

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director Development Review & Historical Preservation

**DATE:** June 20, 2011

**SUBJECT: Final Report** on Zoning Commission Case No. 11-04 – SeVerna, LLC and Golden Rule, Apartments, Inc.

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### **I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the Zoning Commission approve the proposal by SeVerna, LLC and Golden Rule Apartments, Inc. (Applicant) to rezone the property at Square 621, Lot 862 and a portion of Lot 861 from the C-2-A district to the C-2-C district. The proposal is not inconsistent with the 2006 District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan and would allow the anticipated development in the Northwest One area.

### **II. APPLICATION IN BRIEF**

On February 11, 2011 SeVerna, LLC and Golden Rule Apartments, Inc. submitted a request to rezone Square 621, Lot 862 and a portion of Lot 861 from the C-2-A district to the C-2-C district. The applicant submits that the proposed map amendment to the C-2-C district would be more consistent with the land use designations of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the District.

The application states that the proposed map amendment would:

- *Implement the Generalized Future land Use Map designation of the property for Mixed-Use High-Density Residential and Medium Density Commercial uses; and*
- *Permit matter-of-right development of new residential and commercial uses on the site which is consistent with the property designations within a Land Use Change Area on the Generalized Policy Map.*

### **III. BACKGROUND**

On March 28, 2011 the Zoning Commission set down for a public hearing the proposed map amendment. The Commission requested that OP provide larger versions of the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map. These maps have been incorporated in the relevant sections of this report. The Commission also requested copies of the Northwest One Redevelopment Plan which is attached to this report.

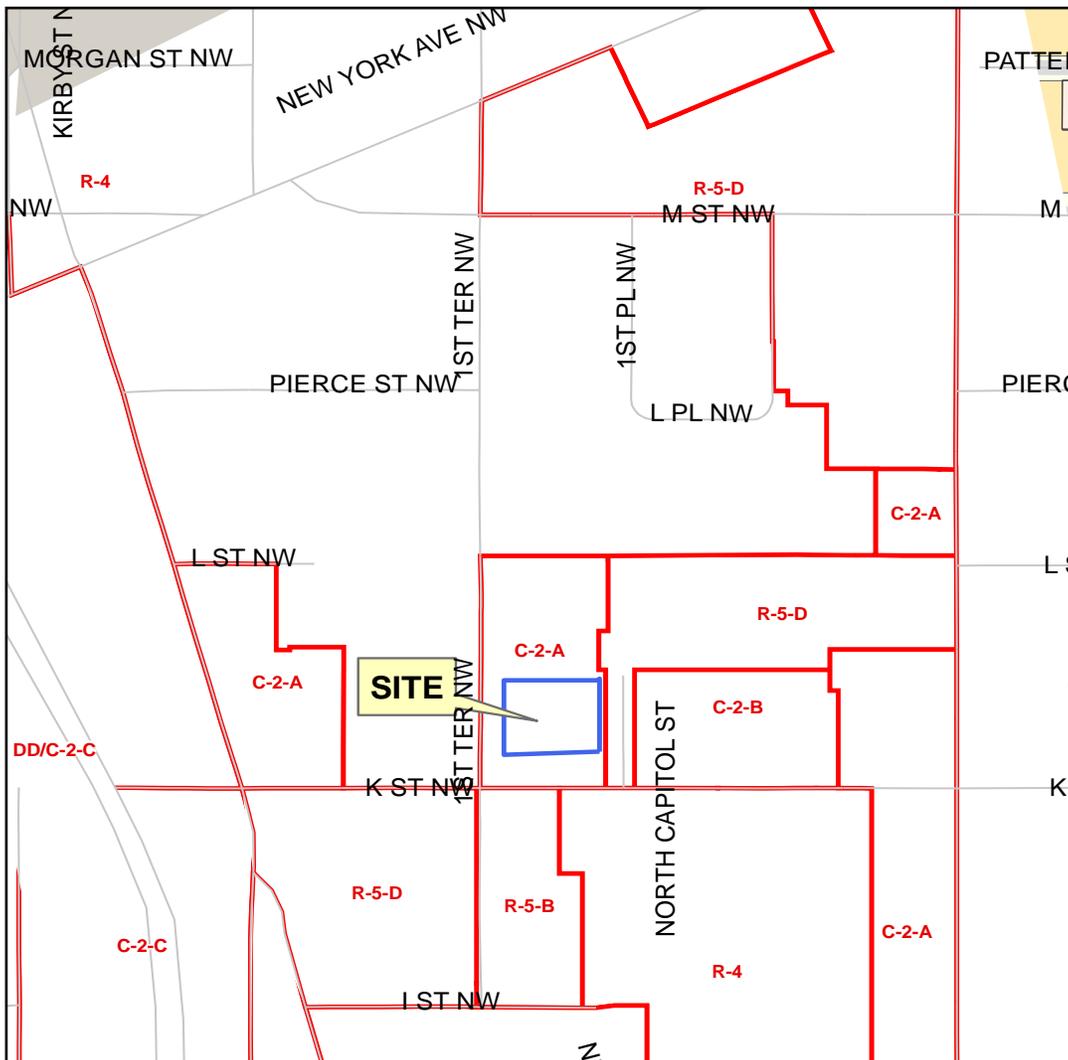
### **IV. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION**

