GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Director, Office of Zoning

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe
Associate Director, PPSA
District Department of Transportation

DATE: April 23, 2013

SUBJECT: **DDOT Report for BZA Case #18544,** 1550 Pennsylvania Avenue SE

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APPLICATION

Penn Avenue Partnership LLC (the "Applicant"), pursuant to 11 DCMR §§ 3104 1 and 3103 2, applied for a special exception from the roof structure provisions under section 411, a variance from the off-street parking provisions under section 2101, a variance from the size of parking space requirements under section 2115, and a variance from the loading requirements under section 2201, to allow a residential project in the C-2-A District at 1550 Pennsylvania Avenue, S E (Square 1077, Lot 130) The proposed development will house 82 residential units with a mixture of efficiency, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

The purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed zoning action on the transportation network. The Applicant is requesting zoning relief to construct 30 vehicle parking spaces in lieu of the required 41 vehicle spaces and a 30-foot loading berth in lieu of the required 55-foot loading berth After an extensive multi-administration review, DDOT finds·

- The project will generate minimal new vehicle trips
- Curbside parking in the vicinity has excess capacity
- The site has excellent access to alternative transportation modes, including walking, biking, and transit
- Future residents are likely to heavily utilize non-automobile modes of travel
- Long-term bike parking spaces may not be adequate

DDOT has no objection to the variance requests from parking or loading. The site's proximity to the Potomac Avenue Metro Station, numerous Metrobus lines and Circulator route, and the quality of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the area will lead to low levels of auto ownership and auto use As such, demand for vehicle parking will be low However, should parking demand exceed the amount provided on-site, ample on-street parking is available within a short distance from the site

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 18544
EXHIBIT NO. 27

While DDOT has no objections to the variances themselves, DDOT has significant concerns about the specific design proposals for parking access and loading. Although these concerns are related to the use of public space, they could impact the variance requests because adequately addressing DDOT's public space concerns may require reducing the number of parking spaces provided. DDOT requests that the following requirements be made conditions of BZA approval:

- The Applicant should redesign the parking garage access such that public space on Kentucky Avenue is not utilized.
- The Applicant should demonstrate the loading berth adequately accommodates a regulation 30-foot truck.
- The Applicant should increase the number of bicycle parking spaces from 28 to at least 41 to reflect a ratio of one long-term bike parking spaces per every two units, and provide four (4) inverted U-racks for short term public bike parking on the sidewalk in a location approved by DDOT.
- As part of the TDM plan, the Applicant should offer a financial incentive to all new tenants instead of the initial occupants and limit the incentive to Capital Bikeshare membership or a subsidy to a car sharing service.

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. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within, and take advantage of, the District's multimodal transportation network.

Roadway Network, Capacity, and Operations

The proposed development is expected to generate vehicular trips that would not trigger a traffic analysis under DDOT's Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) guidelines. *Table 1* shows the vehicular trip generation characteristics of the proposed development using a modal split of 60-percent automobile, which is based on information from several sources including survey data from the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG),WMATA Ridership Survey, and American Community Survey Census Tracts 68.02, 69, and 71. DDOT agrees that this is a sufficiently conservative rate, and that lower vehicle use is likely. DDOT also agrees with the land use code selected for the Applicant's analyses (Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual Code 220 – Apartments).

Peak Hour	Vehicular Trip Generation before Trip Reduction	Vehicular Trip Generation at 60-percent Automobile Split	Enter	Exit
AM	44	26	5	21
PM	63	38	25	13

Table 1 Trip Generation for the proposed Site using ITE LU 220 - Apartments at 60% Vehicular Mode Share

Based on the above table, the proposed development would generate a maximum of 25 vehicle trips in the peak direction during the PM peak hour, and because the Applicant used a conservative vehicle

mode share (60-percent), it is likely that the number of vehicle trips will be lower than shown in *Table 1* DDOT does not expect the forecasted trips to have an adverse impact on the roadway network, capacity, or operations near the site Pennsylvania Avenue is a facility with an average annual daily traffic (AADT) of approximately 20,000 vehicles, and the relatively small number of trips produced by the proposed development would not substantially affect roadway operations or safety of Pennsylvania Avenue While Kentucky Avenue will experience higher levels of usage, the roadway carries an approximate AADT of 4,000 vehicles, therefore, DDOT believes there is sufficient excess capacity to handle the new vehicle trips caused by the proposed project

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Walking and bicycling are expected to be important modes of transportation for this development The Applicant's field observations and inventory of the pedestrian facilities (i e. sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA-compliant ramps) and urban form (i e short blocks) in the study area show that the area is sufficient to accommodate the walking and biking trips from the proposed development.

