

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



Application 14582 of the Catholic University of America for modification of prior approved campus plan pursuant to Sub-section 8207.2 (3108.1, DCMR 11) of the Zoning Regulations, for a special exception under Paragraph 3101.46 (210, DCMR 11) to allow construction of eight new dormitories in an R-5-A District at premises 620 Michigan Avenue, N.E. , (Square 3821, Lots 40 and 816).

HEARING DATE: April 22, 1987
DECISION DATE: April 22, 1987 (Bench Decision)

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The site is located in the interior of the main campus of Catholic University. Lot 816 in Square 3821 is bounded by Taylor Street to the north, Harewood Road to the west, Michigan Avenue to the south and Brookland Avenue to east. The site is located in an R-5-A District.

2. The site is included within the boundaries of the Campus Plan, (the "Plan") 1975-2000, as approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment the ("BZA" or "Board") in Application No. 12002, Order dated October 6, 1975.

3. There have been amendments to the Campus Plan since its adoption. The construction of building in accordance with the Plan has also been approved. In BZA Order No. 12308, dated April 13, 1977, the Board amended the Plan to exclude the Varnum Campus and to approve certain interim uses for that campus. In BZA Order No. 13639, dated April 14, 1982, the Board approved an amendment to the Plan that allowed for the use of three floors of an existing building as administrative offices for the President of the University. In BZA Order No. 14082, dated April 19, 1984, the Plan was amended to change certain uses. In that Order, the Board approved construction of the athletic facility and a laboratory and classroom building for science and research activity. The academic program of the University has not changed significantly since the approval of the original plan.

4. In the Plan, the University anticipated the need for additional student housing. The map of proposed buildings contained in the Plan shows building N and P as Student Housing Buildings One and Two located in the northeastern portion of the campus.

The objective in locating the buildings in this portion of the campus was to create a "distinct neighborhood effect by the formation of a student street between the new dormitories and Regan-Reyan Hall" (existing dormitories).

5. The proposed plans show a cluster of eight residential buildings in a slightly different location than that of buildings N and P. The proposed site is in the center of the campus to the immediate west of the originally proposed site. The site is sufficiently large to accommodate the eight low-rise buildings and allow for a significant amount of green space. It will enable the creation of a residential enclave and will insure that the buildings are insulated from the surrounding area.

6. The site that has been chosen for the dormitories will insure a minimal amount of impact on the surrounding community. The small buildings are sited to take advantage of the rolling terrain and will entail a minimum of site disturbance.

7. The University is in need of additional student housing.

8. The proposed residential cluster consists of eight low-rise buildings that contain from 16,268 to 22,219 square feet of gross floor area. The entire residential cluster will consist of approximately 148,954 square feet of gross floor area. Each building will contain a large lounge. In addition, the complex will contain four one bedroom apartments for resident ministers and resident directors, a resident director's office, two laundry rooms and a storage facilities.

9. It is not anticipated that there will be an increase in student enrollment or number of faculty members as a result of the new dormitory. The present enrollment of 4,810 students is well within the guideline maximum of 6116 students set forth in the Plan. It is unlikely that the size of the faculty will be effected by the proposed change.

10. The proposal will not generate additional traffic. Vehicular circulation patterns will remain the same.

11. The current floor area ratio (FAR) of the campus is .25. The project will add approximately 148,954

square feet of gross floor area, thereby increasing the FAR for the campus to .27. The Zoning Regulations permit an FAR of .90.

12. The Office of Planning (OP) by memorandum dated April 15, 1987, recommended the approval of the proposed new residential buildings. The OP found that the proposed dormitories are consistent with the spirit and intent of the approved plan. The OP further reported that the application meets the requirements of Sub-section 3108.1 and 210 of DCMR 11. The Board concurs.

13. The Department of Public Works, by memorandum dated April 15, 1987, reported that there would be no adverse transportation conditions created as a result of the proposal. The report noted that DPW would actually expect improvement in transportation because there would be a decrease in the number of students commuting to the campus each day by automobile.

14. ANC 5A did not submit a report on the application.

15. All persons who sought to give testimony either in favor or in opposition to the application were given an opportunity to do so.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND OPINION:

Based on the record, the Board concludes that the Applicant is seeking a special exception, the granting of which requires compliance with the requirements of Sub-section 8207.2 (3108.1 and DCMR 11) of the Zoning Regulations. The Board concludes that the use is located so as not to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students or other objectionable conditions. the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus does not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-B District. The Applicant has previously submitted a plan for developing the campus as whole. The OP and DPW reported no objections to the application. The Board further concludes that the application can be granted as in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the application is hereby GRANTED. SUBJECT to the CONDITION that construction shall be in accordance with the plans marked as exhibit No. 10 of the record provided that each individual building's footprint maybe relocated up to five feet in any direction.

VOTE: 5-0 (William F. McIntosh, Lindsley Williams,
Charles R. Norris, Paula L. Jewell and Carrie
L. Thornhill to grant).

BY ORDER OF THE D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

ATTESTED BY:


EDWARD L. CURRY
Acting Executive Director

FINAL DATE OF ORDER: JUN 9 1987

UNDER SUB-SECTION 8204.3 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS, "NO
DECISION OR ORDER OF THE BOARD SHALL TAKE EFFECT UNTIL TEN
DAYS AFTER HAVING BECOME FINAL PURSUANT TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL
RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING
ADJUSTMENT."

THIS ORDER OF THE BOARD IS VALID FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS
AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDER, UNLESS WITHIN SUCH
PERIOD AN APPLICATION FOR A BUILDING PERMIT OR CERTIFICATE
OF OCCUPANCY IS FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND
REGULATORY AFFAIRS.

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