GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sara Bardin
District of Columbia Office of Zoning

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe
Associate Director

DATE: November 10, 2015

SUBJECT: **BZA Case No. 19099** - 3701 New Hampshire Avenue NW

APPLICATION

RP 3701 NW LLC (the Applicant), pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3103.2, seeks variances from the lot occupancy requirements under § 772.1, and the off-street parking requirements under § 2101.1, to allow the construction of a new mixed-use building with 21 residential units and ground floor retail in the GA/C-3-A District at premises 3701 New Hampshire Avenue N.W. (Square 3030, Lot 805). The Applicant proposes zero vehicle parking spaces in lieu of the 12 required spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

The purpose of the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) 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;
- Residents are likely to heavily utilize non-automobile modes of travel, reducing the need for auto ownership;
- The site is located on a block that is in the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program;
- A robust on-street parking inventory was performed for the weekday mid-day and evening peak periods. On-street parking in the vicinity appears sufficient to accommodate potential spillover parking;
- Ample off-site parking is available in nearby parking garages.
- The Applicant's proposal to offer free parking in these facilities for three years could encourage auto ownership amongst tenants, setting up a situation where residents may seek to utilize on-street parking after the incentive expires;

- This concern is partially moderated by a strong Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan that includes a carshare or bikeshare annual membership and SmarTrip benefit for a period of 10 years.

The site's proximity to the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station, extensive bus service, Capital Bikeshare, 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 ownership and use. However, the free off-site parking could encourage auto ownership amongst tenants. While this concern is partially moderated by the TDM plan, making the off-site parking spaces available to residents at market rate costs rather than free of charge would more fully mitigate potential curbside parking impacts.

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 and ultimately discourage single occupancy vehicle trips.

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 Comprehensive Transportation Review (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.

Trip Generation

Each trip a person makes is made by a certain means of travel, such as vehicle, bicycle, walking, and transit. The means of travel is referred to as a 'mode' of transportation. A variety of elements impact the mode of travel, including density of development, diversity of land use, design of the public realm, availability and cost of parking, among many others.

The Applicant provided trip generation estimates utilizing the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, the WMATA *2005 Development Related Ridership Survey*, and the assumed mode split to convert base vehicular trips to base person trips using average auto occupancy data and then back to vehicular trips. DDOT generally finds this method appropriate. Mode split assumptions used in the subject analysis were informed by the above resources and the building location and program.

Based on the trip generation and mode split assumptions discussed above, Table 1 shows the Applicant's predicted weekday peak hour trip generation. Based on this level of trip generation, a full vehicle traffic analysis is not required, as impacts to the surrounding vehicle network are expected to be minimal.

Land Use / Trip Type	AM Peak Hour In	AM Peak Hour Out	AM Peak Hour Total	PM Peak Hour In	PM Peak Hour Out	PM Peak Hour Total	ADT
Townhouse Condominium – LUC 230 (21 DU)							
Total Trips[1]	3	12	15	11	6	17	165
Non-Auto Reduction[2]	*2*	*8*	*10*	*8*	*4*	*12*	*116*
Transit	*2*	*7*	*9*	*6*	*3*	*9*	*96*
Bike	-	-	-	*1*	-	*1*	*8*
Pedestrian	-	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*2*	*12*
Vehicle Trips	**1**	**4**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**5**	**49**
Retail – LUC 820 (3,428 SF)							
Total Trips[1]	2	1	3	6	7	13	146
Non-Auto Reduction[3]	*1*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*3*	*6*	*73*
Transit	*1*	*1*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*4*	*51*
Bike	-	-	-	-	-	-	*9*
Pedestrian	-	-	-	*1*	*1*	*2*	*13*
External Vehicle Trips	**1**	**0**	**1**	**3**	**4**	**7**	**73**
Total Proposed Development							
Total Trips	5	13	18	17	13	30	311
Non-Auto Reduction	*3*	*9*	*12*	*11*	*7*	*18*	*189*
Transit	*3*	*8*	*11*	*8*	*5*	*13*	*153*
Bike	-	-	-	*1*	-	*1*	*18*
Pedestrian	-	*1*	*1*	*2*	*2*	*4*	*27*
External Vehicle Trips	**2**	**4**	**6**	**6**	**6**	**12**	**122**

