

District of Columbia Office of Planning
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MEMORANDUM

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TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Karen Thomas, Project Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: June 12, 2012

SUBJECT: BZA 18360 - 1307 19th Street, NW

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) **recommends approval** of the variance request for relief from off-street parking spaces (2 spaces required; 0 spaces proposed), per the requirement of § 2101, as requested by the Huckleberry Cheesecake Child Development Center.

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1307 19 th Street, N.W.
Legal Description/ Ward/ANC	Square 138, Lot 803. Ward 2, ANC-2B
Historic District	Dupont Circle Historic District
Lot Characteristics	The lot is irregularly shaped with frontage along 19 th Street, NW, Connecticut Avenue, NW, and N Street, NW. The lot is 31,974 square feet in area.
Existing Development	The lot is developed with a 10-story building with basement. The proposed child development center will be in 4,100 square feet of leased space on the ground floor facing 19 th Street.
Zoning	C-3-C - Permits matter-of-right development for major business and employment centers of medium/high density development, including office, retail, housing, and mixed uses. Dupont Circle Overlay (DC) - The Dupont Circle (DC) Overlay District was established to preserve and enhance the unique low scale, predominately residential and historic character, and independent small retail businesses of Dupont Circle.
Adjacent Properties and the Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The property is within Dupont Circle with predominantly office uses with ground floor retail uses. Building heights range between nine to eleven stories with some historic buildings between three and five stories. The child development center is approximately 1,000 feet from the Dupont Circle Metro Station.

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The Huckleberry Cheesecake Child Development Center relocated from 2001 M Street, NW to leased space at 1307 19th Street, NW. The applicant states that parking spaces in the building are solely to serve the office uses in the upper floors and parking for the ground floor tenants are not provided. The child development center has 16 staff persons and would require two parking spaces per Section 2101. No spaces would be provided. Therefore, variance relief is requested from the parking requirement.

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Board of Zoning Adjustment

CASE NO. 18360

EXHIBIT NO. 27

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IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

An analysis of the project against the relevant variance criteria is provided below.

1. *Is the property unique due to*
 - a. *Exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape at the time of original zoning regulation adoption,*
 - b. *Exceptional topographical conditions, or*
 - c. *Other extraordinary or exceptional situation?*

The property in this case would be defined as the leased space. The unique situation is that parking for leased spaces on the ground floor is not provided and it is impossible for the applicant to provide their own parking on the site.

2. *Does the uniqueness, in combination with the zoning regulations, result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to the owner?*

This condition creates a practical difficulty for the applicant's ability to provide on-site parking. In addition, while there are buildings in the vicinity of the property in which the applicant could provide off-site parking, the applicant states that at an average of \$537.32 per month, the parking rates in the neighborhood are prohibitive for the teachers and the school.

3. *Does granting the variance result in a substantial detriment to the public good or will it substantially impair the intent, purpose, and integrity of the zone plan?*

The requested variance to permit the center to operate without the two required spaces for the center could be granted without substantial impairment to the Zoning Regulations or public good. The center is located downtown in the Dupont Circle neighborhood which a transit-rich location, with close proximity to metrorail, and several stops for major bus routes for Metrobus and the Circulator bus system. A Capital Bikeshare station is located 3 blocks southeast of the site at 18th and M Streets, and there is a bike rack on the sidewalk in front of the center. The applicant states that the center existed at its former location without parking and it is within walking distance of the current location. Some of the staff live in close proximity and walk to the center, while others utilize the available public transportation options. Granting the variance for two parking spaces should not negatively impact the public good nor should it impair the integrity of the zone plan, as the latter supports reduced parking requirements on sites near Metro stations.

V. AGENCY COMMENTS

DDOT's comments would be submitted under separate cover.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The ANC 2B recommended approval of the request at its March 14, 2012 meeting. The ANC's report will be submitted under separate cover.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The child care center is located among several transit options in the Dupont Circle neighborhood. The majority of staff resides within the neighborhood or arrives by public transportation, as they did previously in another location downtown where no parking was provided. No detriment to the public good is anticipated due traffic or on-street parking related to the center. Therefore, OP recommends approval of variance relief to allow the center to operate without the provision of the required parking spaces per Section 2101.