



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3C
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CATHEDRAL HEIGHTS • CLEVELAND PARK
MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE HEIGHTS • MCLEAN GARDENS
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ANC3C RESOLUTION No. 2017 - 010
Regarding HPRB Application No. 17-251 for
ZS 2607 LLC located at 2607 Connecticut Avenue, NW

WHEREAS ZS 2607 LLC, located at 2607 Connecticut Avenue, NW, has filed an application and referral to the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) to renovate, modernize, and expand the building which includes interior and exterior renovations; excavating the basement; and taking the “existing four-story contributing building and developing a five-story rear addition to accommodate housing units; hence, the existing rear wing and rear exterior wall will be removed, rebuilt and enlarged.”

WHEREAS ZS 2607 LLC, located at 2607 Connecticut Avenue, NW, is located within Woodley Park Neighborhood Mixed-Use NC-5 Zone and the Woodley Park Historic District;

WHEREAS ZS 2607 LLC, located at 2607 Connecticut Avenue, NW has been notified by both the ANC and the Woodley Park Community Association that one of the requirements within the Woodley Park neighborhood commercial district is that certain designated commercial uses must occupy at least 50% of the floor area of the ground floor;

WHEREAS ZS 2607 LLC met with ANC3C’s public space and zoning committee on Monday, March 6 and Monday, April 3. These meetings were open to the public, and members and non-members of WPCA attended and listened to the discussion;

WHEREAS ZS 2607 LLC met with the Woodley Park Community Association (WPCA) at its Wednesday, March 8 and Wednesday, April 5 executive committee meetings. These meetings were open to the public, and members and non-members of WPCA attended, participated and expressed deep concerns regarding the setback, height and mass of the proposed development;

WHEREAS several businesses located within the Woodley Park Neighborhood Mixed-Use NC-5 Zone and the Woodley Park Historic District were built in the first three decades of the last century as residences, the balance of buildings were built as stores or businesses with residences or offices above;

WHEREAS ANC 3C finds that the rear lot line of 2607 Connecticut Avenue abuts a residential district and the proposed development will be visible from those residences. Introducing greater height on the proposed development and placing it at the rear of the current structure would drastically change the long-standing character of the existing alley by introducing a canyon-like appearance within the alley which is shared with abutting neighbors and residential single-family homes;

WHEREAS Woodley Park residents and adjacent neighbors have expressed major concerns with the proposed development because the proposed structure would be incompatible with existing buildings along the block with regard to historical concentrations of massing within the Woodley Park Neighborhood Mixed-Use NC-5 Zone and the Woodley Park Historic District.

WHEREAS Woodley Park residents and adjacent neighbors have also expressed the following:

- 1) Most Connecticut Avenue properties within the Woodley Park Neighborhood Mixed-Use NC-5 Zone and the Woodley Park Historic District has massing above the first floor level in the alley that extends as far back toward the alley as planned for the proposed development.
- 2) The setback from the alley for the upper floors of existing buildings facing Connecticut Avenue is more than 40 feet, whereas the proposed plans for 2607 Connecticut Avenue call for only 24 feet. Historically, the pattern of deeper setbacks for higher floors has ensured visual openness along the alley as outlined within the Woodley Park Historic Guidelines. This is also emphasized within the Office of Planning's Historic District Guidelines, "Additions to Historic Buildings."
- 3) No other properties along this end of the alley and/or facing Connecticut Avenue reaches the height proposed in the current proposed development. The incompatibility of this project with other buildings on the block would be accentuated by placing the building's highest point in the rear of the building - towering over the adjacent single-family homes that abut the alley. In contrast, massing for every other building along the block is concentrated on and/or oriented toward the Connecticut Avenue building fronts.
- 4) Residents along the 2600 block of Woodley Place and immediately to the rear of this development find that the plans for renovating this property, remain unacceptable because of the damaging effect it would have on their immediate environment and because the development would conflict significantly with important, historical aspects of the neighborhood.
- 5) Alleyways, along with rear views of sets of row houses and attached business properties, are special features of the Woodley Park Historic District, so much so, that considerations of historic sight lines and consistency of massing across buildings as viewed from alleyways motivated revision of the Woodley Park Historic District guidelines in 2016, following encouragement from the Historic Preservation Review Board.
- 6) There has been and continues to be significant traffic and safety issues in the alleyway behind 2607 Connecticut Avenue due to carry-out vehicles, delivery trucks and trash pick-up; as well as significant rodent problem and the development of 23 to 26 units along Connecticut Avenue corridor will just exasperate the current situation. In addition, a bus-stop and a six days a week Commercial Zone in front of 2607 Connecticut Avenue, located at the corner of Calvert and Connecticut, would add to further congestion as well as increased vehicular and pedestrian public safety concern;

WHEREAS the 2016 Woodley Park Historic Guidelines outlines the following, "*we suggest small additions respect the existing rhythm, scale, and proportions relative to the building. They should not disturb uniform sightlines or consistent patterns of a particular alley or portion of an alley in cases where such sightlines or patterns exist. The exception to this is alleys or portions of alleys that do not have uniform sightlines or consistent patterns. We favor preserving some of the rear open space where it exists.*";

WHEREAS the 2016 Woodley Park Historic Guidelines also outlines the following, "*changes that are visible from the alley should strive to preserve the historic character of the neighborhood. Indeed, some alleys or portions of alleys appear much as they did when the neighborhood was built. Greater*

respect should be paid where the conditions are relatively uniform and intact, and greater scrutiny should be given to the proposals for visible change in such circumstances.”:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED ANC 3C does not support the HPRB application for ZS 2607 LLC and urges the applicant to continue to work with the ANC, Woodley Park Community Association and Historic Preservation Review Board to revise the proposal in order for the proposed development to be more compatible with the rhythm of development along the alley and to explore the following neighborhood concerns:

1. Retaining a discernible, historic pattern of concentrating massing along the Woodley Park Neighborhood Mixed-Use NC-5 Zone and the Woodley Park Historic District and providing open views along the alley,
2. Step-down the rear of the development, thus preserving an outermost sightline that prevails over a significant contiguous span of the alley,
3. Eliminate the 5th floor - which is currently slated for the back part of the building and limit the 4th Floor to only the front part of the building - no further than those floors that are currently extended for any other Connecticut Avenue facing property along the block. This would decrease the height in the rear, overlooking the alley and the adjacent single-family homes,
4. Preserving the rear roof line along the block, a significant portion of which is clearly visible from long stretches of Woodley Place and Calvert Street, by ensuring that it is not disturbed by added or reduced height; and
5. Retaining the block-long pattern of unoccupied roof-tops and no roof-top decks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair, Commissioner for SMD 3C01 and/or their designee(s) are authorized to represent ANC 3C on this matter.

Attested by



Nancy J. MacWood
Chair, on April 17, 2017

This resolution was approved by a roll-call vote of 5-3, on April 17, 2017 at a scheduled and noticed public meeting of ANC 3C at which a quorum (a minimum of 5 of 9 commissioners) was present.