[1] Trips generated using Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation, Ninth Edition.
[2] No internal capture assumed.
[3] Non-Auto Mode Splits for residential uses are based on Census Data.
[4] Non-Auto Mode Splits for retail use is based on 2005 WMATA Ridership Survey. Transit, bike, and pedestrian trips are based on the mode split for the U Street Retail Corridor, taken from the 2005 WMATA Ridership Survey.

Figure 1 Weekday Trip Generation (Source: Wells + Associates)

Loading and Trash

The proposed development is not required by zoning to provide onsite loading facilities, but the site will generate truck trips from the ground floor retail space, residential move-in/move-outs, and trash pick-up. A commercial loading zone currently exists on the north side of Rock Cree Church Road adjacent to the site. The Applicant has expressed interest in relocating the commercial loading zone to New Hampshire Avenue. The move has the potential benefit of providing more direct loading space to other businesses on New Hampshire Avenue, and a time of day restricted loading zone could be installed in the metered vehicle parking spaces. The Applicant will need to coordinate with DDOT during permitting to determine if this shift is appropriate.

In order to ensure smooth loading operations, the Applicant proposes a Loading Management Plan that includes the following elements:

- Designate a loading coordinator to coordinate loading activities for the building;
- Instruct residents to utilize the curbside commercial loading zone for delivery services; and
- Require tenants to notify the loading management coordinator before move-in/move-out.

Of note, curbside loading zones are reserved for commercial activity rather than residential move-in/move-outs. Emergency no parking signs are available for residential moving activities. The loading management coordinator should ensure to make this information available to residents.

Trash is expected to be stored in bins on private property that would be rolled to the curb along Rock Creek Church Road.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Walking and biking are expected to be important modes of transportation and would facilitate access to the area's extensive transit network. 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 good pedestrian and cycling connections to nearby land uses and transit facilities. The Applicant's analysis noted that all crosswalks and curb ramps between the site and the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station meet current DDOT standards. Should any sub-standard conditions exist, DDOT may require the Applicant to make improvements to the pedestrian network in the vicinity as part of the public space permitting process.

The site is within close proximity to multiple bicycle lanes. A pair of one-way bicycle lane couplets on 7th Street/Warder Street and 5th Street/Park Place provide north-south connectivity. Bicycle lanes on other nearby streets, including 11th Street, Rock Creek Church, Upshur Street, and Kansas Avenue, also provide excellent bicycle connectivity to destinations across the District. Additionally, a 15-dock Capital Bikeshare station is located across the street from the site at the intersection of Georgia Avenue/Rock Creek Church Road.

The Applicant is proposing approximately 16 bicycle parking spaces in a bicycle room in the basement. Residents would access the bicycle room by entering the main residential entrance on New Hampshire and take the elevator to the basement level. The Applicant is also expected to provide at least 6-short term bicycle parking spaces in the public space. The exact location of short-term bicycle parking spaces will be determined during the public space permitting process.

Transit Services

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 Applicant evaluated the proximity of the subject site to the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station and the adequacy of the bus service along the routes that serve the subject area. The proposed development will be located across the street from the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station.

The site is currently served by five Metrobus bus lines – the 79, 70, 60/64, 62/63, and H8 lines. Short headways particularly during the peak periods offer frequent bus service to connect the site to multiple destinations. Of note, the site is located across the street from two 79 MetroExtra bus stops at New Hampshire Avenue and Georgia Avenue. The 79 provides frequent, limited-stop service between Silver Spring and downtown. The nearest Metrobus stops are located on Georgia Avenue next to the Metro entrances, and the bus stops feature real-time arrival time screens.

