



Government of the District of Columbia Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

DRAFT RESOLUTION #4B-21-0905

**Opposing Concept Plan for 1000 Main Drive, NW,
Parcels A-G of The Parks at Walter Reed (HPA 21-154)**

Adopted September 27, 2021

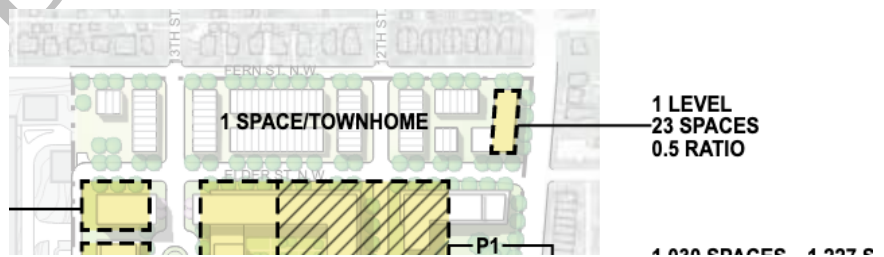
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B (Commission) takes note of the following:

- The Parks at Walter Reed development team, consisting of Bowman, Bohler, Toll Brothers and Hines is seeking Historic Preservation Review Board approval for a concept plan for Parcels A-G at 1000 Main Drive, NW, the parcel primarily located at the corner of Georgia Avenue, NW, and Fern Street, NW.
- According to correspondence with the development team, the concept plan for Parcels A-G consists of 50 single-family townhomes and 94 two-over-two condominiums, with 194 garage parking spaces and an additional seven off-street garage apron parking spaces, according to the development team. During the July 26, 2021 Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B meeting, the development team stated that there were 288 parking spaces and apron garage parking spaces for approximately one-third of the condominiums.
- The development team presented its concept design to Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B at the Commission's July 26, 2021, regular public meeting. They also presented at the Walter Reed Medical Center Local Redevelopment Authority Community Advisory Committee July 12, 2021, and a public Single Member District 4A03 meeting on July 21, 2021.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B finds the proposed concept plan for Parcels A-G inconsistent and incompatible with the extensive programming and design recommendations in the Walter Reed Local Redevelopment Authority, [Final Reuse Plan](#) (2012); the DC Office of Planning, [Walter Reed Small Area Plan](#) (2013); and [The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines](#) (2018).

- The concept plan significantly increases the number of off-street parking spaces for a single-family home. This auto-centric concept plan fails to meet the sustainability design goals outlined in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-approved Final Reuse Plan for the site, which call for the development to “adopt the sustainability standards of today but also look forward to set the sustainability standards of tomorrow” through efforts to “prioritize pedestrian-Friendly environment,” “reduced trip generation,” and “reduce the need to travel and impact on environment with low to zero carbon modes of transportation.” Final Reuse Plan, [Chapter 6, Project Goals](#). These design goals are repeated in the Small Area Plan for the site – unanimously approved by the DC Council – which calls for the development to set “ambitious, yet realistic standards for innovative sustainable practices.” Walter Reed Small Area Plan, [Chapter 1.5, Project Goals](#).

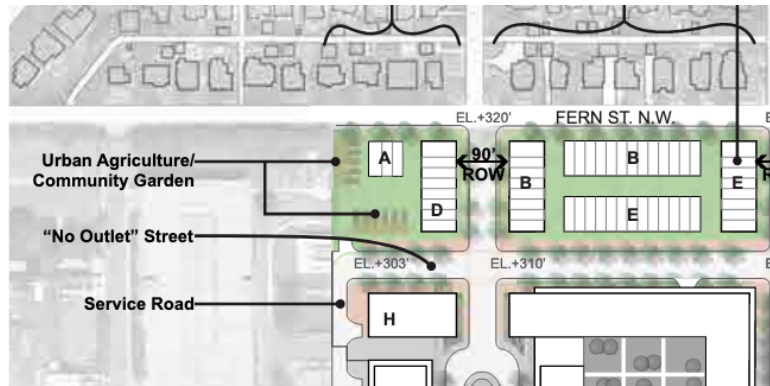
- The extensive parking in the concept plan also fails to meet the sustainability design goals outlined in the The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines, under which the developer “is committed to the highest levels of environmental ... sustainability” and “will apply contemporary best practices for sustainable design.” The Master Plan Implementation also refers to “sustainability as a site-wide core principle.” The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines, [Chapter 1.2.5, Sustainability & Chapter 4, Landscape Design Principles](#).

- The concept plan does not conform with the Parking Plan for the site, as outlined in the HUD-approved Final Reuse Plan, which calls for one parking space per townhome in the townhome section of these Parcels and 23 spaces and a 0.5 space/dwelling ratio for the multifamily section of these



Parcels. Final Reuse Plan, [Chapter 8, Reuse Plan, Development Guide, Parking Plan](#). These same parking ratios are outlined in the Small Area Plan. Walter Reed Small Area Plan, [Chapter 3.4 Transportation Recommendations, Parking Plan](#).

