

WISCONSIN AVENUE GIANT UPDATE



Edition I, Vol. 2

September, 2008

NEIGHBORHOOD BUZZ

We want to keep everyone informed as we move through the planning process to redevelop the Wisconsin Avenue Giant. For more than three years, Stop & Shop/Giant and its development consultant, Street-Works, have been working with the community to shape a shared vision for redeveloping the Giant. What is envisioned is a mixed-use development with a state-of-the-art supermarket, neighborhood serving retail, quality rental and for-sale housing, an enlivened streetscape, engaging open spaces, and adequate below-grade parking.

WHAT'S BEING PLANNED?

The triangular shaped property is along Wisconsin Avenue starting north of Cactus Cantina, going north to Idaho Avenue, and extending southwest down Idaho Avenue, across from the Police Station. Newark Street runs east-west through the center of the site, dividing it in to two parcels.

- A 56,000 sq. ft. Giant supermarket
- A total of 140-150 residential units
- Active sidewalks with 55,000 sq. ft. of street level retail along Wisconsin Avenue, Newark Street and Idaho Avenue
- Approximately 14,000 sq. ft. of commercial space on a second floor along Wisconsin Avenue
- A total of 530-540 parking spaces accessed off of Newark Street and 38th Street
- Loading separately accessed off of Idaho Ave.

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

After gathering extensive community input, Giant filed an application with the Zoning Commission for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and related zoning map amendments for the three lots it owns on Wisconsin Avenue. The entire PUD Application

package may be viewed online at www.wisconsinavegiant.com.

At the July 28 Zoning Commission hearing, the Office of Planning presented our application and heard comment and feedback from the Commissioners. The Zoning Commissioners voted unanimously to set the application down for hearing. Now, the development team is reviewing the Zoning Commission's comments, refining the design and preparing its pre-hearing submission, which will be sent to the Zoning Commission later this year. Next, the Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing, which may take place sometime early next year. As required, there will be adequate community notification prior to the hearing so that everyone can participate.

Keep in mind that the purpose of a PUD is to allow the Zoning Commission to evaluate and assess an applicant's proposed changes to zoning regulations.

WHAT CAN I DO RIGHT NOW?

Your opinion is important! The best way to ensure that your voice is heard is to email a letter to ANC 3C about this project. Address it to anc3cmail@gmail.com and send us a copy at Huesrose@aol.com.

GIANT'S POSITION

We want community members to be aware of the project, the process and our availability for dialogue. Most importantly, we want residents to have accurate information. One of the best ways to keep informed is to visit our website www.wisconsinavegiant.com and to attend community meetings. We encourage neighbors to read our PUD Application, including our Traffic Report on the website. The following is our position on some of the concerns which have been raised.

Traffic

We understand that traffic and parking are natural concerns for a neighborhood undergoing redevelopment. To address these concerns, a traffic study conducted by our traffic consultants, Wells & Associates, found that this project will have *no significant traffic impact on the neighborhood*. The PUD will add 539 weekday PM peak hour trips, and 550 Saturday mid-day peak hour trips, compared to the existing Giant and vacant and occupied retail stores. More than a third of these trips will be “pass-by” trips that already are on Wisconsin Avenue and area streets. The additional new trips will be distributed among the multiple project driveways and the public street network. Traffic on Wisconsin Avenue, Macomb Street, Newark Street, and Porter Street would increase by only 2 to 15 percent during peak hours. Essentially, area intersections will continue to operate at the same level as they do today. Moreover, the traffic calming measures, parking and flow design proposed for the development will improve the existing function.

Parking

New Residential Units

The number of parking spaces planned for the new residential units exceed the Zoning Commission's requirements of 1 parking space for every 2 units. We are proposing 1 parking space for every unit, which is twice what is required, but in line with what census data suggests is appropriate.

