

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Meridith Moldenhauer, Chairperson
DC Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe *sz*
District Department of Transportation

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18306
EXHIBIT NO. 29

DATE: January 13, 2012

SUBJECT: BZA case 18306
(Application of 1919 14th Street, LLC, Washington, D.C. 20009)

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APPLICATION

1919 14th Street, LLC (the 'Applicant') pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 and 3103.2, seeks a variance from the court requirements of Section 776.3; a variance from the off-street parking requirements of Section 2101.1; a variance from the compact space requirements of Section 2115.2; a variance from the off-street loading requirements of Section 2201.1; a special exception from the roof structure requirements pursuant to Section 411.11; and a special exception from the roof structure height limitation of Section 1902.1(a) to allow the construction of a new 7-story residential building with ground floor retail and service uses in the ARTS/C-3-A District at premises 1905 -1917 14th Street, NW. The Applicant has proposed approximately 144 residential units and 34 parking spaces to accompany the project.

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) recommends approval of the Applicant's request for the variances and special exceptions to construct a new 144 unit mixed use apartment building at 1919 14th Street, N.W. The proposal shows vehicle access to and from the site will occur via an existing alley

with ingress from T Street and egress on to Wallach Place. DDOT has worked with the Applicant on a number of recommendations and the Applicant has responded affirmatively to most of them. The Applicant is aware they will need to work with DDOT on the safety improvements to be located in the alley located adjacent to the proposed project. Without the installation of those safety improvements in the alley, the safety concerns for pedestrians and vehicles will become noticeable once the construction of the project is completed.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

DDOT is committed to achieving an exceptional quality of life in the nation's capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, constructing safer streets and providing outstanding access to goods and services. Central to this vision is improving energy efficiency and modern mobility by providing next generation alternatives to single occupancy driving in the city. As one means to achieve the agency mission, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that new land development is compatible with a multi-modal urban transportation system.

Strategic Elements

The Comprehensive Plan, established by the Home Rule Act, is a general policy document that provides guidance for the development of Washington, DC. The Plan contains both general practices and action plans for the implementation of District policies. The Transportation Element of the Plan provides policies and actions to maintain and improve the District's transportation system. The Land Use Chapter provides the general policy guidance on land uses across the District. In conducting its review of an applicant's proposal, DDOT adheres closely to practices shaped by the Comprehensive Plan. A summary of the relevant policies and actions with regard to the Applicant's proposal can be found in the Addendum to this report. The following analysis evaluates the Applicant's proposal to determine its accuracy and consistency with District policy goals.

Roadway Capacity and Operations

The Applicant's proposal does not result in any noticeable increase in intersection delays at the area intersections.

Safety

The vehicles exiting through the alley, onto Wallach Place, may pose danger to those pedestrians and bicyclists on Wallach Place. The Applicant will need to work with DDOT on the installation of the safety improvements to make drivers aware of the more vulnerable transportation users on Wallach Place. The improvements will include, but not limited to, signs and pavement markings in the alley where it intersects with Wallach Place. *Action T-2.3.B: Bicycle Master Plan; Policy T-2.4.2: Pedestrian Safety.* The Applicant should refer to the *DDOT Design and Engineering Manual* for guidelines regarding such pavement markings and signage.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

DDOT applauds the Applicant for installing the number of residential bicycle parking spaces inside of the building upon final build out. The Applicant should consider locating the retail employee bicycle parking separate from the residential bicycle parking. The Applicant will be responsible for installing DDOT approved guest bicycle racks on the street and on the curb extensions on 14th Street. With the amount of ground floor retail being proposed, it will be useful to have more guest bicycle parking. The retail

customers are not likely to park bicycles in the bike parking room on level P1 of the parking garage. DDOT staff has informed the Applicant that showers for the retail employees should be considered as part of the project. By encouraging the retail employees to bicycle, and by offering showers and changing rooms, the Applicant's development will support those using sustainable transportation in accordance with District policy. *Policy T-2.3: Bicycle Access, Facilities, and Safety*. Some employees will not consider biking to work without the assurance that they can shower when they arrive.

