

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Project Review Manager 

DATE: May 11, 2018

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 19722 – 925 5th Street NW (Square 516, Lots 827, 828, 829 and 833)

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum is intended to provide further clarification about the transportation issues raised at the March 28, 2018 Board of Zoning Adjustment hearing for 925 5th Street NW (Square 516, Lots 827, 828, 829 and 833). On March 14, 2018, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) provided comments related to the zoning relief requests of Kline Operations (the “Applicant”). DDOT understands that the BZA seeks further comment on the Applicant’s trip generation tabulations and loading operations.

TRIP GENERATION AND CTR REQUIREMENTS

DDOT uses the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s (ITE) *Trip Generation* to determine whether or not a project meets the threshold for a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR). Based on the project’s proposed number of rooms, the assumed mode share of a highly walkable urban environment, the project’s proposed supply of zero (0) vehicle parking spaces, and ITE’s hotel land use assumptions, the subject property did not meet the threshold of 25 peak hour trips in the peak direction. Additionally, the specific actions requested by the Applicant were not related to land use or density, which are matter-of-right with this project. As such, no CTR was required. The Applicant supplied the BZA with a transportation memorandum at its own discretion, which was reviewed by DDOT with the Application package.

At the Applicant’s March 28, 2018 hearing, a party in opposition commented on the project’s transportation impacts and has since submitted these comments to the record (exhibit 62), noting that the valet operations effectively double the count of inbound and outbound trips per ITE’s methodology. In other words, a car pulls curbside, counting as one (1) inbound trip during the peak hour, and is then immediately moved by the valet to a different location, counting as a second outbound trip. DDOT notes that counting valet operations in this manner effectively penalizes projects that offer zero (0) parking spaces. Because limiting parking is a proven Transportation Demand Management strategy, DDOT maintained its existing practice of using ITE’s *Trip*

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Generation. DDOT concurs that the Applicant's mode shares are both conservative and acceptable due to walkability and proximity to multiple Metrorail station entrances, and high pedestrian and transit mode share was considered by DDOT when determining whether or not the Applicant met the threshold for a full CTR. DDOT does not agree that increasing the auto mode share would accurately reflect anticipated conditions, and further notes that the mode share for the hotels discussed in exhibit 62, which are located in Arlington and Silver Spring, are suburban and not comparable.

LOADING MANUEVERS THROUGH THE ALLEY

The Applicant submitted revised turning movement diagrams on May 5, 2018. The diagrams show that trucks can enter the alley system via 4½ Street from both K Street NW and I Street NW, clear the existing utility poles in Plather Court Alley, and maneuver in the hammerhead behind the subject property. The entries show that some overhang will likely take place over the sidewalks when the streets' adjacent parking lanes are full.

DDOT agrees that movements in the alley are constrained and may on occasion require multiple turns, but this condition is not irregular in the District's alley network. DDOT further notes that two (2) existing buildings located at 450 K Street NW and 459 I Street NE have loading service bays located off of Prather Court, suggesting trucks are able to turn and maneuver within the alley.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT maintains its previous recommendation, and continues to have no objection to the approval of the requested special exceptions and variances on the condition the Applicant implement the Loading Management Plan and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan detailed in DDOT's March 14, 2018 report.

AC:pr