The subject property is located in the northwest corner of the intersection of K and First streets, NW in Square 621, Lot 862 and a portion of Lot 861. The property is a vacant, rectangular lot with an area of

27,075 square feet. The property is located in an area known as Sursum Corda. The area surrounding the property is developed with predominantly residential rowhouses, medium and high density apartments interspersed with vacant and institutional uses.

The property to the immediate north of the site (Square 621, portion of Lot 861) is currently being developed with a 5-story apartment building with 49 units and 12, two-over-two townhouse units in the C-2-A district. To the northeast are walkup apartments in the R-5-D district; to the east is a vacant property in the C-2-B district; to the west and northwest are vacant property, the Southern Baptist Church and the new Walker Jones Education Campus in the R-4 district; and to the south are a variety of residential housing from townhouses to the high-rise Golden Rule Apartments in the R-4, R-5-B and R-5-D districts.

### SITE LOCATION AND ZONING



**V. ZONING**

The subject property is within the C-2-A district which is designed for shopping and business needs, housing and mixed uses within low and medium density residential areas. The proposed C-2-C zone is designed to serve commercial and residential functions similar to the C-2-A district but with higher density residential and mixed uses.

The table below compares the matter-of-right development for the C-2-A and the proposed C-2-C.

	<b>C-2-A DISTRICT</b>	<b>C-2-C DISTRICT</b>
Height	50 feet	90 feet
FAR	2.5 max. 3.0 Under Inclusionary Zoning  1.5 max non-residential	6.0 max. 7.2 Under Inclusionary Zoning  2.0 max non-residential
Lot Occupancy	60%	80%
Predominant Uses	Low to medium density residential, low density commercial or mixed uses	High density residential and mixed-uses to a high density
Comp Plan Map Designation	Shopping and business needs, low and medium density residential or mixed uses	High density residential, medium density commercial, or mixed Use

The existing C-2-A district does not allow the level of development that is envisioned by the 2006 Comprehensive Plan land use designations of High Density Residential and Medium Density Commercial.

The proposed map amendment to the C-2-C district would allow the anticipated residential development and be “not inconsistent” with current Land Use and Policy Map designation. The map amendment would support the Comprehensive Plan guidance to establish a zoning framework for the redevelopment of the Northwest One area.

