampshire Avenue as shown on the approved plans;

The final design of any improvements in public space shall be subject to final approval from DDOT and the University shall have flexibility to modify such improvements in response to DDOT direction.

Throughout the planning and design of the Project, the University has endeavored to enhance the existing tree canopy through protecting and retaining existing mature street trees where possible as well as in the final design of the Project. As illustrated on L03 and L04 of the attached plans:

¹ However, the University will continue to follow its streetscape guidelines and use the standard un-segmented bench on other parts of the Square 39 development site and throughout other sites on the Foggy Bottom Campus.

- The project design permits the preservation of 9 of 14 existing street trees in public space, including a very large mature oak tree along 24th Street near the park and the two mature trees along K Street and Washington Circle. During construction, these trees will be protected and periodically monitored by a certified arborist to review impacts of construction activities and determine any preventative maintenance or remedial actions required.
- GW will also replace the remaining five street trees as well as add two new street trees. The final design will also incorporate a number of additional trees within the public space adjacent to the new building. In total, the proposed design will add a net new 20 trees to the property and surrounding public space. Many of the existing trees that will be removed or replaced are considered non-value trees or are planted too close to each other.

Campus-wide, through a partnership with Casey Trees established in 2007, GW focuses on expanding its campus tree canopy and using the landscaping and streetscape as an urban laboratory to develop enhanced urban tree planting conditions in concert with DC Government. Such a partnership has resulted in a tree watering program with over 25 participating student organizations that adopted campus street trees in 2010. GW also strives to plant native trees where appropriate and feasible because of the benefits of using native tree species on the surrounding ecosystem.

3. Pedestrian Safety

Since setdown, the University has continued to work closely with DDOT and OP to improve the pedestrian experience for all stakeholders on the public space surrounding the project through a series of responsive changes that are illustrated on the revised streetscape plan shown on pages L01 and L02 of the attached plans.

The University has studied the sidewalk widths and, where needed, has made additional changes to respond to the concerns heard in conjunction with recent projects. Under the revised design:

- Washington Circle: the Washington Circle sidewalk will be widened from 12' to 22'. (For comparison, on Square 54, the Washington Circle sidewalk width ranges from 7' to 25'.)
- New Hampshire Avenue: the New Hampshire Avenue sidewalk will be widened from 9.5' to 10'
- K Street: the K Street sidewalk will range from 8' to 29' wide – an increase from the existing range of 4.5' to 11.5' wide. The narrower portion of the sidewalk is needed in order to preserve an existing mature street tree.
- 24th Street: the 24th Street sidewalk will remain at 8' wide.

The University has also reviewed the paving materials selection and modified the design along Washington Circle to use concrete pavers, which is similar to what is used at Square 54. The Washington Circle sidewalk design now also features a wide treebox with low plantings that extend much of the length of the Circle frontage to discourage pedestrians from illegally crossing the Circle. The other rights-of-way will continue to utilize brick pavers, consistent with the approved Streetscape Plan for the campus. As GW has done with all of its recent projects, these brick pavers will be laid on a concrete slab to avoid heaving from tree roots and ensure pedestrian safety.

As discussed above, the University has modified the project design to eliminate the loading dock. As a result of this change, there will now be no vehicular curb cut around the perimeter of the side, which will eliminate potential pedestrian-vehicular conflicts and improve the pedestrian experience. It also means that there will be no need for trucks to back in to the loading area, which will eliminate potential conflicts associated with that activity.

Through all of these studies and modifications, the University has consulted with DDOT and OP regarding planned improvements by the District to the surrounding roadway and pedestrian network, and will continue to do so throughout permitting and construction of the Project.

4. Other Issues Raised by ANC 2A

Bike Safety

The George Washington University actively promotes bicycle use and safety for all GW students, faculty, and staff. For example, information about bicycle options and safety will be highlighted during two upcoming campus events. First, during the annual Proud to be GW Festival in June 2011, which recognizes and celebrates all GW faculty and staff, University Police Department representatives will be distributing bike safety tips and resources such as bike maps, and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association will be invited to host an informative bike safety table with students from Campaign GW. Second, during the annual Welcome Week at the beginning of the fall semester, students will be provided with information on bicycle safety and Campaign GW will distribute information on bike maps, and bike safety educational materials at the annual student Organization Fair. The University will invite other vendors such as Capital Bikeshare to participate in this event.

Construction Management

As GW has done with all projects, it will work with its contractors to develop a construction plan for the site and share the information with the ANC and other interested stakeholders. The plan will address impacts on pedestrian and vehicular circulation and construction hours as well as provide a point of contact for all construction-related questions or concerns. The University will coordinate the construction management of this project with other

projects as well, and will continue to use its Neighborhood.gwu.edu website to provide construction updates to the community.

Student, Faculty, and Staff Numbers

Regarding the impact of the Project on the numbers of students, faculty, and staff, the University notes that the new space is being constructed as modernized and improved replacement space for existing facilities that will address evolving technological and academic program needs and enhance the quality of GW's educational programs. The increase in space is largely independent of any campuswide population growth because of the University's continued adherence and management to existing caps on the number of students, faculty, and staff on the Foggy Bottom campus. As a result, even with the increased density, the University will generally continue to serve a relatively stable campus population.

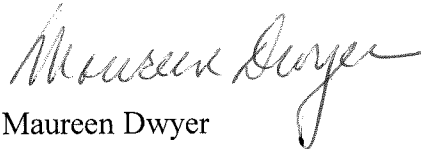
Witness List, Proposed Testimony, and Time Estimate for Presentation

We look forward to presenting this case to the Commission. The University will provide four witnesses to testify on its behalf: two representatives of the University, the project architect, and the traffic consultant. The University will call two of its four witnesses, Arlen Li of Payette and Jami Milanovich of Wells & Associates, as experts in their respective fields. Mr. Li will be called as an expert in the field of architecture and Ms. Milanovich will be called as an expert in the field of transportation engineering. Resumes for these witnesses are included as Exhibit B. The University anticipates at this time that its presentation will require up to 60 minutes.

Conclusion

The University looks forward to presenting the material at the public hearing scheduled for June 16, 2011. If you have any questions regarding this application, please feel free to contact Maureen at 202-721-1101 or David at 202-721-1137.

Sincerely,


Maureen Dwyer


David Avitabile

Enclosures

cc: Charles Barber
Alicia O'Neil Knight

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

On May 27, 2011, I caused a copy of the foregoing letter and enclosure to be delivered by hand or by U.S. Mail to the following:

Jennifer Steingasser
Deputy Director, Development Review and
Historic Preservation
D.C. Office of Planning
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite E650
Washington, DC 20024

Jeff Jennings
Policy and Planning
District Department of Transportation
2000 14th Street, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20009

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A
West End Branch Library
1101 24th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

L. Asher Corson
President, Foggy Bottom Association
955 26th Street, NW, Apt. 709
Washington, DC 20037

West End Citizens Association
c/o Barbara Kahlow
800 25th Street, NW #704
Washington, DC 20037



David Avitabile