

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Lloyd Jordan
Chairperson
DC Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: October 3, 2013

SUBJECT: DDOT Report for BZA Case #18632, 1921-25 14th Street, NW and 1351 Wallach Place, NW

APPLICATION

14th and U Residential, LLC (the "Applicant"), pursuant to 11 DCMR §3103.2, is seeking a variance from the requirements regarding public space at the ground level (§633), lot occupancy on the first and second story (§643), and the rear yard setback (§636 2), and a special exception, pursuant to 11 DCMR§3104 from the parking requirement for historic structures (§2120 6) and the ARTS Overlay setback requirement (§1902 2 to renovate two historic structures and build a new residential building with ground floor retail at premises 1921-23 14th Street, NW (Lot 180, Square 237), 1925 14th Street, NW (Lot 196, Square 237) and 1351 Wallach Place, NW (Lot 806, Square 237) The proposed mixed-use development will be comprised of 56 residential units, primarily studios and one-bedroom units, and 12,200 square feet of ground floor retail

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

The purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District's transportation network. This memorandum addresses the special exception request to eliminate the parking requirement, as well as the Applicant's Loading Plan, though no loading variance is being requested. Based on a multi-administration review, DDOT finds.

- A robust network of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure exists in close proximity to the proposed development.
- The Applicant has proposed to remove the site from eligibility in the residential parking permit (RPP) system
- On-street parking utilization occupancy is 99 percent during the peak demand.
- The proposed development will generate minimal new vehicle trips
- Future residents are likely to heavily utilize non-automobile modes of travel.

- A TransitScreen is proposed to be installed in the lobby of the residential building to provide real-time transit, car-share, and bike-share updates
- An on-street commercial loading zone, as proposed by the Applicant, may not be an appropriate approach to provide loading space for moves and deliveries. However, DDOT is not opposed to loading through the use of Emergency No Parking signs. Further details of on-street loading will be addressed during the public space permitting process.

The site's proximity to the U Street/African-American Civil War Memorial Cardozo Metro Station, 13 Metrobus lines and one Circulator route, Capital Bikeshare stations, quality of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the subject area, commitment to a strong TDM program, and provision of adequate bicycle parking will lead to low levels of auto ownership and use. As such, DDOT has no objection to the requested special exception for parking with minor additional conditions:

- The Applicant should limit non-vehicular incentives to Capital Bikeshare and car-sharing membership service
- Bikeshare and car-sharing memberships should be provided to all new tenants in perpetuity.
- The Applicant should provide an appropriate amount of short-term bicycle parking, the amount and location of which will be addressed in the public space permitting process

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 and ultimately discourage single occupancy vehicle trips.

Detailed study parameters such as required parking survey parameters, loading provisions and operations, and transit service were discussed with the Applicant and agreed in the Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) Scoping Agreement Form dated August 29, 2013. 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 parking and loading management plan was submitted to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) on September 12, 2013 for review and comments.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Automobile ownership is expected to be minimal, and transit, walking, and bicycling are expected to be the predominant modes of transportation for this development. Based on the Applicant's field observations and inventory of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities (i.e., sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes) it was observed that all of the study area intersections and roadway network provide adequate and functional facilities to promote connectivity between land uses and transit facilities. Within the study area boundaries, continuous sidewalks are provided along both sides of 14th Street and Wallach Place, as well as all of the other approaches.

The site is one block away from the 15th Street two-way protected bicycle lane (or cycletrack) that links Columbia Heights to Downtown. Additionally, all of the east/west directional streets in the vicinity of the proposed development, except U Street, and north/south directional streets (in addition to 15th Street, 12th Street and 14th Street) provide either on-street bike lanes or feature good cycling conditions. Additionally, the site is located within close proximity to two existing Capitol Bikeshare stations, one approximately 700 feet to the north of the site at the intersection of 14th and V Street and a second

approximately 800 feet northeast of the site at the intersection of 13th and U Street. Other stations are located a short walk away from the site.

