

MINUTES
ANC 6A Economic Development & Zoning Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 7:00 pm

Present:

Members: Brad Greenfield (Chair), Mike Cushman, Joal Mendonsa, Ayisha Lockett
Commissioners: Amber Gove, Mike Velasquez

Introductions of Committee Members and Commissioners

Previously Heard Cases

There was no discussion of previously heard cases.

Old Business

1. 721 H Street NE (ZC 23-05): Proposed map amendment to rezone the property from NC-16 to NC-17. Hearing date scheduled for July 24, 2023.

Mr. Chris Cohen and Ms. Candice Elliot presented the project. Mr. Greenfield noted that this project had been considered by the EDZ twice before, and much of the consideration was focused on the racial equity toolkit. Mr. Greenfield summarized the developers' argument that increased density will increase the amount of affordable housing, which would improve racial equity. Ms. Elliot also noted that the project would provide other amenities that would assist racial equity. Mr. Cohen noted that the upzoning would put the area in line with the comprehensive plan.

Questions from the Committee included whether there would be anything in the project that improved job opportunities for neighborhood residents and disadvantaged communities and whether IZ+ would come into play due to the upzoning.

Commissioner Velasquez noted his appreciation for how often the developer has been before the committee, and voiced his support for the project. Mr. Cushman noted that the repeated appearances was primarily due to the newness of the racial equity tool, but also expressed support for bringing the property into alignment with the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Greenfield moved that ANC 6A support the requested zoning change, and that we encourage the developer to look into job training programs and other ways to benefit the community. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cushman. The motion passed unanimously, six votes in favor and none opposed.

New Business

2. 1207 H Street NE (BZA #20943): Request for a Special Exception pursuant to Subtitle H § 910, Subtitle H § 1202, and Subtitle X § 901.2 from the development standards of Subtitle H § 901 to raze an existing structure, and to construct a new, detached, six-story with below-grade parking and penthouse, 175-210 dwelling unit, mixed-use building in the NC-15 zone. Hearing date set for September 27, 2023.

Mr. Greenfield noted that this was the development of the AutoZone property, which the ANC supported when it was before the Zoning Commission for upzoning. Mr. Ben Miller, Jeff Goines and Gerald Soto presented the project.

Mr. Miller stated that the AutoZone lease is expiring. Mr. Goines went through the architectural plans for the property. Mr. Goines noted that the project is by right, with between 175 and 210 units in the building. There are 66 parking spaces in the below-ground parking garage. Under the IZ+ program there should be approximately 36-40 affordable units. Part of the plan is to activate 12th Street and the 10 foot alley behind the building. Mr. Goines noted that there will be solar panels and a green roof. There will be a sizable lobby, with two retail bays on the ground floor. The units will be a mix of studio, one and two bedroom apartments, with the one bedroom units being most common. The units on the alley will be one bedroom, with a front yard setback. Mr. Goines noted that the design reflected the informal preference expressed by the EDZ committee, with a “jigsaw” design, with glazed brick. Mr. Goines noted that each unit in the alley will have outdoor lighting, which will provide lighting for the alley. Mr. Miller noted that there is no decision about the retail space, and there will be further discussions about how to activate the public space on 12th Street NE. Mr. Miller said that there is a trash room in the building, and that all trash will be picked up from there. Residents of mews units will have access to the trash room.

Questions from the Committee included why the development included 66 spaces, more than the 44 required, whether bike parking spaces are included, the mix of the size of the units, how the roof deck will be configured, whether the building will be condos or apartments, the design of the alley dwellings (mews dwellings), the height of the mews dwellings, the front yard landscaping of the mews dwellings, whether the roof of the mews dwellings could be green roofs, whether the alley will be widened, whether there would be fencing, how the retail space would be used, how HVAC would be done, how move in/out would be handled, the status of the AutoZone lease, how construction will be managed and what the timeline for the project is.

Mr. Greenfield noted that the ANC would prefer that amplified music not be allowed on the roof deck. Commissioner Velasquez appreciated the outreach and communication from Mr. Miller on this project and appreciated the design and treatments of the project. Commissioner Velasquez suggested setting up a meeting with the Department of Public Works (DPW), the developer and residents to discuss how garbage will be collected. Mr. Cushman encouraged the developer to have a number of units towards the lower end of the projections provided.

