

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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NCPC File No. Z.C. 08-27



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## CONSOLIDATED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED MAP AMENDMENT AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS HEADQUARTERS

1735 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC

Referred by the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia

May 28, 2009

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### Abstract

The Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia has taken a proposed action to approve a Consolidated Planned Unit Development to add three building ventilation stacks, install cisterns, create a green roof, install operational windows, and install both solar thermal equipment and photovoltaic array on the roof on the American Institute of Architects Headquarters building in an effort to become LEED platinum certified. The Zoning Commission has also taken proposed action to approve a related map amendment to change the zoning from SP-2 to C-3-C to allow a retail use to be located at this site. The American Institute of Architects Headquarters is on Square 170, on Lots 38 and 39 located in Washington, D.C. on H Street, NW between 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets, NW.

### Commission Action Requested by Applicant

Approval of the report to the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 8724(a) and DC Code § 2-1006 (a).

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### Executive Director's Recommendation

The Commission:

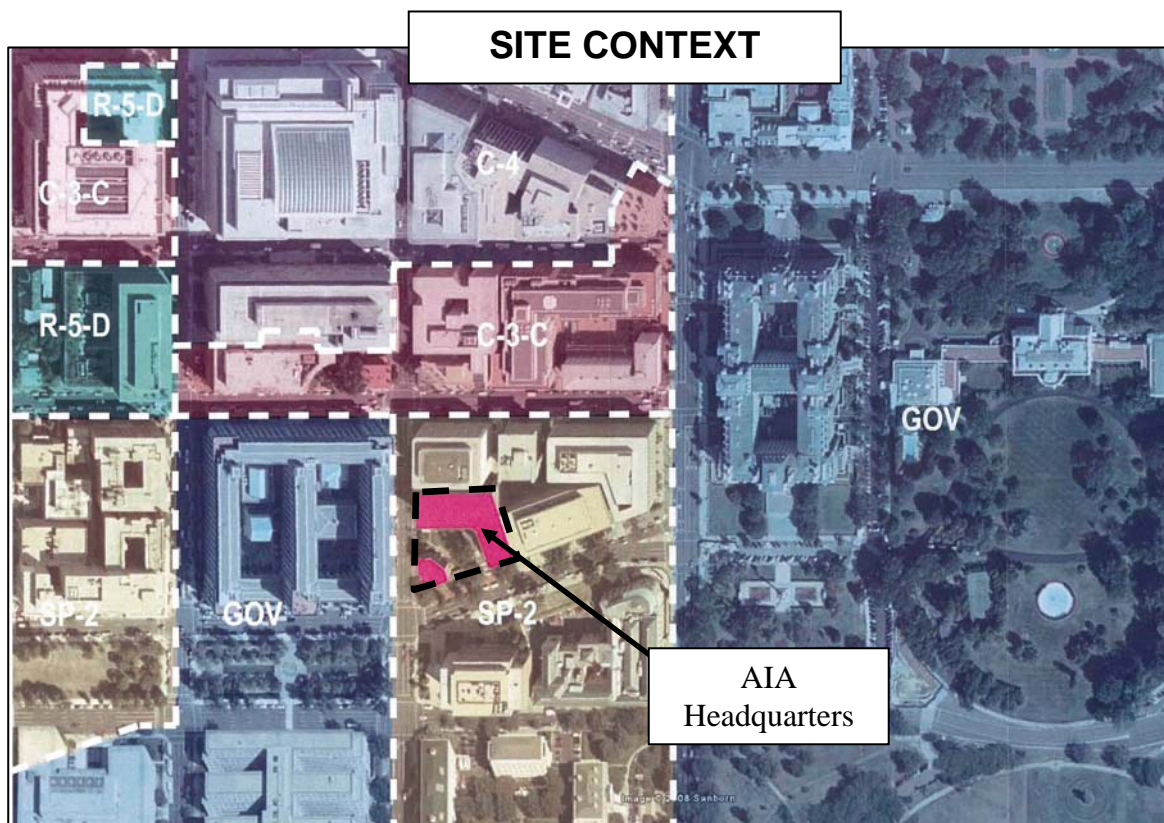
**Advises** the Zoning Commission that the proposed Consolidated Planned Unit Development for Square 170, Lots 38 and 39 and a related map amendment to change the zoning from SP-2 to C-3-C would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital nor would it adversely affect any other identified federal interests.