Vehicle Parking & Impacts

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, and price/supply of parking spaces. However in urban areas, other factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high quality transit, frequency of transit service, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, and the demographic composition and other characteristics of the potential residents.

A minimum of 12 vehicular parking spaces are required by zoning, including 11 for the residential component and one for the retail component. The Applicant is seeking full relief from the parking requirement.

The block is currently in the District's Residential Permit Parking (RPP) and residents of the building would be able to register for Zone 4 RPP permits.

The Applicant conducted a curbside parking utilization study in an area surrounding the site to determine the availability of parking. The inventory noted a total of 510 curbside parking spaces within an approximately two block radius of the site, including about 444 RPP, 19 metered, and 47 unrestricted spaces.

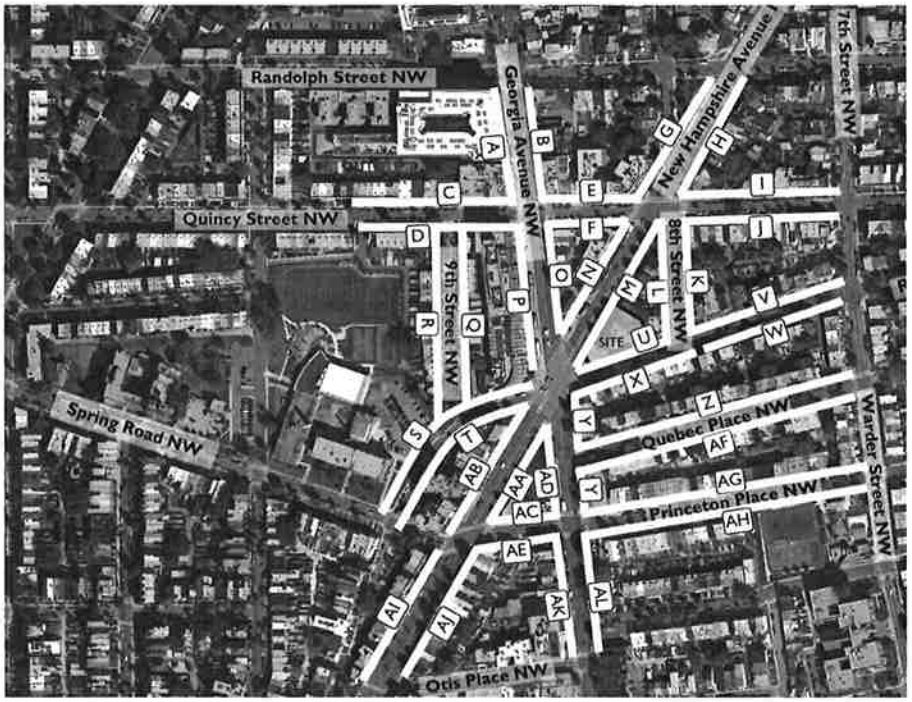

Figure 2 On-street Parking Survey Study Area (Source: Wells + Associates)

The Applicant surveyed parking utilization during two weekday periods, 9:00AM to 12:00PM (mid-day) and 5:00PM to 12:00AM (evening) when demand for parking is typically at its highest. The average amount of parking availability during each observation period is summarized in Table 1:

Table 1 Observed Parking Availability - Entire Study Area

	Occupied Spaces	# of Available Spaces	% Available
Mid-day	364	510	29%
Evening	425	510	17%

The Table 2 shows the average observed parking availability on the streets immediately adjacent to the subject site. While parking along New Hampshire Avenue during the evening period is scarcer than the average for the entire study area, parking availability is more plentiful on 8th Street and Rock Creek Church, and overall parking availability in the immediate vicinity is slightly lower in the mid-day period and slightly higher in the evening period than the overall study area.

