

Advisers Hit Tall Buildings At Watergate

The height of five major buildings in the \$60 million Watergate development next to the proposed National Cultural Center should be "substantially reduced," the Fine Arts Commission said today.

In a letter to the District Department of Licenses and Inspection, the commission said the proposed Watergate development as now proposed would seriously hurt Rock Creek Park.

The commission repeated some of its previous opposition to the Watergate complex, in a move which caught officials of Watergate Realty Corp., the developer, off-guard. The Watergate proposals previously have been approved by the District Zoning Commission, the National Capitol Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Adjustment.

Permit Required

The District has to issue a building permit before construction could be started, and the commission letter was intended to give the District guidance in judging this issue.

The letter said that "of the five major structures proposed

on the site, only a small portion of the roof of one building is less than 120 feet above ground.

"The remainder are all over this level, with two buildings closest to Rock Creek and Potomac parkway nearly 160 feet over the level of the road. . . ."

Specific Limitations

In addition to recommending a substantial reduction in the number of stories, the commission said that the two buildings closest to the public park land "should not exceed the height of 90 feet above the ground."

The Watergate development is on a site bounded by New Hampshire and Virginia avenues, Potomac parkway and F street N.W.

The Fine Arts Commission's recommendations are advisory to the District Commissioners.