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### Site

The site for the proposed project is located at the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> Street, NW and New York Avenue, NW behind the historic Octagon House. This 39,500 square foot parcel, zoned SP-2, is part of Square 170 and is a few blocks west of the White House. This site is just to the west of the Federal Reserve building and just south of a building occupied by the Federal Deposit and Insurance Corporation. Large federal and private office buildings characterize the immediate vicinity of the site. The existing American Institute of Architects (AIA) Headquarters building, the subject of this Consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD), was completed in 1973, while the Octagon House, a historic house now dedicated as a museum to architecture and design, was built between 1799 and 1801.

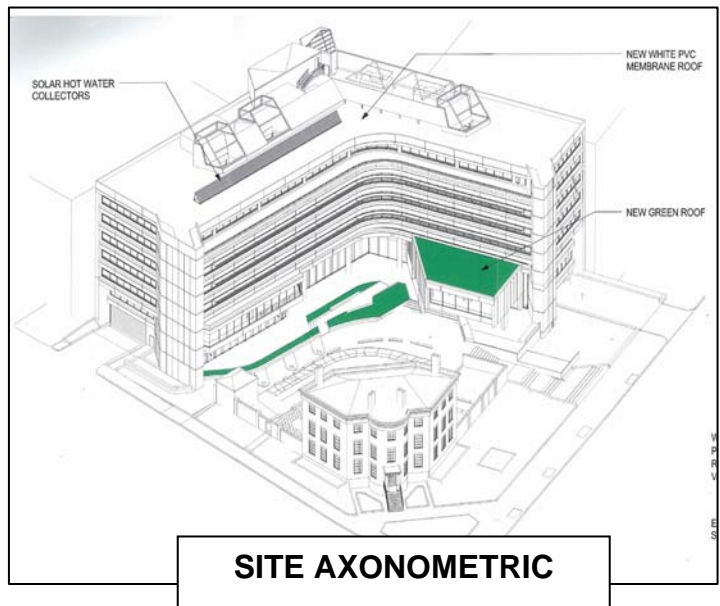


### Proposal

This project is to renovate the existing AIA Headquarters building located at 1735 New York Avenue, NW. The renovations are proposed in an effort to retrofit the existing building in order to attain a LEED platinum certification. This certification will be attained by installing three building ventilation shafts, using recycled building materials, installing cisterns, creating a green roof, installing operational windows, and by installing both solar thermal equipment and a photovoltaic array on the roof. This proposed project is intended to be a national model of sustainable design and construction while simultaneously preserving the architectural integrity of its mid-century modern design. The AIA Headquarters renovation is also being proposed in an effort to attain carbon neutrality for the building by 2030.

