

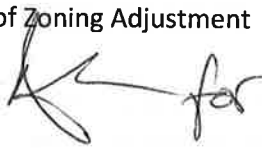
**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



d. Policy, Planning, and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Jamie Henson
Manager, Systems Planning 

DATE: February 16, 2017

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 19450 - 3320 Idaho Ave NW - Ward 3 Emergency Shelter

APPLICATION

The District of Columbia Department of General Services (the "Applicant"), pursuant to 11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapters 9 and 10, requests variances from the loading requirements of Subtitle C § 901.1, the number of primary structure requirements of Subtitle C § 302.2, and the height and number of stories requirements of Subtitle F § 303.1, and a special exception for the RA-1 use requirements of Subtitle U § 420.1(f) to allow the construction of a six-story short-term family housing facility in the RA-1 Zone at premises 3320 Idaho Avenue, NW (Square 1818, Lot 849). The shelter will contain 50 units with 185 beds, a minimum of 23 vehicle parking spaces, 6 short-term bicycle spaces (3 racks), and 5 long-term bicycle spaces.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation's capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and 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 purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District's transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The Applicant expects that the facility will hold a maximum of 27 staff and 185 beds;
- The site is well-served by transit;
- The proposed loading is appropriate for the scale of the proposed use; and

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- Residents will have access to the long-term bicycle parking facilities; and
- The proposed curb cut will result in the removal of a healthy street tree, which DDOT will not support, and potentially healthy special trees. Relocating the proposed curb cut closer to the existing Metropolitan Police Department building is a more appropriate design solution to retain the street tree and special trees. Final curb cut design will be handled through the public space permitting process.

DDOT has no objection to the requested variances and special exception.

Continued Coordination

The Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT outside of the Board of Zoning Adjustment process on the following matters:

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

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Site Design

Site design, which includes site access, loading, and public realm design, plays a critical role in determining a proposed action's impact on the District's infrastructure. While transportation impacts can change over time, the site design will remain constant throughout the lifespan of the proposed development, making site design a critical aspect of DDOT's development review process. Accordingly, new developments must provide a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience, enhance the public realm, and serve as positive additions to the community.

Site Access

The site is located on an improved lot bounded by Idaho Avenue to the east, Newark Street to the north, community recreation uses to the west, and residential properties to the south. A Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Second District Headquarters and surface parking lot is located on the site. The Applicant proposes to maintain the MPD building and replace the surface parking lot with the proposed shelter and a multi-level vehicle parking garage. Pedestrian access will occur from Idaho Avenue via an accessible path to the main entrance. The proposed vehicular access will shift to the north of the existing curb cut on Idaho Avenue, which will be closed. The proposed curb cut will result in the removal of a healthy street tree, which DDOT will not support, and potentially healthy special trees. Relocating the proposed curb cut closer to the existing Metropolitan Police Department building is a more appropriate design solution to retain the street tree and special trees. Final curb cut design will be handled through the public space permitting process.

