

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia, Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18575

EXHIBIT NO. 27

DATE: June 18, 2013

SUBJECT: **DDOT Review of BZA Case #18575, 3825-3829 Georgia Avenue, NW**

RECEIVED
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2013 JUN 19 AM 8:59

APPLICATION

Application of Donatelli Development, as developer, and the District of Columbia, as owner, pursuant to 11 DCMR §3103.2 for an area variance from the off-street parking requirements under §2101.1 to allow the construction of a new residential building at premises 3825-3829 Georgia Avenue, NW (Square 3028, Lot 818) in the GA/C-3-A District. The project proposal includes 31 residential units and 4 off-street parking spaces in lieu of the 16 required under zoning.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

The purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the potential impacts of the project on the District's transportation network. After an extensive multi-administration review, DDOT finds:

- The subject site is well-served by a range of transportation options and has good access to retail destinations and employment centers.
- The demand for private vehicle ownership and vehicle parking is expected to be minimal.
- The 3800 block of Georgia Avenue is currently not Residential Permit Parking (RPP) eligible nor is it consistent with RPP eligibility requirements
- On-street parking in the vicinity has enough excess capacity to accommodate spillover parking, but DDOT's curbside management measures make on-street parking an unlikely option for long-term parking.
- The Applicant has not committed to providing the 11 secure bicycle parking spaces per District requirements.

DDOT has no objection to the variance requests, provided the following conditions or minor changes be incorporated into the project:

- The Applicant should offer a Capital Bikeshare membership or carshare membership to all new tenants in perpetuity.

- The Applicant should provide a transportation information screen in the lobby that would show real time arrival / availability for nearby trains, buses, carshare, and bikeshare.

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 and take advantage of the District's multimodal transportation network.

As part of the transportation impact assessment, DDOT requests that Applicants evaluate the impacts to the pedestrian, transit, and roadway system resulting from the proposed action. Accordingly, an applicant is expected to show the existing conditions for each transportation mode affected, the proposed impact on the respective network, and any proposed mitigations, along with the effects of the mitigations on other travel modes. A Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) should be performed according to DDOT direction. The evaluation should consider guidance from relevant documents including guidance on the public realm, the pedestrian system, the bicycle system, as well as neighborhood-based studies.

Because the proposed development program is allowed under current zoning and only parking relief is being sought, a limited transportation analysis was performed. The Applicant and DDOT coordinated on an agreed-upon scope for the CTR that focused on parking need and availability. An evaluation of the Applicant's CTR follows.

Parking Need

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 factors contribute to the demand for parking such as the availability of nearby high-quality public transit. Because of the project's location, the availability of transportation alternatives, and the requested Transportation Demand Management strategies, demand for parking amongst potential residents is expected to be minimal.

Throughout the District, residents are electing to live in areas like Petworth that offer excellent neighborhood amenities and a variety of transportation options. There are numerous examples of successful residential buildings – both new and old – in the District with little to no parking that appeal to people who do not own cars. These types of residential projects help achieve two important District goals of adding new residents and not significantly straining the transportation network.

Neighborhood Characteristics

The subject site is located in the Petworth neighborhood. The area contains an abundance of shops and restaurants that meet residents' everyday needs. Of note are the Safeway supermarket under construction across the street from the subject site and the various shops and restaurants adjacent to the Metro station and along Georgia Avenue. Additionally, shopping destinations in Columbia Heights are a short transit, bike, or walk trip away. Major job centers throughout the District as well as Silver Spring, MD are also easily accessed by transit, bicycling, and walking. Together, the proximity of the subject site to retail establishments and job centers reduces the need for auto-ownership in order to meet daily needs.

Transportation Options

The site has excellent access to a variety of transportation options that are viable alternatives to car ownership.

Transit: The site is well-served by public transit. The site is in close proximity (about 500 feet) of the Georgia Avenue – Petworth Metro station, which serves WMATA’s Green Line. In addition, 7 distinct WMATA bus routes have stops near the site, including WMATA’s Metro Extra 79 Line, which offers limited-stop service between Silver Spring and Archives Metro Station with approximately 10 minute headways.

Walking Facilities: The site is located in a pedestrian-friendly area. Sidewalk connections provide excellent access to the Metro station, bus stops, and various shopping and dining destinations.

Bike Facilities: The site is located in a bike-friendly area. Nearby bicycle routes on 13th Street NW, 8th Street NW, 7th Street NW, and Kansas Ave NW provide excellent connectivity. In addition, a Capital Bikeshare station is located on New Hampshire Avenue, just to the south of the Metro station and in close proximity to the subject site.

On-Site Bike Parking: The Applicant is considering incorporating approximately 10 secure bicycle parking spaces on private space as well as providing a bicycle shelf/stand in each unit.