Commercial Parking Spaces

A supermarket counts on customer convenience and easy access. Consequently, we carefully considered the adequacy and quantity of parking provided in this project. We feel that the amount of commercial parking planned is more than adequate given the varying times of peak usage throughout the day. In determining the number of proposed commercial parking spaces, we weighed several factors including the anticipated number of grocery and neighborhood retail customers, and the government's initiatives. While, the DDOT wants to encourage the use of public transportation and reduce vehicular traffic, most shoppers want the convenience of using their private cars. We feel that the number of spaces we are proposing reaches a middle ground that accommodates these disparate wishes.

Existing Residents

For additional information, contact Sharon Robinson, Wisconsin Avenue Giant Development Team, 202-494-5338, Huesrose@aol.com, or go to www.wisconsinavegiant.com.

Existing residents have requested that we allow access to the new garage for overnight parking. This is something we are open to discussing and hope to be able to accommodate.

Existing Neighborhood Retailers

The Giant parking lot today permits parking by customers of neighborhood retailers. Our plan continues to provide parking for existing neighborhood retailers and their customers.

Height

Each component of the proposed project has been designed to respect its immediate context. The two-story building containing the new Giant supermarket on the South Parcel is adjacent to similarly-scaled two and three-story commercial buildings. The townhouses proposed on Idaho Avenue across from the police station are similar in scale and height to the residential uses further south along Idaho Avenue. And finally, the five-story building we propose for the North Parcel is actually smaller in scale and height than buildings across Idaho and Wisconsin Avenues.

Loading

Residential neighbors directly to the south of the planned grocery store loading zone on the South Parcel indicate that this location is a concern. So, we are evaluating a redesign of the loading zone that would move the loading area farther from the existing neighbors and closer to the proposed new residential townhouses. We want to emphasize that the loading function continues to be entirely beneath and within the building, which will serve as both an acoustic and visual buffer.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Giant is actively engaging local residents and businesses to discuss its plans. The best source for immediate and up to date information is our website www.wisconsinavegiant.com. Recently, nearly 200 people attended the June 10 community meeting and offered ideas, input, and support for the project's scope, design, and focus. A copy of the questions posed and our answers is attached. We will continue this dialogue through civic, ANC and full community meetings. Upcoming meeting include:

September 10 7 PM, ANC 3C-09, TBD

September TBD Vaughan Place @ McLean

Gardens Condo Association.

WISCONSIN AVENUE GIANT
Community Questions and Answers
September, 2008

During what hours of the day will trucks make deliveries?

Deliveries will be similar to existing patterns on the site and in the surrounding community. A truck management plan will be developed through discussions with the community to ensure that deliveries are done in a way that respects the residential community's need for peace and quiet. This truck management plan will then likely be adopted by the Zoning Commission as a condition of its PUD approval.

Why does Idaho have to be loaded with more traffic and noise? We will have trucks, two-way traffic, busses, police, etc. plus, a loading entrance?

Our traffic study indicates that the traffic generated by the project will have a negligible impact on Idaho Avenue. Features like a truck management plan and noise and visual buffering will further mitigate these impacts.

Why must the whole complex be approved now? Can't we figure out the Giant first?

The renovation and expansion of the Giant in to a state-of-the-art grocery with fresh produce, fish, prepared meals, and so on is made possible by the development of the rest of the property. Moreover, the additional residential, retail and commercial features will enhance the shopping experience at the Giant itself.

The big "Giant" red letters. . . please don't light these at night. People who live in nearby apts. can't sit on their balconies & keep curtains open. People will see the store without night lights.

Some members of the community have expressed an interest in preserving the neon "Giant" letters, which they consider to be a trademark feature that identifies the store. We will speak with management about managing the hours and intensity of the illumination.

Can the bus route avoid Idaho Ave?

We met with WMATA to discuss the bus routes around the PUD site. WMATA indicates that they intend to continue to use Idaho Avenue for its bus routes.

As a resident of 38th St., I am concerned about traffic mitigation. Where will the traffic lights be? Will there be a signal on Massachusetts & 38th Street, on Woodley & Massachusetts or on Macomb & Massachusetts?