The Applicant is proposing 36 bicycle parking spaces in the basement of the development, which exceeds the current District regulations¹ requiring one bicycle space for every three residential units and an additional number of spaces in excess of five percent of the number of automobile parking spaces required for retail uses. In addition, the Applicant is proposing to include short-term public bicycle parking spaces. Given the presence of ground floor retail, as well as existing and planned bicycle infrastructure abutting the site, substantial short-term bicycle parking needs are expected. The Applicant should provide an appropriate amount of short-term bicycle parking, the amount and location of which will be addressed in the public space permitting process.

Transit Services

DDOT and Washington Metropolitan Transportation Authority 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 with minimal infrastructure investment.

The Applicant evaluated the proximity of the subject site to the U Street/African-American Civil War Memorial Cardozo Metro Station and the adequacy of the bus service along the routes that serve the subject area. The proposed development will be located approximately 900 feet of the U Street Metro Station, which is approximately a three to five minute walk.

The site is currently served by 14 bus routes, including the Circulator Bus; headways for each of the routes range from five to 30 minutes on weekdays and Saturdays and 15 to 45 minutes on Sundays. The nearest MetroBus and DC Circulator stop is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of 14th Street and U Street, approximately 500 feet from the site, which, based on an average 4.0 second/feet walking speed and stopping for traffic controls, is approximately two to three minutes of walk time. The frequency of each of these routes provides adequate bus service to the site. Finally, the site is located near proposed routes for the future streetcar system.

DDOT finds that the proposed development will be served adequately with the existing bus routes, as well as the U Street/African-American Civil War Memorial Cardozo Metro Station that is within a short walking distance, which will facilitate a car-free lifestyle.

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 factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high quality transit, frequency of transit service, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, and the demographic composition of the potential residents/patrons.

In order to address the parking supply for the residential and retail portions of the proposed development, and to document the on-street parking inventory/occupancy in the local area, the Applicant conducted a parking survey, which included an inventory of available on-street parking spaces.

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.

and a parking occupancy count. Based on the aforementioned Scoping Agreement, DDOT and the Applicant agreed that the following blocks would be included in the study area as seen in Figure 1: Block Face Map. Based on their report, there are a total of 338 parking spaces in the study area: 97 metered parking spaces, 197 RPP spaces, 22 unrestricted spaces, and 22 additional spaces classified as other, which include loading zones, government vehicle parking, car-share parking, electric vehicle parking, and motorcycle parking (see Figure 2). Additionally, as part of the Applicant's streetscape design, the Applicant proposes to close an existing curb cut on Wallach Place, which will add at least one space of on-street parking to the network's supply.



Figure 1: Block Face Map
(Source: Gorove/Slade)



Figure 2: Summary of Parking Type
(Source: Gorove/Slade)

The inventory of available on-street parking facilities was conducted on Thursday, September 5, 2013 and parking occupancy data was collected from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. Several blocks restrict parking from 9:30 to 11:30 am once a week from March 1 to October 31 for street cleaning. Parking utilization subsequently was affected from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm due to these street cleaning restrictions. A survey conducted by the Applicant resulted in the utilization rates and peak hour inventory as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Hourly Utilization Percentages

	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm
Occupancy	246	249	248	262	283	292	286	282	257	266	302	333	327
Total Spaces	338	280	280	280	338	338	338	338	338	338	338	338	338
Utilization	73%	89%	89%	94%	84%	86%	85%	83%	76%	79%	89%	99%	97%

Table 2 Peak Hour Inventory and Occupancy Summary

Space Type	Spaces Available Weekday Peak (7-8 PM)	Occupancy	Utilization
RPP	197	195	99%
Metered	97	97	100%
Unrestricted	22	22	100%
Other	22	19	86%
All On-Street Spaces	338	333	99%

Based on the survey results, as presented in Table 1, it can be observed that the parking space supply in the vicinity is at approximately 73 to 99 percent of its capacity throughout the day. The weekday parking peak occurs from 7:00 to 8:00 pm with a parking utilization of 99 percent. This high utilization rate will be a disincentive for residents to own cars and for visitors driving to the site, particularly given the proximity of the subject development to the Metro station, 14 bus lines, provision of on-site bicycle parking facilities, and comprehensive transportation demand management (TDM) package to encourage tenants to use transit and bikeshare for their commute.