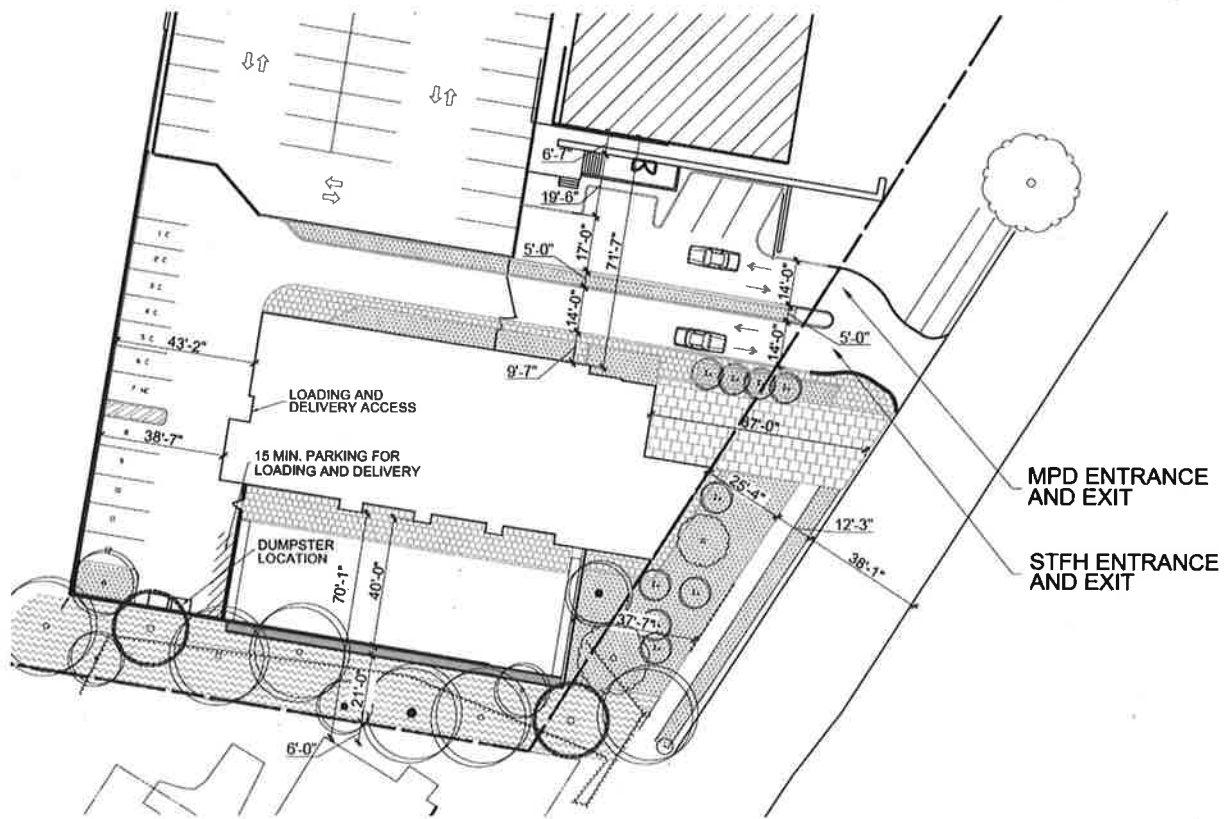


Figure 1 - Site Access (Source: Ayers Saint Gross)

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 modes 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 an alley network.

The Applicant requests full relief from the loading requirements of one 30-foot loading berth, one 100 square foot platform, and one 20-foot service/delivery space. Loading activities will consist of twice daily meal delivery from vans, and trash pick-up three times per week. All loading activity will occur in the parking area at the rear of the site via a loading a delivery space. The proposed loading area is sufficient to accommodate the project.

Trip Generation

Residential trip generation estimates were developed using Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Land Use Code 220 (Apartments). Given that the staff uses do not follow ITE land uses, staff trip generation estimates were developed using information provided by the Applicant. DDOT finds this method to be appropriate for this project.

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.

To inform trip and mode split assumptions, the Applicant provided additional information based on existing policies and observations:

- Residents are not allowed to park vehicles on-site and the number of residents who own vehicles is negligible;
- Children enrolled in DC Public Schools (DCPS) are eligible for DC One Card, which allows students to ride transit free;
- Adult residents will continue to be eligible for Metrorail/ Metrobus subsidies (SmarTrip cards) to assist with transit expenses; and
- At the existing DC General facility, residents are not allowed to store bicycles on-site and staff is unaware of any residents that own bicycles. However, the Applicant has agreed that residents will have access to the long-term bicycle parking spaces.

