

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager
 JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: September 29, 2015
SUBJECT: BZA Case 19068, 727 Hobart Place, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **denial** of the following:

- § 401.9, Lot Area (1,800 SF required, 1,540 SF proposed)
- § 2101.1, Off-Street Parking (1 space per flat required, none proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	727 Hobart Place, N.W.
Legal Description	Square 2888, Lot 202
Ward	1B
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular through lot with no alley access
Zoning	R-4 – row houses and flats
Existing Development	church
Adjacent Properties	North: Across Columbia Road, Bruce Monroe Park South: Across Hobart Place, row houses and flats East and West: Row houses, flats and apartment buildings
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Mixture of moderate density housing with larger apartment buildings and commercial uses along Georgia Avenue

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing improvements to the site to create four lots. Two lots would front on Columbia Road and two would front on Hobart Place, for the development of four flats with no off-street parking. In lieu of the required parking spaces the applicant proposes a Transportation Demand Management Plan that would include the issuance of a one-time one-year bikeshare membership and a preloaded sixty-dollar SmarTrip card to the initial lessee or owner of each dwelling unit.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R-4 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width § 401	18-foot min	46.5 feet	23.25 feet	None Required
Lot Area § 401	1,800 SF min.	6,161 SF	Four 1,540 SF lots	Required
Parking § 2101	1 per unit or 4	None	None	Required

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Variance Relief from § 401.9, Lot Width and Lot Area

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject property is currently one through-lot with no alley access. Rectangular in shape, it could be subdivided into three conforming lots, two facing one street, and a third facing the other. Although the third lot would be wider than required, it could also be developed as a row house or a semi-detached structure, similar to the existing semi-detached structures that exist adjacent to and east of the subject property along Columbia Road, and not substantially inconsistent with the existing residential development on the eastern side of the subject square. Therefore, OP does not find that there is an exceptional situation resulting in a practical difficulty.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The proposed subdivision would result in four substandard lots, at a density greater than permitted or anticipated. Increasing the density of this residential neighborhood beyond that which would otherwise be permitted could result in a detriment to the public good.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The proposed subdivision would result in four lots that do not conform to the lot area provisions of the R-4 district as required. It would also increase the density allowed within the R-4 district beyond that permitted or anticipated by the Zoning Regulations. Therefore, OP finds that there would be substantial harm to the Zoning Regulations.

Variance Relief from § 2101.1, Off-Street Parking

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject property is a large through lot with no alley access. Without the granting of a curb cut by DDOT, the applicant would be unable to provide any off-street parking. OP is unaware of any documentation from DDOT that the applicant was denied a curb cut that could provide common access. The applicant potentially could provide common parking access with an easement to serve each of the proposed units, although this would likely reduce the number of dwelling units on the site to

that which is permitted by the Zoning Regulations. Therefore, OP does not find that there is an exceptional situation resulting in a practical difficulty.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

As proposed, none of the lots would have off-street parking, requiring the residents of the proposed units to utilize on-street parking. The transportation study submitted by the applicant indicates that sufficient on-street parking exists to accommodate the proposed units.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

Although the subject property has no access to a public alley, other options may be available to the applicant for the provision of off-street parking that do not include a curb cut and driveway for each flat. In addition, the applicant is requesting to provide no parking while also proposing to construct more units than would otherwise be permitted in the R-4 district. OP does not find that there would be no substantial harm to the Zoning Regulations.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No comments were received from other District agencies.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 1B was scheduled to review the subject application at its regularly scheduled meeting of September 21, 2015.

Four letters were received in opposition to the application (Exhibit Nos. 27, 29, 30 and 31).

Attachment: Location Map

