

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Sam Zimbabwe

Associate Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S Zimbabwe', is written over the printed name and title.

DATE: June 23, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 18906 - 1337 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. (Square 137, Lot 55)

APPLICATION

Pursuant to 11 DCMR §§3103.2 and §§3104.2 Endeka Enterprises and 1320 Penelope LLC (the "Applicant") seek a variance from the parking (§§2101.1) and loading (§§2201.1) requirements and a special exception from the roof structure setback (§§400.7(b), §411.11, and §777.1) requirements to allow construction of a hotel addition to an existing office building in the DC/SP-1 and C-3-C Districts at premises 1337 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. (Square 137, Lot 55).

The Board previously approved the conversion of existing office space and construction of a one-story addition to add eight residential dwelling units to the existing office building in BZA No. 18569. The Applicant proposes to change the development program from residential to hotel use with a total of 50 micro-unit rooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

The purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the impact of the proposed action on the District's transportation network and, as necessary, propose appropriate mitigations. After an extensive, multi-administration review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- A robust network of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure exists in close proximity to the proposed development;
- Guests are likely to heavily utilize non-automobile modes of travel, reducing the need for auto demand;

- Five long-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided;
- A robust assessment of off-street parking inventory was performed for the area. Off-street parking in the vicinity appears sufficient to accommodate potential spillover parking;
- The Applicant proposes an adequate loading plan; and
- The Applicant's proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan is robust.

The site's proximity to the Dupont Avenue Metro Station, extensive bus service, bicycle facilities, and quality pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, along with the commitment to a strong TDM program and provision of adequate bicycle parking will lead to low levels of auto use. As such, DDOT has no objection to the requested special exception.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

DDOT requires applicants who request Zoning approval complete a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) in order to determine the project's impact on the overall transportation network. 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 CTR should be performed according to DDOT direction. The Applicant and DDOT coordinated on an agreed-upon scope for the CTR that is consistent with the scale of the action.

The Applicant retained a transportation consultant to determine the projected impacts on the transportation network. The consultant submitted a Transportation Memorandum to DDOT on June 5, 2015. The proposed new building addition and conversion of existing office space into hotel use will not lead to a substantial increase of new vehicular trips during the peak periods and will have a negligible impact on the transportation network.

Parking

The site is required to provide a total of 15 vehicular parking spaces with 13 for the hotel use and two additional spaces for the restaurant use. The hotel will occupy three floors of existing office space and reduce existing office parking demand. The site is served by seven existing parking spaces in a one-level, underground garage at the rear of the property accessible from 18th Street. One of the existing parking spaces will be removed and converted to a storage area for trash bins. The proposed six vehicle spaces will be used primarily by management and service staff and are unavailable to hotel guests.

The Applicant conducted an inventory of off-street parking facilities in the study area and identified a total of 28 parking facilities with 25 open during normal working hours and three available 24 hours for overnight parking. Hotel guests arriving by car will be directed to use one of the nearby garages. The Applicant is coordinating with an area parking provider to lease six spaces in one of three nearby garages for guest use for a period of two years.

Car-Sharing Services

The District is served by three car sharing companies. Zipcar and Enterprise CarShare use reserved parking spaces to manage vehicle fleets and provide a total of 42 vehicles within a short walking distance of the project including 14 Enterprise spaces and 28 Zipcar spaces. Car-2-Go is an alternative self-service, car-sharing service in the District that allows on-demand access to vehicles with cars available to be picked up and returned to any authorized parking space in the service area.

Mass Transit

The site is well served by transit facilities and alternative commuting options. The site is located two and a half blocks (0.20 miles) from the Dupont Circle Metro Station and three and a half blocks (0.30 miles) from the Farragut North Metro Station on the Red Line. The area is served by numerous Metrobus routes that provide connections to Downtown, Anacostia, the Federal Triangle, Brookland, Barracks Row and Capitol Hill. The following Metrobus routes have stops within one block of the project site; 37, 42-43, D1-D2, D3, D6, G2, H1, L1-L2, N2-N3-N4-N6) and S1-S2-S4-S9. In addition the site is served by the Dupont Circle – Georgetown - Rosslyn route of the DC Circulator

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The main building lobby is located on Connecticut Avenue with a service access at the rear from 18th Street. Adequate sidewalks have been installed on both sides of the streets in the area and all signalized intersections have marked crosswalks and pedestrian countdown signals.

The area is well served by bicycle facilities including dedicated bicycle lanes on M Street, L Street, Q Street, R Street, 15th Street and the Rock Creek Park Trail. Four Capital Bikeshare stations are located within three (3) blocks of the subject site at the following locations; southeast corner of 18th and M Street; northeast corner of 17th Street and Massachusetts Avenue; northwest corner of 17th Street and Rhode Island Avenue; and, the southeast corner of 18th Street and L Street. Several existing short-term bicycle racks are located in front of the site on Connecticut Avenue. The Applicant will provide five long-term, secure bicycle parking spaces in the parking garage for employee use.

Loading

The hotel use is required to provide a 30 ft. deep loading berth, a 100 SF loading platform and 20 ft. deep service and delivery space. The existing site conditions prevent the establishment of dedicated loading and service delivery spaces onsite. The Applicant will not provide loading facilities and will use the existing curbside loading spaces on Connecticut Avenue. Existing retail tenants in the building are served by four to five deliveries per day. The transportation consultant expects three additional truck trips with the hotel use for a total of seven to eight truck arrivals per day by FedEx, UPS and occasional residential move-ins and move-outs. The trash room is located at the rear of the building accessed by the public alley network. Trash and recycling trucks will partially enter the parking garage level for collections. The TMC will coordinate trash and loading activities.

The Applicant proposes a loading management plan with the following components;

1. Vendors and on-site tenants will be required to coordinate and schedule deliveries;
2. Trucks accessing the site will be limited to a maximum 30 feet in length;
3. All tenants will be required to schedule any loading operation using a truck 20 ft. to 30 ft. in length;
4. Deliveries will be scheduled to ensure curbside capacity is not exceeded. Unscheduled delivery vehicles will be directed to return at a later time when loading space is available;
5. Inbound and outbound truck loading movements will be monitored to ensure trucks do not block the alley. Tenants will ensure trucks will not be allowed to park on 18th Street for deliveries; and
6. Trucks using the loading docks will not be allowed to idles and must abide by the DDOT Freight Management and Commercial Vehicle Operations regulations and use the primary access routes listed in the DDOT Truck and Bus Route System map.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program

The Applicant has committed to the following TDM measures;

- A member of the property management group will serve as the Transportation Management Coordinator (TMC) responsible for coordinating and implementing the TDM provisions, preparing informational and promotional brochures to residents and visitors and coordinating trash and loading activities. The contact information will be provided to DDOT and Zoning Enforcement with annual contact updates;
- Real time transit information will be presented on a display in the hotel to provide guests real time transportation information. In addition, the TMC will make printed materials for guest and employees upon request; and,

- The Applicant will register as a member of the Capital Bikeshare Bulk Membership program for hotels and provide initial free daily Capital Bikeshare passes for hotel guests in perpetuity, not to exceed \$5,000 per year.

Public Space

DDOT's lack of objection to the zoning variances should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. For the portions of the project with elements in the public space requiring approval including the proposed lead walks and step projections, 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.

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