We are currently working with DDOT to analyze existing traffic speeds and volume on 38th Street to determine what measures, if any, will be required. Concerns about traffic on 38th Street were raised and discussed at a meeting we attended at DDOT along with representatives of ANC 3C. No new traffic signals are proposed along Massachusetts Avenue.

Integrate the expensive town house into the existing residential neighborhood, not as an island onto itself.

We revised the site plan to move the loading entrance off Idaho Avenue to the north, adjacent to the proposed townhouses and further away from the existing residential neighborhood. The townhouses will read as a part of the pattern of single-family residential development along Idaho Avenue. The loading entrance cannot be moved further to the north because of the changes in grade on the site.

Before trucks start coming through for either construction or loading the stores, several of our narrower streets MUST be widened (38th, for example, is completely impossible in one direction when a moving van arrives).

Construction and delivery traffic will access the PUD site along the streets recommended by DDOT, which are existing roadways that are wide enough to accommodate them. We will develop both a Construction Management Plan and a Truck Management Plan that will provide additional guidelines for both construction traffic and regular deliveries once the project is completed.

I have concerns about the scale of the Giant store. This seems far bigger than a neighborhood store - bigger than Whole Foods. It seems that an urban supermarket should follow an urban (rather than a suburban) model.

The Giant will continue to serve the immediate neighborhood. The scale of the planned Giant supermarket is in keeping with the population density it is designed to serve and directly responds to the requests from many residents for an improved store with greater selection and enhanced features.

Why don't you put a model of the development and some large pictures in the existing Giant along with a place to deposit comments. Put out the website for more info & comments. The silent majority needs to be heard from. If space is a limitation why not open a section of Murphy's on Saturday mornings (10-2) to gather input from the public.

Thank you for this suggestion. We will work to implement it.

While we applaud many aspects of the latest plan, as a resident of 38th St, I am concerned about the entrance on 38th Street because the density of the project may increase traffic on 38th Street and will adversely impact the residential character of the neighborhood. As you know, an earlier version of the project did not have a 38th Street entrance. As I recall, concerns were raised about the pedestrian entrance on 38th Street. However, the vehicle entrance is a serious problem for me and many of my 38th Street neighbors. Solution: (1) eliminate 38th Street entrance, or (2) move entrance to right of way next to 2 Amys (?), or (3) make 38th Street a one way entrance only while keeping Newark Street both an entrance and exit.

The proposed entrance and exit from 38th Street was added based on community input and we feel that it enhances the overall planning of the site. Also, concerns about the perceived impact of the PUD on 38th Street have been discussed with DDOT and ANC 3C, and we are working with DDOT to study and analyze the existing conditions and proposed impact of the 38th Street entrance. DDOT

has indicated preliminary support for two-way access at this entrance, but has asked us to analyze the benefits and drawbacks of restricting this entrance to one-way traffic only. We are currently doing this analysis.

Will there be a charge for parking in the garage? If so, how much?
There will be no charge for parking in the garage.

How will you ensure that there is sufficient parking for shoppers when your flats are going to use some of them?

We took this in to consideration as we planned the number of parking spaces. The South Parcel contains 396 parking spaces and only 14 flats. Even if every resident has a car and parks it all day, the South Parcel will still have an ample 382 spaces available for shoppers.

I'm concerned about the impact on Wisconsin Avenue traffic and trucks double parking to load on the North Parcel. You are planning only 2 loading berths in the North Parcel rather than the 3 berths and 2 service/delivery spaces required. Please explain.

There will be no need to double park to load on the North Parcel. The proposed loading berths will provide trucks with a convenient off-street location to load and unload. Much of the truck traffic serving the retail uses are the same trucks that will provide deliveries to the residential units proposed for the site (e.g. FedEx, UPS, USPS). The additional truck trips attributable to the apartments will be primarily for move-in and move-out, which is a periodic occurrence, not a regular one, and can be coordinated by the apartment management.