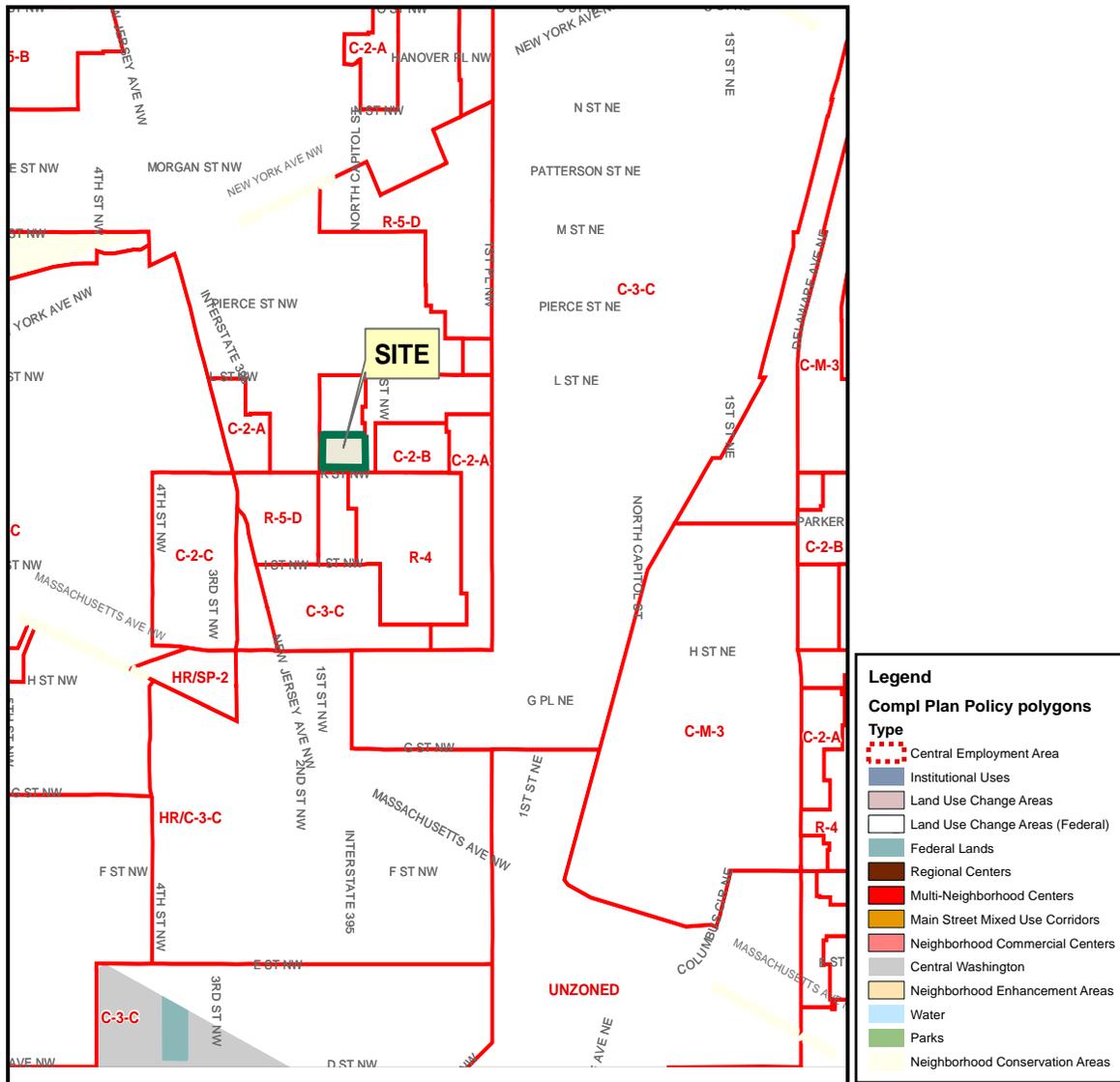
**VI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Generalized Future Land Use Map**

The site is within an area designated for a mixture of High Density Residential which is characterized by high-rise apartment buildings (eight stories or more) as the predominant uses and Medium Density Commercial characterized by shopping and service areas where retail, office and service businesses are the predominant uses in buildings not to exceed five stories in height. Unlike the existing C-2-A zoning, the proposed C-2-C zone would be consistent with this designation.



## 2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GENERALIZED POLICY MAP



### Comprehensive Plan City-Wide Elements

In the Comprehensive Plan City-Wide Elements, the Managing Growth and Change section, guiding principles for future development are outlined and include the following:

4. *The District needs both residential and non-residential growth to survive. Nonresidential growth benefits residents by creating jobs and opportunities for less affluent households to increase their income. [217.4]*

The Comprehensive Plan envisions this area as an area of growth. The proposed map amendment would allow redevelopment of the subject property with residential uses at the density recommended and envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan. It would also further policy statements of the Land Use (Chapter 3) and Housing (Chapter 5) Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Element lists as one of the most critical land use issues facing the District:

*“Directing growth and new development to achieve economic vitality while minimizing adverse impacts on residential areas and open space. [300.2]”*

The Comprehensive Plan recommends a mixture of residential and commercial uses within the Sursum Corda area. Further, the Northwest One Redevelopment plan outlines strategies to revitalize the overall area, address housing and open space as well as the social and economic well being of the projected residents.

The proposed rezoning would allow redevelopment that would complement existing development along this block of K Street, as well as the projected redevelopment envisioned for the Northwest One Redevelopments area and is also consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies for infill development. The Land Use and Housing Elements include additional policies in support:

- **Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development**  
*“Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern.” [307.5]*
- **Policy LU-1.4.3: Zoning of Infill Sites**  
*“Ensure that the zoning of vacant infill sites is compatible with the prevailing development pattern in surrounding neighborhood. . . .” [307.7]*
- **Policy H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support**  
*“Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future district Residents at locations consistent with land use policies and objective.” [503.2]*

The property is privately owned by the Golden Rule Apartment, Inc. and will be developed by Severna LLC. The map amendment will allow high density residential use to meet the needs of present and future residents of the District consistent with the recommendations of the land use maps, policies and objectives.

- **Policy H-1.1.3: Balanced Growth**  
*“Strongly encourage the development of new housing and underutilized land in all parts of the city. Ensure that a sufficient supply of land is planned and zoned to enable the city to meet its long term housing needs, including the need for low- and moderate-density single family homes as well as the need for high- density housing.” [503.4]*

The Comprehensive Plan recommends moderate and medium density residential for the northern portion of Square 621 and high density residential and medium density commercial for the southern portion (the subject property). The northern portion of the square is currently being developed with two-over-two townhouses for families and a five story apartment building consistent with the Plan designation. The proposed rezoning would allow the development of high density residential use on the site and fulfill the mix of residential unit types envisioned for the square.

