

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 *[Signature]*
District Department of Transportation

DATE: February 2, 2012

SUBJECT: BZA case 18309
(Application of Jubilee Housing, Inc.)

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18309

EXHIBIT NO. 32

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APPLICATION

Jubilee Housing, Inc. (the 'Applicant') pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3104.1, is seeking a special exception to allow a child development center (80 infants and children and 15 staff) under section 205, and a special exception to allow a community service center serving 35 high school aged children under section 209, in the D/R-5-B District on the ground floor of premises 1474 Columbia Road, N.W. (Square 2669, Lot 825).

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) recommends approval of the Applicant's request for the special exceptions to allow a child development center and a community service center at 1474 Columbia Road, N.W. The proposal shows a drop-off and pick-up staging area location on 15th Street. 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 appropriately staff the drop-off/pick-up operation each morning and afternoon to avoid those potential impacts that may occur.

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 could result in noticeable increases in intersection delays at the area intersections including 1) 15th Street and Harvard Street and 2) 15th Street and Columbia Road. Without the Applicant thoroughly monitoring the childcare drop-off and pick-up, the vehicle traffic will become noticeable and contribute to significant intersection delays and traffic safety concerns. Managing this drop-off/pick-up zone will work both as an effective curbside management and pedestrian safety technique. *Action T-3.2.C: Curbside Management Techniques; Policy T-2.4.2: Pedestrian Safety.*

Safety

The vehicles using the drop-off and pick-up staging area on 15th Street may pose some safety challenges. Once again, DDOT is firmly requesting the Applicant have childcare employees positioned in the vicinity of the drop-off/pick-up to keep vehicle drivers moving along on the one-way 15th Street. If left unstaffed, there is a potential for drivers to double park vehicles and cause safety concerns.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The Applicant will be responsible for installing DDOT approved guest bicycle racks on the sidewalk on Columbia Road or 15th Street. The Applicant should consider showers and changing rooms for the childcare employees to encourage bicycling. By encouraging the Jubilee Housing daycare 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; Action T-2.3.A: Bicycle Facilities.* 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 H series bus route traveling east and west along Columbia Road. The MacPherson-Woodley Park Circulator also serves as a convenient transit option. The Columbia Heights Metro station (3030 14th Street, N.W.) is located approximately 1000 feet from the site location (1474 Columbia Road, N.W.).

Site Access and Loading

The Applicant has met with DDOT staff to review the childcare drop-off and pick-up location on 15th Street. Based on the Applicant's request for the staging area, DDOT has agreed to extend the existing parking spaces to make it long enough for 4 car parking spaces and designate two (2) out of four (4) car spaces for pick-up/drop-off zone during the morning and afternoon peak hours for the proposed new daycare. The signs will allow for up to fifteen (15) minutes of parking during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up hours.

DDOT requests for the Applicant to consider a loading management plan for residents moving in and out of the apartment building, to avoid any impacts on the transportation network. The Applicant should agree to a loading management plan to handle the deliveries for residential purposes. The Applicant needs to agree to restrict move-in and move-out times to certain times of the day. This action will help reduce the impacts on the overall neighborhood.

Parking

The site is served by on-street curbside parking and the Applicant is not providing any additional parking spaces for use by the childcare employees.

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, contrary to DDOT pedestrian and safety policy. *Policy T-2.4: Pedestrian Access, Facilities, and Safety*. Additionally, the Applicant will be responsible to restore the Columbia Road and 15th Street streetscape to DDOT standards, in the event those areas of public space may be part of any construction.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The Applicant has been made aware that TDM measures will inform the residents and Jubilee Housing daycare employees 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 \$50 WMATA SmartTrip fare card (\$50 in fare media shall be provided on the SmartTrip card).
- A one-time annual membership to Capital Bikeshare for each Jubilee Housing employee.

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. The drop-off and pick-up operations will need to be included in this plan.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

DDOT recommends approval of the Applicant's request for the special exceptions at 1474 Columbia Road 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 adhere to a strict policy to staff the pick-up and drop-off that will serve the childcare facility. Finally, to ensure all of the traffic operations are working appropriately, Jubilee needs to employ some form of performance monitoring to traffic management.

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ADDENDUM

Action T-3.2.C: Curbside Management Techniques

Revise curbside management and on-street policies to:

- c. Establish parking policies that respond to different parking needs of different types of areas.

Policy T-2.4.2: Pedestrian Safety

Improve safety and security at key nodes throughout 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.

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

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

Action T-2.3.A: Bicycle Facilities

Wherever feasible, require large new commercial and residential buildings to be designed with features such as secure bicycle parking and lockers, bike racks, shower facilities, and other amenities that accommodate bicycle users.

Policy T-2.4: Pedestrian Access, Facilities, and Safety

...Improvements to pedestrian facilities can enhance the quality of the walking and public transit environments, and foster greater use of both modes. Improvements should focus on reductions in the number and severity of pedestrian-vehicle conflict points, clarified pedestrian routing, widened sidewalks, and improved aesthetic features such as landscaping...