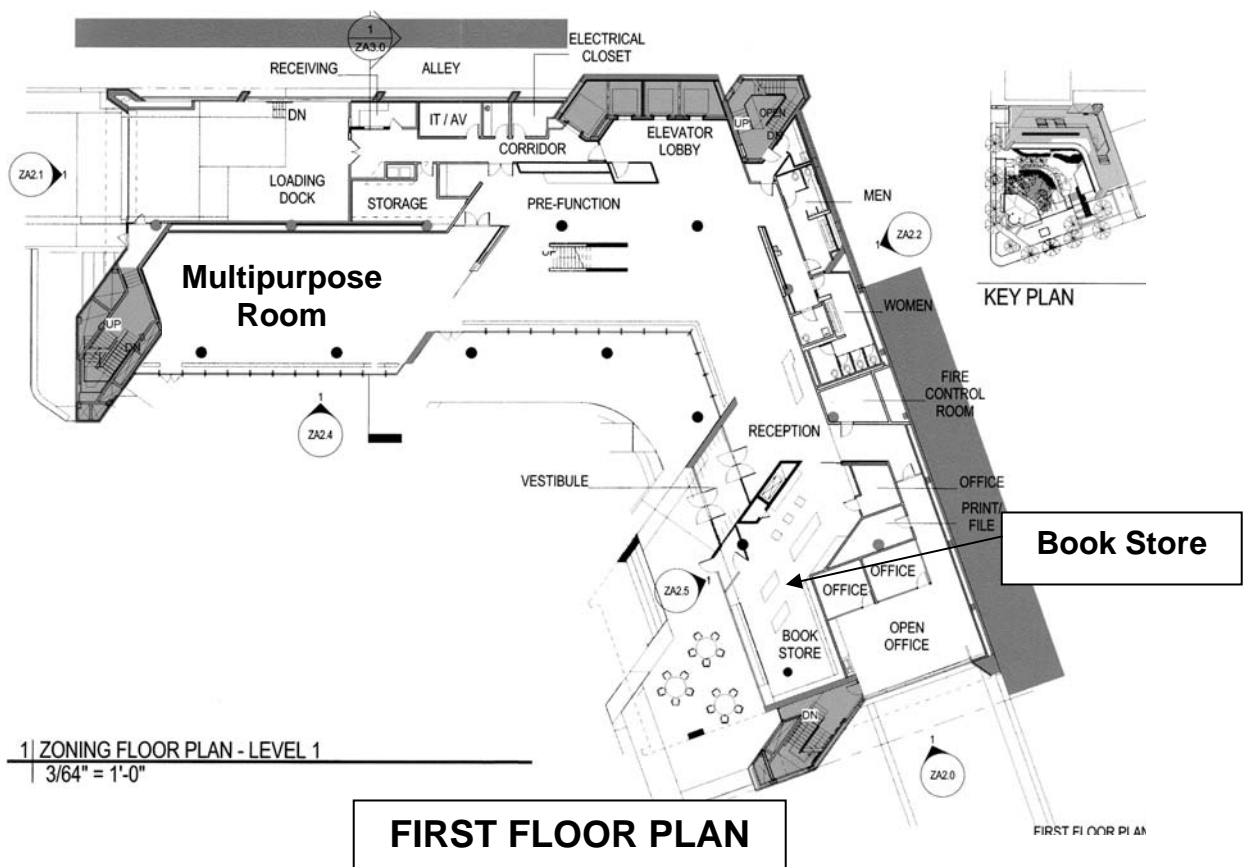
*Ventilation Shafts*

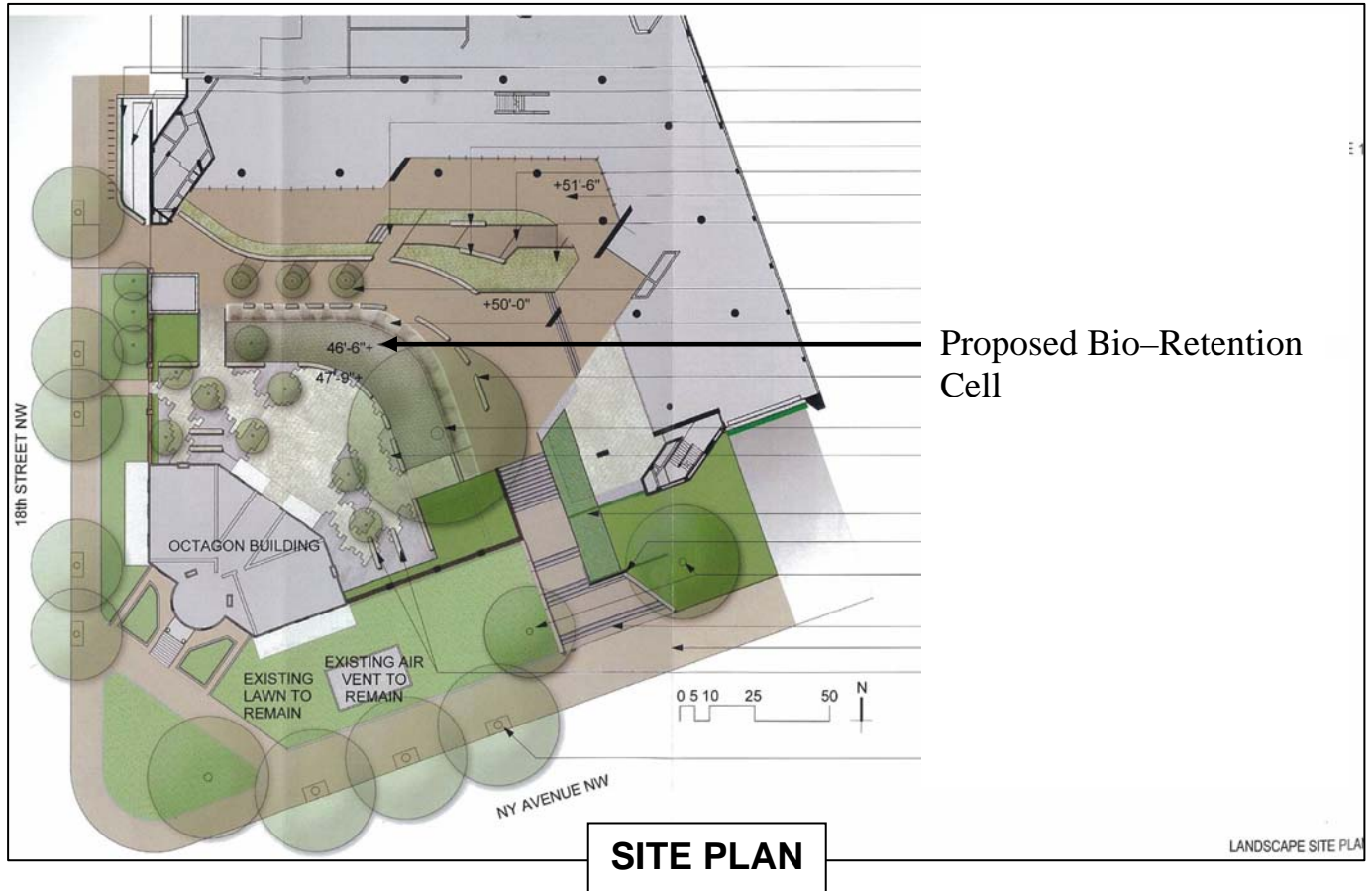
The proposal includes constructing three building ventilation shafts, through the top four floors of the building to be used in conjunction with proposed operational windows to help passively cool the building using natural air flow. Each of the three building ventilation shafts will be 20.5 feet in height above the roof. These ventilation shafts will serve a dual role and contain light reflectors that will also allow light to penetrate into the interior portion of the offices. In addition, window treatments like solar shades and heat reflective glass are proposed for glare control and improved insulation.



*Other Design Elements*

A bookstore is also included in the design and it will be accessible directly from the front plaza as will a multipurpose meeting room that will be available to the public. The bookstore existing in the AIA Headquarters building now, but is not accessible directly from the street. The zoning change requested by the applicant to C-3-C is to allow them to include retail, which is not an allowed use in the existing SP-2 zone.





Addition sustainable design elements include a green roof on the lower roof, a bio-retention cell as indicated on the Site Plan, solar hot water collectors and a new “cool roof” membrane that has a high solar reflectivity. Rainwater will be collected from the main roof level and stored in a cistern on the parking level underground. This cistern will be used to reduce the building’s use of potable water.