(1) I asked for roof top parking, which was dismissed. Whole Foods has done it successfully, why can't you make the green roof smaller? (2) Can we reduce the size of the planned Giant so we can keep our local retailers like the flower store?

(1) We have proposed the use of skylights on the roof over the sales floor to provide natural light as one of the numerous sustainable features of the project, which is in keeping with Stop & Shop/Giant's commitment to sustainability. The slope of the site actually makes the construction of below-grade parking a more innovative and appropriate design solution. (2) A larger supermarket incorporates a wider variety of products for the convenience of its customers but can't and won't replace the character and quality of the small neighborhood retailers in the area, like the flower shop. We fully expect Giant shoppers to frequent other retailers on and near the site as a part of their shopping trip. This will result in a better Giant, which attracts more customers to the grocery and encourages more residents to use surrounding neighborhood retailers.

Will Giant seek LEED certification for the retail and residential projects?

Stop & Shop/Giant has taken the lead among retailers in sustainability, and we will commit to reach a certain level of sustainability as a condition of PUD approval. We continue to refine the project's design and will track the number of LEED points that we achieve and provide examples of some of the project's innovative and beneficial low-impact features. Our sustainable commitment will likely not include certification itself, but rather a commitment to achieve a certain level of sustainability that will be verified by District approvals.

Why do you need such a large store? The existing store has no variety in its product offering - only one type of each product.

We've heard loud and clear from the majority of the community that more variety and services are very important. The purpose of the redevelopment of the Giant is precisely to increase the variety in our product offerings and to provide additional services such as prepared foods.

I support Stop & Shop's investment in our neighborhood & look forward to your rebuilding an excellent grocery store & whatever money-making retail/residential building you can put in place to make your investment work for you. Being able to walk to the grocery would benefit all of my neighbors, even those who are worried about traffic & driving in the neighborhood, while they drive and park in other neighborhoods and shop!

We agree! Thank you.

How long is the project going to take to finish? What is your target date for completion? Won't our tax base increase? And foot traffic?

Once the Zoning Commission approves the PUD, we anticipate it will take about 3 years to complete construction of the entire project. One of the benefits of new development is that it increases the value of the redeveloped site, adds to the tax base and therefore increases the tax dollars paid to the District from the site. We hope it will increase foot traffic. Generally, neighborhood-serving retail and the associated increase in pedestrian traffic enhance the desirability of a residential location, enliven the community, and act as a deterrent to crime.

I applaud and support your company for this thoughtful and creative proposal and support it. I live on Macomb Street. I regret the citizen obstruction, which stopped the original Giant proposal and will do what I can to support its passage by the Zoning Commission. Good luck!

We appreciate your support. Thank you for participating in the process with us and please stay involved for now, you can let your elected ANC representatives know that you support the project.

Traffic will double or more and that, on its face, is unacceptable.

Traffic will **not** double on area streets. The PUD will add 539 weekday PM peak hour trips, and 550 Saturday mid-day peak hour trips, compared to the existing Giant and other occupied and vacant retail stores. More than a third of these trips will be "pass-by" trips that already are on Wisconsin Avenue and other area streets. The additional new trips will be distributed among the multiple project driveways and the public street network. Traffic on Wisconsin Avenue, Macomb Street, Newark Street, and Porter Street would increase by only **2 to 15 percent** during peak hours.

Traffic calming should be proposed before the project is presented for PUD.

DDOT has established policies and procedures for evaluating and implementing traffic calming measures that include DDOT, the community, and the applicant (in this case Giant). Giant has discussed the concerns about traffic calming with DDOT and representatives of ANC 3C, and has agreed to conduct speed and volume studies in September 2008 to identify locations where traffic

calming measures may be appropriate, and to commit funds to implement such measures if they should be necessary. DDOT concurs that specific measures should actually be implemented during or after construction of the PUD when the actual impact of the project can be evaluated.

For additional information, contact Sharon Robinson, Wisconsin Avenue Giant Development Team, 202-494-5338, Huesrose@aol.com, or go to www.wisconsinavegiant.com.