Mr. Greenfield moved that ANC 6A support the requested relief with the stipulation that the apartment lease documents include a prohibition against amplified music on the roof deck after 11:00 pm, or comply with DC code, whichever is earlier. Ms. Lockett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, six votes in favor and none opposed.

3. 1216 Constitution Avenue NE (BZA #20956): Request for a Special Exception pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 and Subtitle X § 901.2 from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle E § 304.1 to construct a rear addition, to an existing, attached, two-story, principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone. Hearing date set for October 18, 2023.

Mr. Joe Boyette presented the project before the Committee. He noted that the site is adjacent to Maury Elementary. Currently, the property exceeds lot occupancy. The proposal is to add a one-story addition to infill the dogleg. There are privacy fences on neighboring properties, and the nature of the addition has no impact on the light, air and privacy of neighbors. The addition is designed to make the property’s kitchen larger. Because of the fencing and the nature of the project, it is likely that no one in the neighborhood will even know it exists. Mr. Boyette said that the most immediately impacted neighbor at 1218 Constitution has expressed support, but

has not signed a letter of support. Questions from the committee included how HVAC will be handled, and the support of the neighbor.

Mr. Greenfield moved that ANC 6A support the requested relief. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mendonsa. The motion passed unanimously, five votes in favor and none opposed.

4. 1244/1246 H Street NE (BZA #20960): Request for a Special Exception pursuant to Subtitle H § 1107.1(e)(2) and Subtitle X § 901.2 from the matter-of-right uses of Subtitle H § 1103 to construct a side and rear addition, and permit a fast food establishment use, to an existing, attached, two-story commercial building in the NC-14 zone. Hearing date set for October 18th, 2023.

Mr. Martin Sullivan, Jason Crane (President of Slutty Vegan), Jim Cronenberg (Architect) and Dan Ward (Project Manager) presented the project. Mr. Sullivan noted that the relief was to allow a fast food establishment, Slutty Vegan at the site on H Street. Slutty Vegan serves vegan hamburgers. Mr. Crane described Slutty Vegan's mission to bring healthy, accessible vegan food to customers. Mr. Crane described Slutty Vegan's growth from Atlanta to multiple cities, including New York, Dallas and Birmingham, and now Washington, DC. Mr. Cronenberg reviewed the plans for the project. The site would include two properties, both 1244 and 1246 H Street. The building at 1244 would house the kitchen and offices for the restaurant. 1246 is an open lot, and it would largely remain open, outdoor seating. There is no indoor seating that is intended for the project.

Questions from the Committee included whether the existing exterior facade will be maintained, why there is no indoor seating, the hours of operation, whether the existing curb cut would remain, whether the entire menu is plant based, how grease would be disposed of, how vermin and rats will be prevented, how crowds will be managed, whether it was possible to prevent other fast food restaurants from coming in at a later date, whether the parking could be converted for more outdoor space, whether shade could be provided, what community engagement and communication has been conducted and whether alcohol would be served.

Mr. Crane said that letters had been sent out to the community, but other than that there had been no engagement with the community before the EDZ meeting. Commissioner Velasquez noted that H Street NE had a long history of African American entrepreneurship, and he wanted to see a full commitment from the Slutty Vegan leadership. Mr. Crane noted that Slutty Vegan serves an alcoholic Slushie drink. Mr. Cushman and Mr. Greenfield noted some reservations about serving alcohol with no indoor space. Mr. Greenfield noted that since there had been no outreach to neighbors, and since the BZA case was still several months away, he was inclined to table the case until more communication with neighbors could be conducted. Mr. Cushman asked why there was no arts aspect tied to the restaurant. Mr. Crane noted that there would be a mural added to the design of the property.

Mr. Greenfield tabled discussion of the project.

**Next Scheduled ED&Z Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, July 19, 2023
7:00-9:00 pm
Zoom information to be posted on ANC 6A Website**