

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen Gyor AICP, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: July 1, 2014

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18788 – request for special exception relief under § 731 to allow a massage establishment on the first floor of premises 4620 Wisconsin Ave NW.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception:

- § 731 Massage Establishments

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	4620 Wisconsin Ave NW
Legal Description	Square 1732, Lot 45
Ward	3
Lot Characteristics	The rectangular lot is 17,136 square feet, with a frontage of 130 feet on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue NW between Brandywine and Chesapeake Streets, NW. The rear of the lot is also 116 feet wide and abuts a 20 foot wide public alley. The lot currently includes a four-story office building with ground floor retail uses and a below grade garage.
Zoning	C-2-A - Permits matter-of-right low density development, including office employment centers, shopping centers, medium-bulk mixed use centers, and housing.
Existing Development	Commercial building, permitted in this zone.
Historic District	NA
Adjacent Properties	Adjacent properties include commercial office, retail, and service uses. To the immediate north of the Property are two- and three-story mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail uses. Immediately to the south is a vacant property for which a new, five-story apartment building with ground floor retail uses has been approved (ZC Case # 10-23).
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by commercial office, retail, and service uses.

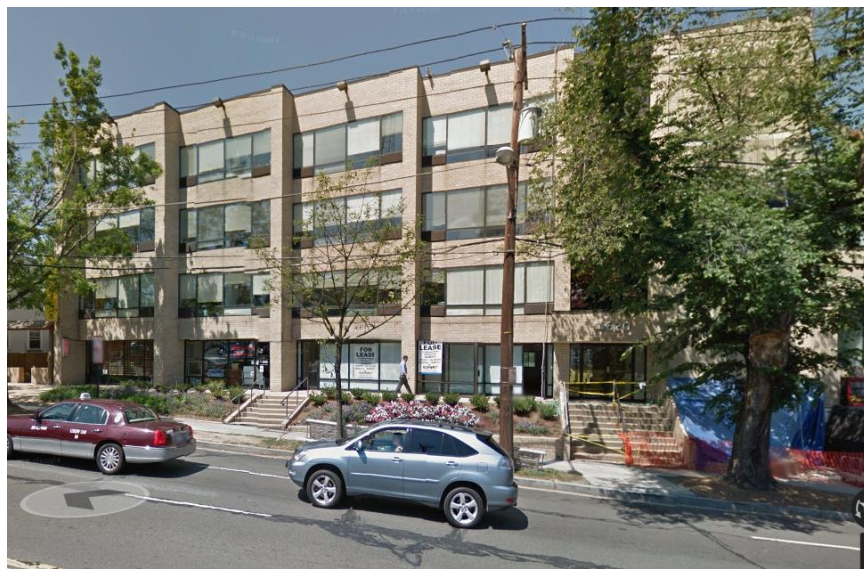


III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

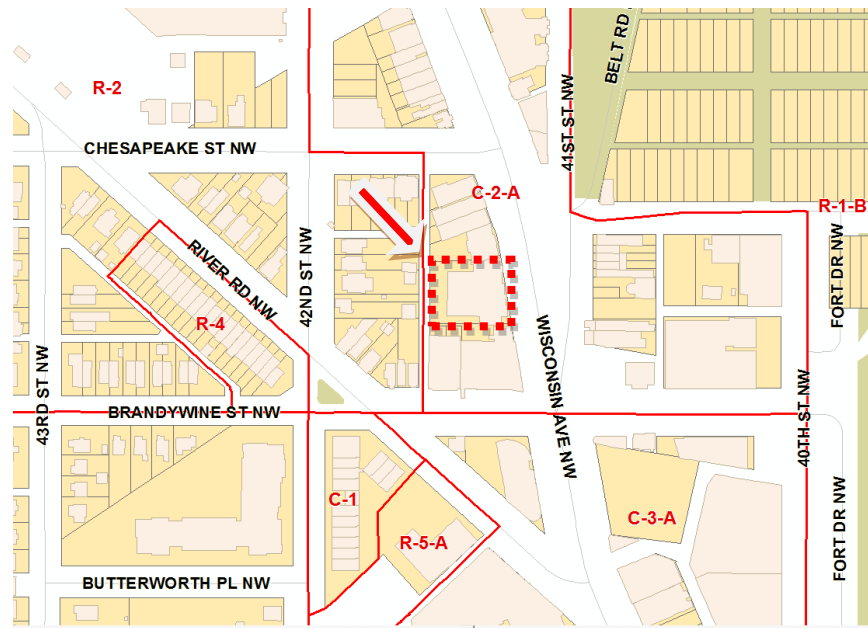
Proposal:	The applicant proposes to locate a massage establishment, which is permitted only by special exception within the C-2 Districts, on the ground floor of an existing four-story office building. The building is owned by American University. No building additions are proposed, and only minor modifications to the interior would occur. The massage establishment would consist of approximately 2,857 square feet. The spa would be open Monday-Friday 8am to 10pm, Saturday from 8am to 8pm, and Sunday from 10am to 8pm. Parking would be available in the onsite below-grade parking garage.
-----------	--

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

C-2-A Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	NA	NA	NA	None required
Lot Width § 401	NA	NA	NA	None required
Lot Area § 401	NA	NA	NA	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	NA	NA	NA	None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	NA	NA	NA	None required
Rear Yard § 404	NA	NA	NA	None required
Side Yard § 405	NA	NA	NA	None required
Court § 406	NA	NA	NA	None required
Massage Establishments § 731	NA	NA	NA	Relief required



Subject Property



Subject Property

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 731 Massage Establishments

731.1 Any establishment that has as a principal use the administration of massages shall be permitted in a C-2 District as a special exception if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.

731.3 The establishment shall be compatible with other uses in the area.

The proposed massage establishment would be compatible with other uses in the area. The Wisconsin Avenue corridor includes a variety of retail and service uses. The applicant would offer facials and professional therapeutic massages, similar to the services offered by physical therapist offices and day spas commonly offered in the C-2 zone.

731.4 The use shall not be objectionable because of its effect on the character of the neighborhood or because of noise, traffic, or other conditions.

The use would not be objectionable because of noise, traffic or other conditions. The proposed massage establishment is inherently a quiet use that would be fully contained within the first floor of the building. Employees would include professionally licensed therapists and administrative staff. Parking would be available in the onsite parking garage with free validation from the applicant.

731.5 The establishment shall not have an adverse impact on religious, educational, or other institutional facilities located in the area.

The establishment would not have an adverse impact on religious, educational or other institutional facilities located in the area. Adjacent properties largely include commercial office, retail, and service uses.

b. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposal is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Maps. Approval of the special exception would permit the massage establishment to locate within a C-2-A District, in conformance with the specific criteria for massage establishments as contained within § 731 of the Zoning Regulations.

c. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

The proposal would not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property. It would permit a licensed business with licensed professionals to operate a use permitted by special exception within an existing commercial district. The establishment would be a quiet use that compliments other existing businesses located in the Tenleytown neighborhood.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of this writing, OP has not received comments from adjacent neighbors. At its meeting held on June 12, 2014, ANC 3E voted not to oppose the special exception application.