- **Policy H-1.1.4: Mixed Use Development**  
*“Promote mixed use development, including housing, on commercially zoned land . . . .” [503.5]*
- **Policy H-1.1.6: Housing in the Central City**  
*“Absorb a substantial component of the demand for new high-density housing in Central Washington and along the Anacostia River. Absorbing the demand for higher density units within*

*these areas is an effective way to meet housing demands, create mixed-use areas, and conserve single family residential neighborhoods throughout the city. Mixed income, higher density downtown housing also provides the opportunity to create vibrant street life, and to support the restaurants, retail, entertainment, and other amenities that are desired and needed in the heart of the city.” [503.7]*

The site is within the Central Washington area and the proposed map amendment would allow for the development of high density residential use on the property. The map amendment would allow the development of a high density residential development up 7.2 FAR (with Inclusionary Zoning) of which up to 2.0 FAR could be devoted to non-residential uses. The Northwest One area with its mixed income, higher density housing would contribute to a vibrant street life and support retail and other uses in the area.

### **Central Washington Area Elements (Chapter 16)**

The Area Elements of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on issues relevant to particular areas of the City. The property is within the Central Washington Area Element which outlines policies and those relevant to the proposal are as follows:

- **Policy CW-1.1.4: New Housing Development in Central Washington**

*“Encourage the development of new high-density housing in Central Washington, particularly in the area north of Massachusetts Avenue and east of Mount Vernon Square. This area includes Mount Vernon Triangle, Northwest One, and NoMA. Ground floor retail space and similar uses should be strongly encouraged within these areas to create street-life and provide neighborhood services for residents. A strong Downtown residential community can create pedestrian traffic, meet local housing needs, support local businesses in the evenings and on weekends, and increase neighborhood safety and security.” [1608.5]*

The redevelopment of the overall Northwest One area is projected to have a mix of residential uses at varying densities. In particular, the subject property is envisioned for high density that would assist in creating a vibrant community and support businesses in the Central Washington area.

The Central Washington Area Element identifies eight “policy focus areas” one of which is the NOMA/Northwest One area within which the property is located. The Plan recommends that “NoMA’s be development as an active mixed use neighborhood that includes residential, office, hotel, commercial, and ground floor retail uses. It further recommends that there be a “diverse mix of housing, serving a range of household types and incomes.”

A specific action recommended to support these policies includes:

- **Action CW-2.8.D: Northwest One New Community**  
*“Redevelop Northwest One as a mixed income community, including new market rate and subsidized housing, and neighborhood-serving retail space.*

### **Northwest One Redevelopment Plan**

The Northwest One Redevelopment Plan (attached) was approved by the City Council in July 2006<sup>1</sup>. The Plan covers three elements, a Master Plan, a Human Capital Plan and a Development and Finance Strategy with a goal of guiding redevelopment of the Northwest One neighborhood. The Northwest One Vision recommends “New Mid-and High-Rise Apartments for the Site” (page 14). The Plan, at page 15, further recommends that new building massing be tailored to existing right-of-ways and contexts. The C-2-C zone allows for the high density residential use and heights up to 90-feet which is consistent with the vision for this area.

The Northwest One community redevelopment is currently underway with the construction and occupancy of the new Walker Jones Education Campus located northwest of the site along L Street. The campus includes a 100,000 square foot school, a 200,000 square foot recreation center, and a 5,000 square foot library. Construction of new housing is underway and the development of the subject property with high density residential use will assist in fulfilling the redevelopment envisioned for the Northwest One New Community.

## **VII. RECOMMENDATION**

Redevelopment of the area is currently underway as envisioned by the Northwest One plan. Housing development is progressing and includes the development of the adjacent northern portion of the subject square with a five-story apartment building with 48 affordable units fronting on First Street. Twelve, two-over-two, affordable townhouse units fronting on L Street are also under construction. The development of the subject site would complete the development of the square.

The high density residential use that would be developed on the site would facilitate the mix of housing types envisioned for the area and would also begin the redevelopment along this portion of K Street. OP therefore recommends approval of the requested map amendment from the C-2-A zone to the C-2-C zone.

ATTACHMENT:Northwest One Redevelopment Plan

JLS/Maxine Brown-Roberts, Case Manager

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<sup>1</sup> Although the cover page reads “Draft 11.04.05” this was the Plan approved by the City Council. The cover page has not been updated.