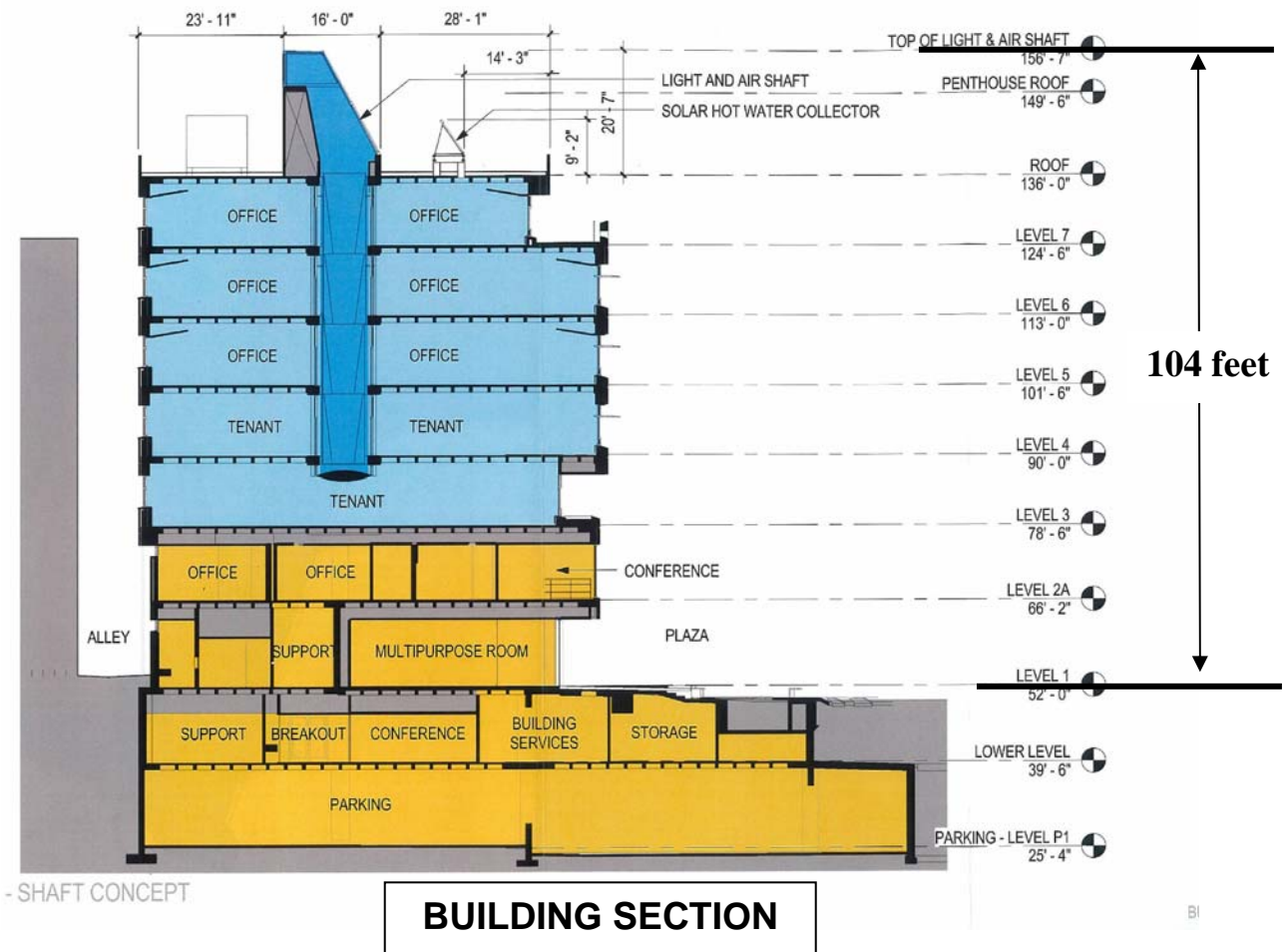
## PROJECT ANALYSIS

### Executive Summary

Staff identifies the only federal interest with respect to this proposed PUD and its related map amendment is whether or not it meets the provisions of the Height of Buildings Act of 1910, as amended.