Additionally, the Applicant has proposed to remove the site from eligibility in the RPP system, further limiting the likelihood of residents owning vehicles and impacting the demand for parking.

Transportation Demand Management

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires applicants 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 public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods.

The Applicant proposes utilizing the following TDM strategies:

- Transportation Management Coordinator to provide transportation information to residents and coordinate all loading activities
- Bicycle Program to provide 36 long-term parking spaces and additional short-term spaces
- Transit Screen: a digital multi-modal display in the lobby showing real-time transit information
- RPP exclusion: the Applicant volunteered to be removed from the RPP database
- Marketing Program: brochures to include links to CommuterConnections.org and goDCgo.com, and employees and residents will be referred to carpool matching services
- Non-Vehicular Incentives: the Applicant will provide one of the following resident incentives, to be elected by residents
 - \$150 Capital Bikeshare membership fee for first occupant of each unit
 - \$100 car-sharing membership fee for first occupant of each unit
 - \$200 SmartTrip card for first occupant of each unit
- Loading Facility Management: all moves must be scheduled prior to 11:00 am

DDOT finds the Applicant's TDM measures are a good basis that would generally encourage use of alternative modes of transportation. Bicycle parking is ample for the size of the development. The Capital Bikeshare membership incentive will allow residents to utilize and explore a transportation system that provides quick access to nearby amenities on dedicated user lanes. A Transportation Coordinator will be helpful in disseminating non-vehicular information to residents. Based on DDOT's

evaluation of the proposed TDM program, the following are the items that need to be addressed to strengthen the proposed program

- DDOT finds that the success of these trip reduction measures would depend on the promotion of continuous use of the bikeshare and car-share programs by the prospective tenants, rather than the initial tenants only. Therefore, DDOT recommends that the Applicant develop a program that would ensure continuous use of the bikeshare and car-share programs, such as providing annual membership fees for the initial and each new tenant in perpetuity.
- Remove the SmartTrip option and provide only Capital Bikeshare or car-share membership. A one-time transit subsidy in this area will not alter travel behaviors of future residents. Prospective residents will likely be drawn by the proposed development's proximity to the Metro station and not need a further incentive to utilize public transit.

Loading and Curbside Management

The Applicant has proposed converting three existing parking spaces on 14th Street adjacent to the site, which are currently metered, to a commercial loading zone restricted until 11:00 am, seven days per week. Loading for residential and retail portions of the proposed development would be combined at this loading zone. The Applicant has estimated approximately 3-4 deliveries per day to the site, primarily FedEx and UPS deliveries, and will limit residential moves prior to 11:00 am when the loading zone restriction is in effect. The Transportation Management Coordinator (TMC) will coordinate all moves and ensure proper utilization of loading space for all deliveries, including monitoring truck maneuvers to ensure that trucks do not block pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular movements.

An on-street loading zone may not be an appropriate approach to provide loading space for moves and deliveries for this location. Five other loading zones exist within a one-block radius of the site, although none exist on that block face of 14th Street. Based on the sizes of the residential units being limited to primarily studio and one-bedroom dwellings, DDOT finds that the use of Emergency No Parking signs may serve the needs of the proposed development. Further details of on-street loading will be addressed during the public space permitting process.

Streetscape and the Public Realm

In line with District policy and practice, any substantial new building development or renovation is expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines. This includes curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site. As part of this process, the Applicant must work closely with DDOT and OP to ensure that the design of the public realm meets current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape for public users needing to access the property or circulating around it. The Applicant may refer to the DC Municipal Regulations and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual for specific controls of public space.

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