

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning, and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lloyd Jordan
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe 
Associate Director

DATE: February 3, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 18876 – 23 46th Street, SE – Habitat for Humanity of Washington, D.C.

APPLICATION

Habitat for Humanity of Washington, D.C. (the "Applicant") Pursuant to 11 DCMR §§ 3104.1 and 3103.2, requests the following areas of relief: (i) special exception under 11 DCMR § 353 to permit row dwellings in the R-5-A District; and (ii) area variances from (a) the number of off-street parking spaces required by 11 DCMR § 2101.1; (b) the floor area ratio ("FAR") requirements of 11 DCMR § 402.4; and (c) the lot occupancy requirements of 11 DCMR § 403.2, to permit five new residential row dwellings in the R-5-A District at premises 23 46th Street, S.E. (Square 5346, Lot 4) (the "Site"). The Applicant proposes to provide zero parking spaces in lieu of the five (5) required by zoning.

DDOT FINDINGS IN BRIEF

The purpose of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) review is to assess the impact of the proposed action on the District's transportation network and, as necessary, propose appropriate mitigations. After review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The Site is approximately 1,040 feet from the Benning Road Metro Station and within two blocks of a bus stop;
- Residents are likely to heavily utilize non-automobile modes of travel, reducing the need for auto ownership;
- A robust on-street parking inventory was performed for the weekday peak periods;
- On-street parking supply is sufficient to accommodate the expected parking demand of the proposed townhomes; and
- At the initial sale of each townhome, the option of either a Capital Bikeshare membership for one year or a \$100 prepaid SmarTrip Card will be included.

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RECOMMENDATION

The site's proximity to the Benning Road Metro Station and bus stops, and pedestrian infrastructure, will lead to low levels of auto ownership and use. Along with an adequate supply of on-street parking available, DDOT has no objection to the requested special exception for parking.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

The Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT on the following matters during the public space permitting process:

- Public space, including curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other features within the public rights of way, are expected to be designed and built or maintained to DDOT standards.

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.

The Applicant and DDOT coordinated on an agreed-upon scope for the Comprehensive Transportation Review that is consistent with the scale of the action. An outline of this project's impacts follows below.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Automobile ownership is expected to be minimal, while transit and walking 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), the study area intersections and roadway network provide adequate pedestrian connections, while there are two recreational bicycle trails, there are no on-street bicycle lanes within the study area. As noted by the Applicant, the study area has a continuous pedestrian sidewalk, but some sidewalks do not meet current DDOT standards due to their constrained width and lack of a planting strip.

Transit Facilities

DDOT and the Washington Metropolitan Area 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 development is located approximately 1,040 feet from the Benning Road Metro Station and within two blocks of a bus stop. The transit network available to this Site support a high transit mode share and low vehicle use during the peak hour.

Vehicle Parking

Per current zoning regulations, the proposed five (5) townhomes are required to provide five (5) parking spaces. The Applicant is seeking full relief from the parking requirement. The projected trip generation for the Site expects one (1) auto-based trip during the peak hour.

The Applicant conducted a parking occupancy study on Wednesday September 3, 2014 at 6:30 PM and at 9:30 PM. Although the study was conducted two days after Labor Day, which would not provide the most accurate occupancy study, DDOT believes that given the expected low parking demand for the project that it can be easily accommodated on-street. Occupancy levels indicate on-street spaces were parked at 61% during the evening (6:30 PM) and 71% during the night (9:30 PM) survey. Parking along 46th Street exceeded the available capacity and was near capacity along B Street, SE between Benning Road and 46th Street. With at least 52 spaces identified within the study area by the Applicant, off-street parking demand can be easily accommodated. See below figure for details:

Table 2: On-Street Parking Occupancy

Street	Supply	(6:30 PM)			(9:30 PM)		
		Occupied Spaces	% Occupied	Vacant	Occupied Spaces	% Occupied	Vacant
46 th Street (East Capitol Street to B Street)	30	21	70%	9	31	103%	N/A
A Street (46 th Street to 47 th Street)	61	29	48%	32	37	61%	24
B Street (Benning Road to 46 th Street)	18	14	78%	4	17	94%	1
B Street (46 th Street to 49 th Street)	55	29	53%	26	33	60%	22
Benning Road (East Capitol Street to B Street west side)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
East Capitol Street (46 th Street to 47 th Street north side)	14	15*	107%	N/A	9	64%	5
Total Study Area	178	108	61%	71	127	71%	52

*Includes one illegally parked vehicle

Given the available off-street parking, the action's impact on the District's road network is expected to be minimal. Thus, DDOT supports the lack of parking provision in this area due to the close proximity to transit, provided bicycle storage, and the provision for vehicular parking need in nearby garages. Additionally, the Applicant has agreed to TDM measures, which will further alleviate parking needs.

Loading

DDOT's practice is to accommodate vehicle loading in a safe and efficient manner, while at the same time preserving safety across non-vehicle mode areas and limiting any hindrance to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm. This often results in loading being accessed through the alley network, which in this case, the townhomes do not have. All trash and loading will occur on-street without any backing maneuvers and is acceptable.

Streetscape and 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 gutters, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the Site.

The Applicant must work closely with DDOT and the Office of Planning 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 circulate around it. In conjunction with the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, DDOT's *Design and Engineering Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant. As such, all public space shall be designed and constructed to DDOT standards.

DDOT's lack of objection or discussion of other public space elements as part of this zoning variance should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. Final design of the public space will be determined during DDOT's public space permitting process.

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