The Applicant identified a potential substandard pedestrian condition on the north side of the 1500 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE Pedestrians walking along this sidewalk do not have a consistently clear pedestrian path to the Metro station, which is located on the adjacent block to the northwest Multiple cars were observed to be parked within the public space along the northern side of Pennsylvania Avenue, obstructing the clear path for pedestrians along the sidewalk The obstructions could force pedestrians into alternative routes that compromise pedestrian safety or make the walk to the Metro station longer and therefore less convenient. DDOT understands that solving this problem is a matter of coordination among several agencies, and expects the Applicant to work with appropriate agencies to ensure a safe and convenient walking path for pedestrians throughout the area

Based on the Applicant's field observations and inventory of the bicycle facilities (i e bike lanes, bike paths, Capital Bikeshare), the area is very bicycle friendly Within two blocks of the site, 15th Street and 14th Street have paired one-way bicycle lanes connecting to several other bicycle facilities and points of interest throughout the city. Additionally, Kentucky Avenue and G Street are local, low volume roadways that provide a comfortable bicycle route to the Potomac Avenue Metrorail station. One block east of the site is an entrance to the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, which connects to points along the Anacostia River As noted by the Applicant, there is one Capital Bikeshare station within ¼ mile of the site, at the western corner of the intersection of Potomac Ave SE and Pennsylvania Ave SE This station has 12 docks

The Applicant is proposing 28 bicycle parking spaces in the below-grade garage; this number is in compliance with the current District regulations[1], requiring one bicycle space for every three residential units However, §1603 1 of the proposed regulations (under review) for minimum parking spaces require that one long-term space be provided for each residential unit and one short-term space for every 20 dwelling units. DDOT believes that because of the expected high rates of bicycling by residents of the proposed project, the Applicant should increase the number of bicycle parking spaces from 28 to at least 41 to represent a ratio of one long-term bicycle parking space per every two units Bicycle parking is also expected to be located in a secure area of the proposed building, and when tiered (or double-stacked) design is proposed, the specifications should meet current DDOT standards The Applicant is not currently proposing short-term bicycle parking racks. In order to comply with §1603.1

[1] Section 8 of the Bicycle Commuter and Parking Expansion Act of 2007, effective February 2, 2008 (D C Law 17-103, D C. Official Code § 50-1641 07) (2012 Supp) and Mayor's Order 2011-149, dated September 6, 2011

of the draft regulations, DDOT also recommends that the Applicant provides four (4) inverted U-racks for short term public bike parking on the sidewalk in a location approved by DDOT.

Transit Services

DDOT and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) have partnered to provide extensive public transit service in the District. DDOT's vision is to leverage this investment to increase the share of non-automotive travel modes so that economic development opportunities increase with minimal infrastructure investment.

The Applicant evaluated the proximity of the subject site to the Potomac Avenue Metro Station and the adequacy of the bus service along the routes that serve the subject area. Using Pennsylvania Avenue or Kentucky Avenue, the proposed development is approximately 1,500 feet – a 6-minute walk and 3-minute bike ride – from the Potomac Avenue Metrorail Station. The area is served by 13 different bus lines and the Circulator, covering weekdays and Saturdays with approximately 10-minute headways in average during the weekdays.

While most bus stops in the area have shelters, landing pads, and sidewalk access, the Applicant identified access deficiencies to the bus stop along Pennsylvania Avenue adjacent to the site. There is a gap between the landing pad and the sidewalk, and DDOT is investigating the feasibility to ask the Applicant to either relocate the bus stop approximately 50 feet to the south or fill in the aforementioned gap for improved pedestrian access. The bus stop adjacent to the site also lacks a bus shelter. DDOT expects that the Applicant work with DDOT and WMATA to address the deficiencies to provide safe and efficient access of the building residents and other riders to the bus stop adjacent to the site along Pennsylvania Avenue.

Site Access

The following *Figure 1* shows proposed site access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