Table 2 Observed Parking Availability - Immediately Adjacent

Street	Approximate Supply	Mid-day		Evening	
		Occupied Spaces	% Available	Occupied Spaces	% Available
New Hampshire Avenue (Rock Creek Church to Quincy)	25	24	4%	25	0%
8th Street (Rock Creek Church to Quincy)	26	23	12%	17	35%
Rock Creek Church Road (Georgia to 8th)	29	13	55%	13	55%
TOTAL	80	60	**25%**	55	**30%**

Accordingly, the level of on-street parking is likely sufficient to accommodate potential spillover parking from the site.

The Applicant also surveyed nearby buildings to determine on-site parking utilization and found that 28% of parking spaces were unused. Two buildings in particular, The Swift (3828 Georgia Avenue) and Park Place at Petworth Metro (850 Quincy Street), had a combined 131 unused parking spaces. The Applicant proposes to offer free parking to residents at these off-site garages.

For a typical project of this size and location, DDOT expects auto ownership rates to be low and does not anticipate that the off-site parking spaces would be necessary to accommodate the long-term vehicle storage needs of residents. However, the Applicant proposes to offer free parking to residents at these two buildings for the first three years the project is open, and this is likely to encourage auto ownership amongst tenants. By encouraging initial tenants to move in with vehicles, the Applicant could create the potential for on-street parking impacts after the three year off-site parking incentive expires. Those tenants taking advantage of the free off-site parking will look for cheap and convenient parking options, and this demand may fall on the on-street parking supply. The Applicant has begun to address this issue by extending the financial incentive for carshare or bikeshare membership for 10 years; however, the free off-site parking incentive will encourage higher auto ownership behavior than would ordinarily be experienced if no such parking incentive were offered.

Transportation Demand Management

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires applicants to produce a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. TDM is a set of strategies, programs, services, and physical elements that influence travel behavior by mode, frequency, time, route, or trip length in order to help achieve highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation facilities. In the District, this typically means implementing infrastructure or programs to maximize the use of public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods.

The Applicant proposes implementing the following TDM strategies[1]:

- Assign a Transportation Management Coordinator to provide transportation information to residents and coordinate all loading activities;
- Install an electronic display with transportation alternative information in a common, shared space;
- Provide approximately 16 long-term bicycle parking spaces in a bicycle room in the basement level;
- Provide a bicycle repair facility in the basement level of the building;
- Provide a one time, one year Capital Bikeshare membership or a one time, one year car share membership for all new residents for the first 10 years the project is open.
- Provide a $25 SmarTrip card for all new residents for the first 10 years the project is open.
- Host an annual bicycle training event conducted by the Washington Area Bicycle Association or similar organization for residents, provided there is sufficient demand; and
- Maintain a current list of neighborhood retail, services, and amenities and publish the list on the property management website.

DDOT finds the Applicant's TDM measures will encourage use of alternative modes of transportation. However, as discussed in the Vehicle Parking & Impacts section above, the free off-site parking could encourage auto ownership amongst tenants. While DDOT has no objection to identifying off-site parking options for tenants, those spaces should be offered to tenants at market rate rather than free of charge in order to more fully mitigate potential curbside parking impacts in the short- and long-terms.

Streetscape and the 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. DDOT staff will be available to provide additional guidance during the public space permitting process.

[1] Updated TDM plan provided via a memo from Wells + Associates to DDOT, "3701 New Hampshire Avenue, NW", November 3, 2015.

The Applicant met with DDOT to discuss preliminary concepts for the public space design. DDOT informed the Applicant that re-establishing the "public parking" landscaped area between the property line and the sidewalk will be required during permitting. If a café-eligible retail tenant is secured for the retail space, a sidewalk café design that provides for a 3-foot landscaping buffer between a possible sidewalk café area and the sidewalk would be expected. Utility vaults located in public space are expected to be surrounding by landscaping on all sides.

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