

**BEFORE THE FOREIGN MISSIONS  
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT  
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

**Application of the Republic of Georgia**

**October 22, 2013**

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2013 OCT 23 PM 1:10

**STATEMENT OF THE APPLICANT**

**I. Nature of Relief Sought**

This is an application pursuant to Chapter 10 of the Zoning Regulations for review and approval of a proposed chancery use for the Republic of Georgia ("Georgia") at 1824 R Street, N.W. (Square 134, Lot 167, (the "Property"). The Property is located in a DC/R-5-B zone district. The DC ("Dupont Circle") overlay has no bearing on the subject application.

**II. Jurisdiction of the Board**

This application is being filed pursuant to Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act, approved August 24, 1982 (92 Stat. 286, D.C. Code § 5-1206 (1994 Repl.)), 22 U.S.C.A. § 4306 (1990), and 11 DCMR § 1002.1 (1995). Under Section 206(b)(2)(B) of the Foreign Missions Act, 22 U.S.C.A. § 4306(b)(2)(B), D.C. Code § 1206(b)(2)(B), a chancery is permitted to locate in areas determined on the basis of existing uses, which include office or institutional uses, including but not limited to any area zoned mixed-use diplomatic or special purpose, subject to disapproval by the FMBZA in accordance with the criteria set forth in 11 DCMR § 1001.

**III. Description and Zoning History of the Property**

1824 and 1826 R Street N.W. are four-story rowhouses designed and built in 1911 by noted Washington D.C. architect, Clarke Waggaman (1877-1919.) Waggaman designed many of the stately mansions in the historic Dupont Circle and Kalorama neighborhoods, including the neighboring Argentinian Embassy. After many decades as two single family homes, the interiors of 1824 and 1826 were partially joined together when the property served as the Chancery for the Embassy of Singapore in the 1980s and 90s. In 2003, the current owners embarked on a three-year, multimillion dollar renovation and restoration project, and ultimately seamlessly combined the two homes into a single 12,000 square foot mansion with one address: 1824 R Street NW. Existing historic elements were carefully restored, and new and antique elements were added as needed to complete the project.

The Property was zoned SP prior to 1974 (See Zoning Commission Order No. 90 for 1974 rezoning) and has a history of nonresidential use which began prior to the rezoning.

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT  
District of Columbia**

CASE NO. 18691  
EXHIBIT NO. 4

1035193.7 10/23/2013

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 18691  
EXHIBIT NO. 4

In 1971, the Republic of Singapore established its chancery at 1824 R Street as a matter-of-right under the then existing SP zoning. In 1981, the BZA (#13459) approved an expansion of the chancery into the adjoining 1826 R Street (previously a six-unit rooming house), combining the buildings into a single building on the interior. (See BZA Order No. 13459 attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.)

From 1993-2003, the Property was devoted to office use for the following tenants: *Beacon Properties, United Therapeutics Corporation, Sky Station International, PPH Cure Foundation, and World Against Racism Foundation*. (See Certificate of Occupancy B175299 dated July 31, 1996 attached hereto as **Exhibit B**).

From 2006-2010, the Property was a six-bedroom Bed and Breakfast, *Artists Inn Residence, LL*. (See BZA Order No. 17655 attached hereto as **Exhibit C**). The B&B was closed in 2010 and since that time the property is being used as a residence/home office of former bed and breakfast owners. The residential use was intended as a temporary situation until the Property could be sold. The owners have listed the Property for sale continuously since 2010. In the three years the Property has been for sale, the owners had approximately 20 showings with only two for potential residential use. All other showings were for embassies and private foundations. They received only 2 offers, both from embassies. Based on their experience, they have concluded that there is no market in the neighborhood for a residence this size and there have been no sales of residential properties this size in the neighborhood in decades.

#### **IV. Description of the Surrounding Area and Zoning**

The Property is located in Square 134 on the south side of R Street between 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets, N.W. Square 134 is bounded by R Street on the north, Corcoran Street, N.W. on the south, 19<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. on the west, and 18<sup>th</sup> Street on the east.

The R-5-B District within which the Property is located generally encompasses the area between Connecticut and New Hampshire Avenues north of Dupont Circle. The southeast portion of Square 134 is zoned SP-1 and that zone generally follows the properties fronting on New Hampshire Avenue. The C-3 -B District is mapped along Connecticut Avenue between Dupont Circle and Florida Avenue. To the south, much of the area around Dupont Circle is zoned C-3-C.

The area surrounding the Property features a mix of uses. More specifically, the south side of the block where the Property is located includes the following uses:

- 1812 R Street (Offices of British West Indies Labour Organization)
- 1816-1818 R Street (Offices of the American Association of Colleges and Universities)
- 1822 R Street (Offices of the American Friends Society)
- 1800 R Street is a high rise condominium with 1st floor physician offices

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2013 OCT 23 PM 1:10

The only exclusively residential building on the south side of R Street is the rental apartment building at 1830 R Street.

The north side of the 1800 block of R Street, N.W. includes these uses:

- The German Marshall Fund (address is 1700 18th Street, NE corner of block with large frontage on R Street)
- 1811 R Street-The National Museum of American Jewish Military History
- 1825 R Street-The International Student House Dormitory
- The Embassy of Sierra Leone (address 1701 19th Street, NW corner of the block with large frontage on R Street)
- 1841 R St-A 5 Unit Condominium
- 1837 R St-A Single Family Home operating as a Group House
- 1839 R St-A Single Family Home
- 1843 R St-A Single Family Home

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2013 OCT 23 PM 1:10

Other international uses in the vicinity of the Property include the Consular Section of the Embassy of Iraq at 1801 P Street, the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo at 1800 New Hampshire Avenue, the Embassy of Rwanda at 1714 New Hampshire Avenue, Swaziland at 1712 New Hampshire Avenue, Eritrea at 1708 New Hampshire Avenue, Grenada at 1701 New Hampshire Avenue, a French Military Attache at 1759 R Street, and a Soviet Cultural Mission at 1706-18<sup>th</sup> Street.