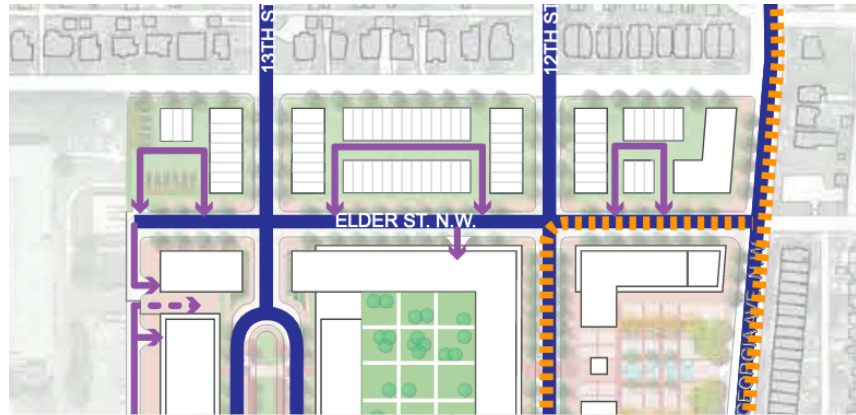
- The concept plan eliminates the urban agriculture/community garden originally proposed for the west end of the Parcels, further failing to meet the sustainability goals of the project, as outlined above, instead substituting additional pavement and parking. Walter Reed Small Area Plan, [Chapter 3.3](#)



[Sub-Area Urban Design Principles.](#)

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has previously prioritized sustainability in design principles for historic districts, stating: “If we don’t preserve our planet against the catastrophic impact of climate change, we won’t be able to historically preserve anything.” [Resolution 4B-19-0104](#), “Supporting Installation of Roof Solar Panels at 500 Dahlia Street N.W., HPA 19-123” (Jan. 28, 2019); [Resolution 4B-19-0601](#), “Supporting Installation of Roof Solar Panels at 6824 5th Street, NW, H.P.A. No. 19-439” (June 24, 2019); [Resolution 4B-19-0903](#), “Supporting Adoption of 21st Century Guidance for Installing Solar in Historic Districts” (Sept. 23, 2019).
- The combined townhome and condominiums plan for Parcels A-G fails to meet the design goal for this Formal Zone, which states that buildings should form “open courtyards.” The proposed concept plan does not contain a single true courtyard, instead substituting pavement for access to driveways and parking. The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines, [Chapter 3.3.3, Urban Design and Architecture, Building Siting and Configuration](#). Furthermore, this additional concrete eliminates the trees originally designed for that courtyard space in favor of additional pavement, further damaging the project’s overall sustainability.
- The proposed use of a series of double-door garage doors is highly uncharacteristic of the surrounding community. Given the relative lack of greenspace and straight-line alleys in the concept plan, these rear elevations would be prominently visible at numerous locations along Elder Street, 12th Street, and 13th Street within the Walter Reed Historic District. This also contrasts considerably with the recently approved concept design for townhomes at Parcels WXY, where parking areas are less prominently visible and include only single-door style garage doors.

- The proposed vehicle circulation driveways are not in keeping with the Small Area Plan. Whereas the Small Area Plan envisions vehicular circulation toward Elder Street, NW, with all curb cuts and driveways confined to the Southern border of Parcels A-G, the proposed



Urban Mobility - Fern Street. Source: Perkins+Will.

concept plan adds curb cuts and driveways on both 12th Street, NW, and 13th Street, NW, driving vehicular traffic north out of the parcels and increasing the impact on adjacent neighborhoods. Walter Reed Small Area Plan [Chapter 3.3 Sub-Area Urban Design Principles](#).

- The proposed townhome concept design for Parcels A-G is inconsistent with the applicable WR-1 zone, which calls for the design to “[p]rovide for residential development that complements the character of nearby established residential neighborhoods.” Instead, the developer proposes a novel two-car garage townhome concept that is not in keeping with the adjoining duplex and bungalow-style homes.
- The inclusion of two-over-two stacked townhomes is an imported design that has not been adapted for the neighborhood in which it sits. Representatives from the development team have told Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B that this design has been “very successful ... across the country” but were unable to provide an urban setting where they had successfully implemented the design, pointing instead to suburban areas like Tyson’s Corner, Virginia. The developer’s failure to adapt the design to the surrounding neighborhood and the existing urban context does not meet the key design goal for Campus Character Area 3, which contains Parcels A-G, to “reinforce the principles of the historic pattern of development unique to each zone, while also being responsive to the surrounding neighborhoods and the overall campus character.” The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines, [Chapter 3.3.2 Urban Design and Architecture, Campus Character Areas](#).
- The elimination of the multi-family residences originally envisioned in both the Final Reuse Plan and the Small Area Plan for the corner of Fern Street, NW, and Georgia Avenue, NW, means that the proposed buildings no longer serve the placemaking design guidelines or usage guidelines for

that corner. The Small Area Plan envisions the building as “mixed use.” It further provides, “To help strengthen the Georgia Avenue and Fern Street intersection, the proposed mixed use building here would have access at grade and increase maximum allowable height at the corner.” Walter Reed Small Area Plan, [Chapter 3.3 Sub-Area Urban Design Principles](#). The Final Reuse Plan envisions a “4 or 5 story multifamily residence facing Georgia Avenue.” Final Reuse Plan, [Chapter 8.0, Reuse Plan, Development Guide, Building/Land Use Plan](#). Likewise, the New Design Guidelines state, “The buildings to be located at the corners of Georgia Ave and Aspen St and Georgia Ave and Fern St, will play a critical and highly visible role in demarcating the beginning of the campus and establishing and reinforcing the overall character. These buildings should consider incorporating a prominent architectural feature at these corners.” The Parks at Walter Reed Master Plan Implementation: Preservation and New Design Guidelines, [Chapter 3, Urban Design and Architecture](#). The failure to adapt the design from suburban principles fails to meet these goals.