Carshare: There are two Zipcar locations within 1 block of the subject site that offer a total of 5 Zipcars. Car2Go vehicles can also be readily found in the vicinity.

Transportation Demand Management

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires the Applicant to produce a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. TDM is a set of strategies, programs, services, and physical elements that influence travel behavior by mode, frequency, time, route, or trip length in order to help achieve highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation facilities. In the District, this typically means implementing infrastructure or programs to maximize the use of mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods.

The District requires new developments to provide bicycle storage through the zoning ordinance as well as the District’s code. The Applicant has not committed to providing the 11 secure bicycle parking spaces required under DC Code 50-1641.05.

DDOT requests that the Applicant incorporate the following strategies into a TDM Plan in order to further decrease the demand for parking generated by the proposed project:

- The Applicant should offer a Capital Bikeshare membership or carshare membership to all new tenants in perpetuity.
- The Applicant should provide a transportation information screen in the lobby that would show real time arrival / availability for nearby trains, buses, carshare, and bikeshare.

DDOT acknowledges that the Applicant is considering, but has not committed to, providing a bicycle stand/rack in each unit. DDOT encourages the Applicant to provide these as an additional mitigation.

Parking Availability

The Applicant is requesting a variance from the zoning-required 16 off-street vehicle parking spaces. Instead, the Applicant proposed to provide 4 off-street parking spaces located at the rear of the building accessed via an existing 15-foot alley. Accordingly, the Applicant is seeking relief from 12 parking spaces. Given the aforementioned low demand for parking, DDOT believes that the 4 proposed off-street parking spaces are sufficient to meet the parking demand generated by the proposed project. In addition, even if more residents than expected want to own cars and parking demand exceeds on-site parking supply, DDOT has measures in place that make on-street parking an unviable long-term parking solution.

Residential Permit Parking

The 3800 block of Georgia Avenue is not currently eligible for Residential Permit Parking (RPP). Residents must petition DDOT in order to make their block RPP eligible. DDOT considers the overall character of the block to determine eligibility for RPP. Commercial streets are not typically eligible for RPP. The block is currently comprised of a mix of residences and businesses. Recent developments along the block, including the Safeway project under construction across the street from the subject site, signal a shift in the character of the block toward being more commercial in nature. Accordingly, DDOT is not likely to grant RPP to the block if requested.

On-Street Parking Availability

The Applicant conducted a curbside parking utilization study in an area surrounding the site to determine the availability of parking. The study showed a large supply, approximately 732 parking spaces, within the vicinity. Five different types of parking spaces were noted: RPP, metered, unrestricted, time-restricted, and, school zone. Approximately 82% of the on-street parking spaces are designated as RPP and about 7% are designated as unrestricted parking. The parking inventory is illustrated in *Figure 1*.



Figure 1 Parking Inventory Map

The Applicant surveyed parking utilization during a Friday afternoon/evening period (4:00pm to 10:00pm) and an early Saturday early morning period (4:00am to 7:00am). These two periods are typically when demand for on-street parking is highest. The results of the survey indicated that observed parking utilization rates were below the available supply. In the blocks immediately adjacent to the site (Zone A from the Applicant's analysis), approximately 40 spaces and 25 spaces were observed to be available during the Friday afternoon/evening period and the Saturday early morning period, respectively. Within the overall study area, parking utilization across all types of parking spaces was observed to be approximately 70% during both the Friday afternoon/evening period and the Saturday early morning period. Therefore, approximately 210 parking spaces were observed to be unutilized during both observation periods. Of those available spaces, only about 2% (5-6 spaces) of the available spaces were designated as unrestricted. The amount of parking availability observations in the overall study area are summarized in Figure 2.

Parking Category	Inventory	Afternoon/Evening Availability	Early Morning Availability
RPP	598	170	159
Metered	54	22	34
Unrestricted	54	6	5
Time Restricted	14	6	9
School Zone	12	4	3
Total	732	208	210

Figure 2 Parking Availability Observations

If parking demand generated by the proposed project were to exceed the parking supplied on private property, the supply of on-street parking supply would be sufficient to accommodate spillover parking demand. However, because 82% of the on-street parking spaces are designated as RPP, the vast majority of on-street spaces would not be available as a long-term parking solution to future residents of the proposed project. Future residents would be able to park in the approximately 54 unrestricted on-street parking spaces. However, it is unlikely that the limited supply and availability of unrestricted parking spaces would be seen as a dependable long-term parking option. Collectively, DDOT's controls of on-street parking in the vicinity would likely force residents to seek off-street parking arrangements that would not significantly impact the available supply of on-street parking.

SZ|jr