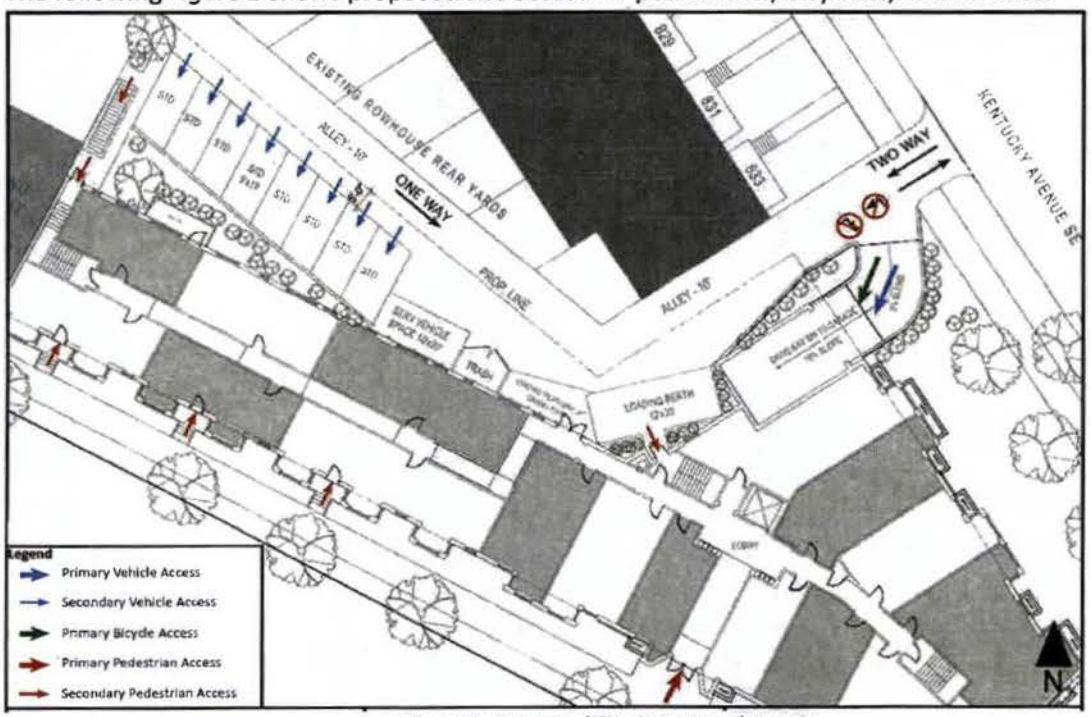

Figure 1: Proposed Site Layout and Access.

The Applicant proposes to close/abandon the existing curb cuts, two along Kentucky Avenue and two along Pennsylvania Avenue, widen the alley (Freedom Way), and convert it to two-way operation between the garage ramp and Kentucky Avenue DDOT has significant concerns about the proposed garage ramp's impact on public space The current proposal calls for a ramp to the garage through public space, which is contrary to DDOT's public space standards. Adding to DDOT's concern is the steep slope (18%) and sharp blend (9%) of the ramp, which DDOT believes creates a safety issue for pedestrians Finally, the proposed access ramp intersects with Freedom Alley right at the sidewalk along Kentucky Avenue, thus creating a potential conflict point between pedestrians and motorists In light of these concerns, DDOT will be unlikely to permit the garage access as proposed.

Although DDOT will address permitting concerns after the Board of Zoning Adjustment ruling on the variance requests, the garage access design must be addressed prior to the BZA ruling because DDOT does not believe the Applicant can provide the proposed number of parking spaces and loading configuration while simultaneously complying with DDOT's public space standards A reconfigured garage access design that can meet DDOT's standards may result in the elimination of several parking spaces and/or a reconfigured loading scheme, both of which would impact the magnitude of the parking and/or loading variance(s) the Applicant is seeking Given the existing usage of on-street parking, DDOT would support additional on-site parking reduction of up to 5 spaces to address this issue

Loading

All trucks servicing the site are proposed to enter Freedom Alley head-in at its northern intersection with Potomac Avenue and exit head-out at its intersection with Kentucky Avenue to the south The loading berth, platform, and service/delivery spaces are proposed to be located on Freedom Way Both the proposed loading berth and platform are at grade, flush with Freedom Way In addition, the Applicant proposes designating an on-site Loading Coordinator to manage residential move-in/move-out dates/times for efficiency

Based on the DC Zoning Regulations §2201 1, apartment house or multiple-dwelling buildings with 50 or more dwelling units in all districts are required to provide a 55-foot loading berth with a 200 square foot loading platform, and one 20-foot service/delivery space The Applicant is requesting relief from the 55-foot loading berth requirement, with a proposal to provide a 30-foot loading berth and a 200 square foot loading platform

Based on the size of the dwellings and their needs for move-in and move-out, DDOT finds the Applicant's request for reduction in loading berth size reasonable. However, because the Applicant did not provide turning maneuvers showing that a SU-30 (30-foot) model truck can pull into the loading berth, DDOT has concerns about the adequacy of the proposed loading berth The location of the proposed loading berth at the bend in Freedom Alley requires that trucks complete a complex series of maneuvers to access the loading berth that DDOT does not believe are possible for a SU-30 model truck. While the Applicant did provide turning maneuver diagrams showing adequate access for a 22-foot U-Haul truck, this does not meet engineering standards DDOT recommends that the Applicant considers reconfiguring the loading access to accommodate the truck movements for a SU-30 model truck pulling into the loading berth and out of the berth can be accommodated adequately

Passenger Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, and price / supply of parking spaces. However in urban areas, other