

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: September 22, 2015
SUBJECT: BZA Case 18138-B, 210 Allison Street, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

To allow continued operation of a private school originally approved by the BZA Case No. 18138 (expires December 23, 2015), the Office of Planning (OP) recommends **special exception approval** of the following:

- § 205, Child Development Centers; and
- § 206, Public and Private Schools and Staff Residences

Subject to the following conditions carried forward from the previous approval:

1. Enrollment shall be limited to 120 children, ages two and one-half to 12 years old.
2. Staff shall be limited to 18 persons.
3. Hours of operation shall be 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
4. Access to the entrance of the subject property for the purposes of the private school and child development center shall be on Webster Street and access to the exit from the subject property for these purposes shall be at Allison Street.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	210 Allison Street, N.W.
Legal Description	Parcel 111/37
Ward	4D
Lot Characteristics	Large unusually shaped property (86 acres) that includes a historic church and cemetery
Zoning	R-3– detached and semi-detached single family dwellings
Existing Development	One-story church building within the cemetery that houses the school
Historic District	Rock Creek Church and Cemetery and Saint Paul's Episcopal Church (Saint Paul's Church)

Adjacent Properties	North: Rock Creek Church Cemetery Southeast: Armed Forces Retirement Home East & West: Residential use, primarily row houses and apartment buildings
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Primarily residential, but also institutional uses, including the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Catholic University, Trinity College and Glenwood Cemetery

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to continue the operation of the child development center and private school as approved by the Board in 2010 for a period of five years. No changes in enrollment, staff or hours of operation are proposed.

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 205, Child Development Centers

205.2 The center or facility shall be capable of meeting all applicable code and licensing requirements.

The application indicates that the existing child development center has been in compliance with all applicable code and licensing requirements since opening in 2011. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Division of Early Learning, indicated its support of the application in a memorandum dated August 17, 2015.

205.3 The center or facility shall be located and designed to create no objectionable traffic condition and no unsafe condition for picking up and dropping off persons in attendance.

Peak pick-up and drop-off times would remain unchanged (8:00 to 8:45 AM, 11:30 to 12:00 Noon and 3:00 to 3:30 PM), and Christian Family Montessori School (CFMS) security personnel would continue to be charged with ensuring that motorists adhere to established traffic flow procedures. During peak times vehicular access to the center is via a paved drive approximately 830 feet length and accessible from Webster Street. Traffic exits via Allison Street, where motorists have the option of going north on 4th Street to access New Hampshire Avenue, or south onto 3rd Street to Upshur Street to leave either via 5th Street or Rock Creek Church Road. Pick-up and drop-off would continue to take place from the south parking lot, where up to 39 short-term parking spaces are available to parents while escorting their children into or out of the building.

To reduce automobile dependence the applicant would continue to provide parents and staff with lists of students by zip code to facilitate carpooling, information on the two closest bus routes serving the site (the 60, the Takoma-Petworth Line, and the H8, the Park Road-Brookland Line) and employ a School Transportation Coordinator to

provide further information about all available transportation alternatives.
There are two bike racks in the north parking lot.

The combination of the long access drive, sufficient off-street parking and use of security personnel to ensure proper traffic flow during peak pick-up and drop-off times ensure that no objectionable traffic conditions or unsafe condition for picking up and dropping off persons in attendance would result.

205.4 The center or facility shall provide sufficient off-street parking spaces to meet the reasonable needs of teachers, other employees, and visitors.

Five off-street parking spaces are required for the child development center and twelve for the school, for a total of seventeen. Twenty parking spaces are reserved on-site for the child development center and private school, in excess of the minimum required.

205.5 The center or facility, including any outdoor play space provided, shall be located and designed so that there will be no objectionable impacts on adjacent or nearby properties due to noise, activity, visual, or other objectionable conditions.

The child development center would continue to be located within an existing building on an 86-acre property. Outdoor play areas would continue to be located on the north side of the building, facing into the cemetery, buffering the residential uses from the center.

205.6 The Board may require special treatment in the way of design, screening of buildings, planting and parking areas, signs, or other requirements as it deems necessary to protect adjacent and nearby properties.

The Office of Planning does not recommend any special treatments.

205.7 Any off-site play area shall be located so as not to result in endangerment to the individuals in attendance at center or facility in traveling between the play area and the center or facility itself.

No off-site play area is proposed.

205.8 The Board may approve more than one (1) child/elderly development center or adult day treatment facility in a square or within one thousand feet (1,000 ft.) of another child/elderly development center or adult day treatment facility only when the Board finds that the cumulative effect of these facilities will not have an adverse impact on the neighborhood due to traffic, noise, operations, or other similar factors.

The Office of Planning is unaware of any other child development center within 1,000 feet.

205.9 Before taking final action on an application for use as a child/elderly development center or adult day treatment facility, the Board shall submit the

application to the D.C. Departments of Transportation and Human Services, the D.C. Office on Aging, and the D.C. Office of Planning for review and written reports.

205.10 The referral to the D.C. Department of Human Services shall request advice as to whether the proposed center or facility can meet all licensing requirements set forth in the applicable laws of the District of Columbia.

Comments were requested from DDOT and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). OSSE submitted a memorandum dated August 17, 2015 in support of the application.

b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 206, Public and Private Schools and Staff Residences

206.2 The school shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions.

The applicant proposes to continue to operate the school as it has for the last four years with no changes. The Office of Planning is not aware of any complaints and the Single Member District Commissioner for ANC 4D05 informed OP that the ANC supports the application. Therefore, the continuation of the school and child development center should not become objectionable.

206.3 Ample parking space, but not less than that required in chapter 21 of this title, shall be provided to accommodate the students, teachers, and visitors likely to come to the site by automobile.

Ample parking is available as seventeen parking spaces are required for the two uses and twenty are provided.

c. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposal to continue to use the subject property for a child development center and private school, in conformance with specific criteria contained under Sections 205 and 206 and the R-3 zoning of the property, would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map.

d. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

Most of the subject property is in use as a cemetery, with the nearest residence more than 500 feet away. The outdoor play areas are on the side of the building facing the cemetery, and not the surrounding residences. Sufficient off-street parking is provided and the school proposes no changes to its pick-up and drop-off policies, including the employment of a School Transportation Coordinator.

The Historic Preservation Office had no comments on the application.

V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

OSSE, Division of Early Learning, in a memorandum dated August 17, 2015, indicated its support of the application.

No comments were received from other District agencies.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The Single Member District Commissioner for ANC 4D05 informed OP in an email dated August 4, 2015 that the ANC 4D is in support of the application.

One letter was submitted to the file in support of the application.

Attachment: Location Map



