

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: Sam Zimbabwe *S. Zimbabwe*
Associate Director

DATE: January 22, 2014

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 18683 - 1150 Neal Street, N.E. (Square 4065, Lot 819)

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 18683
EXHIBIT NO. 26

APPLICATION

Pursuant to Title 11 DCMR §§3104.1 Holy Name Parish (the Applicant) seeks a special exception to establish a private school (100 students and 9 staff) for adults under §206 in the R-4 District at premises 1150 Neal Street, N.E. (Square 4065, Lot 819)

The Applicant seeks to continue to use the property for educational purposes by establishing an adult education center for a prospective tenant, the Higher Development Academy (School). The non-profit School has a mission of supporting District adults with basic educational assistance including reading comprehension, grammar skills, GED completion and life and job skills training.

The site was first used for educational purposes in 1935 and has contained a variety of programs including a private middle school, day-care program, religious programs and most recently a child development center. The site is improved with two separate two-story buildings, a large surface parking lot and a playground lot. The building at the western portion of the site is currently occupied by the Center City Public Charter School. The subject School would occupy the two-story, 37,000 SF building located on the eastern portion of the campus. The building will remain unchanged and does not require any modifications or renovations.

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The School will adopt a policy that encourages the use of alternative transit options including walking, bicycling, carpooling and mass transit however details of the proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program were not provided. DDOT recommends the applicant implement the following strategies as part of the TDM program:

- Select one person of the staff to serve as the transportation director to coordinate TDM measures, distribute information on alternative transit options to students and staff, encourage transit ridership and carpooling.
- Provide employees the maximum allowable amount of Metro Smart Benefits, only to teachers and staff who commit to riding Metro to get to and from the school, (Employees are able to elect this as a tax-free option that employees fund themselves at a maximum contribution of as of \$130 per month as of the date of this memo) or a *Capital Bikeshare* membership at a value of not less than \$75.00.
- Include an information display kiosk in the lobby with information on alternative transit modes including WMATA, CommuterConnections.com, GoDCGo.com, the Capital Bikeshare Program and car-sharing programs.
- Install a TransitScreen in the lobby to provide real-time transit information including Metrobus, Metrorail and Capital Bikeshare facilities in the vicinity of the site.

The project has the potential to generate minor impacts to on-street parking utilization. Vehicle parking demand may increase slightly as a result of the project, resulting in a higher level of parking utilization in the immediate area. Despite this minor potential impact DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested special exception.

This review pertains only to zoning issues and does not consider potential impacts to District owned public space. DDOT's lack of objection to the zoning special exception should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. If any portion of the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. The Applicant may refer to the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual for specific controls of public space. A summary can be found in DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

DDOT staff conducted a site visit and held an onsite meeting with the Applicant on November 27, 2013. The surface parking lot is accessed by an existing driveway curb-cut on Neal Street. The parking lot has a total of 32 spaces with 12 spaces reserved for Center City Public Charter

School and 20 spaces designated for School use. The School is required to provide a minimum of 16 accessory parking spaces and satisfies that requirement. Refuse and recycling facilities are contained in the surface parking lot and the Applicant will use a single contractor to service both facilities. Bicycle racks for student and faculty will be installed on private property near the main entrance on Neal Street. The existing public space on Neal Street adjacent to the site is in good condition and no improvements are required by the Applicant. DDOT requested the Applicant provide additional information on the school operations and potential impacts to the transportation network.

The Applicant submitted a transportation statement to DDOT dated January 12, 2014 providing information on the projected transportation operations of the school including mode splits, mass transit facilities, hours of operations, site access and parking impacts in the neighborhood. The site is adequately served by mass transit facilities located approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the New York Avenue Metro Station and one block away from the nearest Metrobus stop at the northeast corner of Montello Avenue and Neal Street. The area is served by other Metrobus routes including the X3, 92, D4 and X2 that are within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the site. A Capital Bikeshare station that contains 15 bicycles spaces is located less one block to the east at the intersection of Neal Street and Trinidad Avenue, N.E.

The School will operate between the hours of 9:00 am and 7:00 pm with two sessions. The first session is between the hours of 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and the second session from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The school selected these hours to avoid potential conflicts with the drop-off and pick-up periods at the Center City Public Charter School that begins operations at 8:00 am and ends the school day at 4:00 pm. Employees for the first session arrive between 8:00 to 8:30 am and staff for the second session arrives at 12:00pm. The peak-hour for student arrival is for the first session from 9:00 to 10:00 am and students arrive for the second session between 1:00 and 2:00 pm. The School does not accept students for the first session until after the Center City Public Charter School students are inside the building.

PARKING

The transportation statement purports that 10% of the students would arrive by vehicle and 90% are projected to arrive using alternative travel modes including walking, bicycling or public transportation including Metrobus and Metrorail based on the figures from the previous school location. The school has a total of 9 faculty/staff and 7 of the employees arrive by private vehicle and 2 use mass transit. A total of 4 out the 7 staff who presently arrive by private vehicles carpool and are expected to continue at the new School location.

There is RPP parking on Neal Street from 7:00 am to 8:30 pm Monday through Saturday with a 2-hour time limit for non-RPP vehicles. The Applicant conducted a daytime survey and identified approximately 52-54 on street parking spaces on Neal Street within a one-block radius of the facility that provide adequate parking for residents. The Applicant will encourage students who drive private vehicles to park on West Virginia Avenue if the accessory parking spaces are unavailable. West Virginia Avenue runs along the eastern edge of the Gallaudet University campus with a large perimeter fence on the western side of the roadway and row-houses and single family homes on the eastern side of the roadway. There is on-street unregulated parking on both sides of the roadway that can accommodate students who drive and are unable to park on campus.

TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Transportation Demand Management (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 School will adopt a policy that emphasizes the use of alternative transit options including walking, bicycling, carpooling and mass transit however details were not provided and a TDM plan was not proposed.

DDOT recommends the applicant implement the following strategies as part of the TDM program:

- Select one person of the staff to serve as the transportation director to coordinate TDM measures, distribute information on alternative transit options to students and staff and encourage transit ridership and carpooling.
- Provide employees the maximum allowable amount of Metro Smart Benefits, only to teachers and staff who commit to riding Metro to get to and from the school, (Employees are able to elect this as a tax-free option that employees fund themselves at a maximum contribution of as of \$130 per month as of the date of this memo) or a *Capital Bikeshare* membership at a value of not less than \$75.00.
- Include an information display kiosk in the lobby with information on alternative transit modes including WMATA, CommuterConnections.com, GoDCGo.com, the Capital Bikeshare Program and car-sharing programs.
- Install a TransitScreen in the lobby to provide real-time transit information including Metrobus, Metrorail and Capital Bikeshare facilities in the vicinity of the site.

PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

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