The Applicant developed the following mode split assumptions informed by current observations at DC General, existing policies, location of the site, and proximity to transit:

User Group	Mode Split			
	Auto	Transit	Bike	Walk
Residents	<1%	83%	<1%	17%
Staff	75%	17%	5%	3%

Figure 2 - Expected Mode Split (Source: Symmetra Design)

Based on the residential mode split assumptions discussed above, the Applicant predicted that during the AM peak hour, up to 27 non-auto trips will be generated and during the PM peak hour up to 38 non-auto trips would be generated.

Mode	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	IN	OUT	TOTAL	IN	OUT	TOTAL
Auto	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transit	5	17	22	19	12	31
Walk	1	4	5	4	3	7
Bike	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 3 - Residential Trip Generation (Source: Symmetra Design)

Mode	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	IN	OUT	TOTAL	IN	OUT	TOTAL
Auto	14	8	22	9	12	21
Transit	4	2	6	2	4	6
Walk	1	0	1	0	1	1
Bike	1	1	2	1	1	2

Figure 4 - Staff Trip Generation (Source: Symmetra Design)

Staff generate a total of 22 vehicular trips during the AM peak hour and 21 vehicular trips during the PM peak hour.

DDOT guidance suggests that a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) be completed if various thresholds for added traffic are met, which could signify the potential for impacts to the surrounding street network. Based on this project's anticipated level of trip generation, a comprehensive vehicle traffic analysis is not required, as thresholds are not met and impacts to the surrounding vehicle network are expected to be minimal. However, the Applicant conducted a vehicle parking occupancy study, which met DDOT's parameters and is consistent with the scale of the action.

Off-Street Vehicle Parking

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, and proximity to transit.

Pursuant to 11-C DCMR § 701.5, the proposed uses are required to provide 23 vehicle parking spaces. The Applicant proposes to provide a minimum of 23 off-street parking spaces for the short-term family housing facility. As a part of the redevelopment of the lot, the Applicant also proposes to construct a multi-level parking deck to replace the existing surface parking lot for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) facility on-site. The parking deck will increase the total number of parking spaces for the MPD, and potentially provide more than the required number of off-street parking spaces for the short-term family housing facility.

Transit Service

The District and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) have partnered to provide extensive public transit service in the District of Columbia. DDOT's vision is to leverage this investment to increase the share of non-automotive travel modes so that economic development opportunities increase with minimal infrastructure investment.

The site is located 1.0 miles to the Cleveland Park and Tenleytown Metro Stations, which are served by the Red Line. The site also has access to Metrobus service; the closest stop is located one and a half blocks south along Idaho Avenue. Buses near the site operate at 15-60 minute headways and include 31, 33, 37, 30N, 30S, 96, H3, H4, N2, N4, and N6.

Pedestrian Facilities

The District is committed to enhance the pedestrian accessibility by ensuring consistent investment in pedestrian infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including pedestrian trips.

Bicycle Facilities

The District is committed to enhancing bicycle access by ensuring consistent investment in bicycle infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including bicycling trips.

To serve bicycling needs, the Applicant proposes to provide 6 short-term bicycle spaces (3 racks) and 5 long-term bicycle spaces located in a secure hold that is protected from the elements and easily

accessible. Additionally, the nearest Capital Bikeshare station is located one and a half blocks to the east of the site on Wisconsin Avenue at Neward Street with 19 docks. Bicycle facilities surround the site, including cycle tracks on New Mexico Avenue, Garfield Street, and Tilden Street and shared bike lanes on Van Ness Street, 42nd Street, and 43rd Street.

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 gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site. As part of this process, the Applicant must work closely with DDOT 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 circulating around it. The Applicant may refer to the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual for specific controls of public space.

The proposed curb cut will result in the removal of a healthy street tree, which DDOT will not support, and potentially healthy special trees. Relocating the proposed curb cut closer to the existing Metropolitan Police Department building is a more appropriate design solution to retain the street tree and special trees. Final curb cut design will be handled through the public space permitting process.

DDOT's lack of objection to these zoning variance and special exceptions should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. If any portion of the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, 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 the Public Realm Design Manual.

JH:ei