### *Height of Buildings Act*

This site is located at the intersection of New York Avenue, NW a 160 foot right-of-way and 18<sup>th</sup> Street a 90 foot right-of-way. Under the Height Act, these streets will allow a building height of 130 feet or 110 feet, respectively. The proposed building height is approximately 104 feet as measured from the ground floor to the top of the ventilation shafts. This height is lower than the maximum allowed height of 110 feet, as allowed under the Height Act.



*Comprehensive Plan*

The Historic Preservation and Historic Features Element of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital support this PUD and related map amendment in the National Capital Image Polices that state the federal government should preserve the horizontal character of the national capital through enforcement of the 1910 Height of Buildings Act. The overall height of the building, including ventilation shafts, is less than the maximum allowed height of the building under the Height Act. In addition, the Stewardship and Historic Properties Polices support this PUD and related map amendment because they state the federal government should protect the settings of historic properties, including views to and from the sites where significant, as integral parts of the historic character of the property. The historic Octagon House, which is also located on this property, is not being altered under this proposal and the District of Columbia State Historic Preservation Officer did not have any concerns regarding the proposed renovation, as stated in the District of Columbia Office of Planning Setdown Report dated October 31, 2008.

*Community Concerns*

Residents representing the West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC – 2A) have submitted a resolution to the Zoning Commission from their April 15, 2009 meeting in

opposition to the proposed consolidated PUD and related map amendment on the grounds that the zoning change is unnecessary to allow the retail use being proposed by the AIA and could be handled as a use variance through the Board of Zoning Adjustments process. Staff finds that, in this case, this issue is local and not federal.

Therefore, staff recommends that the **Commission advise the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia that the proposed Consolidated PUD and related map amendment is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital nor adversely affect any other federal interests.**

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT  
FOGGY BOTTOM & WEST END ANC – 2A

c/o West End Library  
1101 24th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20037

THE FOGGY BOTTOM AND WEST END ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION  
(ANC-2A) RESOLUTION ON AIA's Application (ZC Case No. 08-27)

\* WHEREAS, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the American Architectural Foundation (collectively the Applicant) applied for consolidated review and 1-step approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 1735 & 1799 New York Avenue, NW for Lots 38 & 39 in Square 170 (the Subject Property) (ZC Case No. 08-27);

\* WHEREAS, the Applicant also applied for an Amendment to the Zoning Map to upzone the Subject Property from SP-2 to C-3-C;

\* WHEREAS, the Subject Property is located in the middle of a large SP-2 zone;

\* WHEREAS, the Applicant will be maintaining the current building height (of 86' 8") of its office building, which was approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment in 1970, and is proposing less floor area ratio (FAR) than used in its current complex (from 4.54 to 4.51);

\* WHEREAS, the Applicant currently has a publicly-accessible retail store on its second floor and there is street-level retail in other SP-2 properties in the Foggy Bottom-West End community, such as at Columbia Plaza;

\* WHEREAS, DC law provides, "Location of PUD Amenities. Require that a substantial part of the amenities proposed in Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) shall accrue to the community in which the PUD would have an impact;"

\* WHEREAS, the Applicant's proposed public benefits and community amenities package is inconsistent with DC law since it fails to include any amenities for the immediately impacted Foggy Bottom-West End community; and

\* NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, for all of the reasons recited herein, that the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC-2A) opposes both the requested PUD and the requested Map Amendment for the Subject Property.

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 2A

Armando Irizarry  
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