## **V. Criteria for Approval**

**A. Permitted Use.** This application is being filed pursuant to Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act, approved August 24, 1982 (92 Stat. 286, D.C. Code § 5-1206 (1994 Repl.)), 22 U.S.C.A. § 4306 (1990), and 11 DCMR § 1002.1 (1995). Under Section 206(b)(2)(B) of the Foreign Missions Act, 22 U.S.C.A. § 4306(b)(2)(B), D.C. Code § 1206(b)(2)(B), a chancery is permitted to locate in areas determined on the basis of existing uses, which include office or institutional uses, including but not limited to any area zoned mixed-use diplomatic or special purpose subject to disapproval by the FMBZA in accordance with the criteria set forth in 11 DCMR § 1001. Those criteria are reviewed below in sections B through G of this Statement.

**B. International Obligation of the United States.** Subsection 1001.2 directs the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment ("FMBZA") to consider the international obligation of the United States to facilitate the provision of adequate and secure facilities for foreign missions in the Nation's Capital.

The Director of the Office of Foreign Missions will submit a letter to the FMBZA regarding the international obligation of the United States to facilitate the acquisition of adequate and secure facilities for the Republic of Georgia..

**C. Historic Preservation.** Subsections 1001.3 and 1001.4 require that the proposed chancery be in substantial compliance with historic preservation laws and regulations and that the FMBZA consider historic preservation in its decision.

The Property is located in the Dupont Circle Historic District. The Dupont Circle Historic District is roughly bounded by Rhode Island Avenue, M, and N Streets on the south, Florida Avenue on the west, Swann Street on the north, and the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District on the east. It Includes approximately 3100 buildings c. 1875-1940 and features one of the city's most elegant historic residential neighborhoods. It is notable for superior examples of Victorian rowhouse architecture in Queen Anne and Richardsonian styles as well as some of the city's finest turn-of-the-century mansions in Beaux Arts, Chateausque, Renaissance, and Georgian Revival styles.

The Property is a contributing building in the historic district. It consists of two well-preserved turn of the century row houses.

Georgia will fully comply with the intent of historic preservation regulations. The exterior of the building is in excellent condition, and Georgia will maintain the exterior in that condition. No addition or exterior alteration of the building is proposed. No new, special antenna is planned to be added at this time. The only evidence of the use will be a small plaque and a flag indicating the presence of the chancery of Georgia.. Interior alterations will be minor and are not subject to historic preservation regulation.

**D. Parking and Public Transportation.** Section 1001.5 provides that the Board shall consider the adequacy of off-street or other parking, and the extent to which the area will be served by public transportation to reduce parking requirements, subject to any special security requirements that may be determined by the United States Secretary of State.

As indicated above, the Property is located in a high-activity, transitional area to the north of the downtown office core (Golden Triangle sector). In this central location, public transportation, taxicab service, and vehicular accessibility are all excellent and will be more than capable of serving any limited, additional transportation demand generated by the proposed chancery use.

The Dupont Circle Metrorail station is located just two blocks to the southwest of the Property. Several Metrobus routes also serve the area, especially along Connecticut Avenue. Vehicular access is also very good in the surrounding area. Both 19<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets are major arterials and access to the Property parking area is well served by adjacent public alleys.

The proposed chancery is expected to generate little additional demand for parking..Only sixteen employees will work in the building, thirteen of which are diplomats and the rest are administrative. Visa and passport transactions will not be conducted at the chancery. Most

RECEIVED  
OFFICE OF ZONING  
OCT 23 PM 1:10

visitors to the site will be diplomatic and businesspersons who are dropped off and picked up by professional drivers or by taxi.

Onsite parking for up to (6) parking spaces will be located onsite in the rear of the building. Two additional diplomatic zone spaces will be provided on the street in front of the building.

The Zoning Regulations in Chapter 21 indicate a parking requirement for chancery use of one space per 1800 s.f. of floor area, or as determined by the Board. However, § 2100.4 of the Zoning Regulations waives any parking requirement for historic buildings due to a change in use for which more parking is required. Based on all of these factors, the Applicant requests that the FMBZA determine that the proposed parking situation, consisting of approximately six parking spaces at the rear of the Property, is adequate.

**E. Security.** Subsection 1001.6 directs the Board to consider “the extent to which the area is capable of being adequately protected, as determined by the Secretary of State, after consultation with federal agencies authorized to perform protective services.”

The Office of Foreign Missions will report on the security requirements for the proposed chancery.

**F. The Municipal Interest.** The proposed chancery use by the Republic of Georgia is compatible with surrounding uses and will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

As described above, the Property is in an area characterized by numerous nonresidential uses including institutional, office, hotel, and international uses. The proposed chancery use will be fully compatible with the surrounding area and the immediate vicinity. The Property is separated from the residential use to the west by a wide public alley. The property located immediately to the east is an office use. As a result, the new chancery is not likely to have any adverse impact on surrounding properties.

**G. The Federal Interest.** The final criterion to be considered by the FMBZA is the federal interest, as determined by the Secretary of State. (§1001.8)

The Department of State will report on the federal interest in the proposed chancery for the Republic of Georgia.

2013 OCT 23 PM 1:10  
RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING

**VI. Conclusion**

For the reasons set forth in this Statement, the Applicant requests that the Board not disapprove this application.

Respectfully submitted,

SAUL EWING LLP

*Cynthia A. Giordano*

Cynthia A. Giordano

Attachments

RECEIVED  
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING  
2013 OCT 23 PM 1:10