- The proposed condominium concept design for Parcels A-G is inconsistent with the applicable WR-3 zone, which calls for the design to “[p]rovide for moderate- to medium-density commercial and residential development that activates Georgia Avenue frontage through enhanced ground-floor retail opportunities, a more uniform street wall, and publicly accessible plazas.” Instead, the proposed design does not activate Georgia Avenue, NW, at all.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has previously expressed that the Commission “desires retail frontage along Georgia Avenue, NW, that is pedestrian friendly and activates the overall commercial corridor along the eastern boundary of the Campus”; however, this plan fails to activate the Georgia Avenue, NW, frontage at all in favor of a suburban-style condominium design. [Resolution 4B-20-1105](#), “Supporting Proposed Concept Design for The Parks at Walter Reed Building QRS” (Nov. 23, 2020).
- The transition of this building from either of the previously proposed mixed-use or multifamily developments to two-over-two condominiums will have a significant negative impact on the community by effectively avoiding all requirements under the federal Fair Housing Act for accessibility. The Commission is particularly concerned, as **the entire 144-unit development of Parcels A-G under this concept plan will not offer a single accessible unit for community members with disabilities or mobility concerns.**
- The concept plan for Parcels A-G offers very little affordable housing and no deeply affordable housing, providing only 12 affordable units at the 80% AMI level. While the Commission understands affordability is set

site-wide for Walter Reed, only 8% percent of the units in this parcel are affordable (and none are deeply affordable), which is below the modern standard for the District's inclusionary zoning requirements for a project of this size if it was built outside the Walter Reed zone.

- The proposed concept plan for Parcels A-G is inconsistent and incompatible with the extensive master planning and community input for the site. Instead of offering a thoughtful design that is suited for the vibrant urban community context it exists within, it offers instead a template plan duplicated from and designed to encourage suburban sprawl. It provides excessive parking and relocates parking spots from other areas of the Walter Reed campus that have greater need. It is fundamentally exclusionary, both in lack of affordability and in lack of accessibility, and does not reflect the values of the District of Columbia.

RESOLVED:

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B finds the proposed concept plan incompatible with the Walter Reed Historic District and the surrounding community.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B finds the proposed concept plan to offer few community benefits. It offers very little affordable housing and no deeply affordable housing, no accessible housing for disabled residents, and does not adhere to the sustainability goals of either the master plan for the site or the District of Columbia's sustainability goals more broadly.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B finds the proposed concept plan is designed for suburban neighborhoods and not the District of Columbia's urban environment. In particular, the substitution of two-over-two condominiums for either a mid-rise, mixed-use building or multifamily housing at the corner of Fern Street, NW, and Georgia Avenue, NW, significantly degrades activation of Georgia Avenue, NW, and fails to meet the overall architectural goals of the project.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B finds that the development team has taken significant steps to reduce the promised community benefits from the project through deliberate design decisions, including elimination of the urban agriculture/community garden plan, elimination of trees and courtyards, and elimination of multifamily housing.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recommends that the Historic Preservation Review Board reject the proposed concept plan for Parcels A-G and urges the development team to reconsider its designs to

maximize sustainability in accordance with the design and sustainability goals contained in the Master Plan, the Final Reuse Plan and the Small Area Plan.

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recommends that the Historic Preservation Review Board reject the proposed concept plan for Parcels A-G and urges the development team to reconsider its designs to maximize affordability and provide deeply affordable housing in accordance with modern development goals within the District of Columbia.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recommends that the Historic Preservation Review Board reject the proposed concept plan for Parcels A-G and urges the development team to reconsider its designs to provide accessible housing for disabled residents and senior citizens.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recommends that the developer maintain the original Parking Plan contained in both the Final Reuse Plan and the Small Area Plan and use the additional green space to restore both the courtyards and urban agriculture/community garden.
- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B recommends that the developer be required to provide the mixed-use or multifamily housing originally envisioned for the corner of Fern Street, NW, and Georgia Avenue, NW.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Commission designates Commissioner Evan Yeats, ANC 4B01; Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02; Commissioner Tiffani Nichole Johnson, ANC 4B06; and Commissioner Geoff Bromaghim, ANC 4B07; to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, in the event the designated representative Commissioners cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, consistent with DC Code § 1-309, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or

letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

ADOPTED by voice vote at a regular public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of __ of nine members was present) on September 27, 2021, by a vote of __ yes, __ no, __ abstentions.

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