Transit Services

There is ample transit access to this location, including access to the 50 series bus route traveling north and south along 14th Street. The MacPherson-Woodley Park Circulator also serves as a convenient transit option. The U Street Metro station (1240 U Street, N.W.) is located approximately 1000 feet from the site location (1919 14th Street, N.W.).

Site Access and Loading

DDOT supports the Applicant's request for a reduction in the loading requirements. The planned 24' and 30' loading berths will allow for sufficient access to offload to the site.

While meeting with the Applicant, DDOT encouraged them to strongly consider a loading management plan to avoid any impacts on the transportation network. The Applicant should agree to a loading management plan to handle the deliveries for residential and retail purposes. The Applicant needs to agree to restrict 55-foot trucks from accessing any portion of the site, including curbside loading. The retail portion of the proposal may leave opportunities for 55-foot trucks to deliver. DDOT prefers to see the Applicant commit to no 55-foot trucks unloading curbside to the project. This action will help reduce the impacts on the overall neighborhood.

Parking

The Applicant has proposed a total of 34 new parking spaces that will be provided on site, with 26 spaces provided in a single-level below grade parking garage and the remainder provided at ground level along the alley. DDOT fully supports the reduction in parking for the transit-oriented development. By law, the Applicant is required to provide 82 parking spaces. *11 DCMR 2201.1*. The reduction of 48 parking spaces is appropriate considering the wealth of mass transit options for the residents and visitors.

Streetscape/Public Realm

The Applicant is aware that *all* building associated utilities will need to be located inside of the building property line. There will be no utility grates located in the pedestrian path, adjacent to the subject address. Utility grates in public space, especially along pedestrian paths, lead to an uninviting and hazardous pedestrian environment. Additionally, the Applicant will responsible to restore the 14th Street and Wallach Place streetscape to DDOT standards.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The Applicant has been made aware that TDM measures will inform the residents and retailers about the number of transportation options in the neighborhood. DDOT prefers to see the Applicant offer the following as part of its transportation management plan (TMP):

- A one-time, complimentary \$100 WMATA SmartTrip fare card (\$100 in fare media shall be provided on the SmartTrip card).
- A one-time annual membership and registration fee subsidy for participation in carsharing for each residential unit upon move-in, or a one-time annual membership to Capital Bikeshare for each residential unit.

In addition, the Applicant should consider a low cost electronic information display to the residential lobby of the new building, to place emphasis on the TMP. The electronic information display should provide real time information related to local transportation alternatives (e.g. Metro bus arrival, transportation legend showing area transit stops, Capital Bikeshare locations, etc). The electronic information display will have internet access via wired or wireless means in the building lobby.

Performance Monitoring and Measuring

DDOT would like to see the Applicant employ some form of a performance monitoring and management plan with regard to its transportation impact mitigation measures. The plan should consist of the establishment of benchmark goals with regard to TDM measures, along with a commitment to increase TDM efforts should the Applicant fail to reach these goals. The monitoring methodology should at least include quantifiable site performance measures and suggest regular testing intervals. Consistent monitoring of transportation impacts will ensure that the Applicant adequately follows its proposed TDM plan, and that any new development progresses with as few negative effects on the transportation network as possible.

SUMMARY AND RECCOMENDATION

DDOT recommends approval of the Applicant's request for the special exceptions and variances at 1919 14th Street N.W. The Applicant should employ a loading management plan to ensure the impacts are lessened on the existing surrounding neighborhood. Finally, DDOT suggests that the Applicant follow the provided TDM options and employ some form of performance monitoring to ensure a continuous and appropriate response to traffic management.

SZ:jj

ADDENDUM

Transportation Element

Policy T-2.3: Bicycle Access, Facilities, and Safety

...Continued increases in bicycling as a percent of work trips is desired.

Policy: T-2.4.3: Pedestrian Safety

Improve safety and security and key pedestrian nodes across the city. Use a variety of techniques to improve pedestrian safety, including textured or clearly marked and raised pedestrian crossings, pedestrian-actuated signal push buttons, and pedestrian count-down signals.

Action T-2.3.B: Bicycle Master Plan

a. Improve and expand the bike route system and provide functional and distinctive signs for the system