

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia

**FROM:**  Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation, DC Office of Planning

**DATE:** September 24, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Zoning Commission Case 07-08B – **Public Hearing** Report for a Text Amendment to the Chapter 21, Off-Street Parking Requirements to extend the current provision allowing temporary parking associated with the ballpark.

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### 1. BACKGROUND

In Zoning Commission Order 05-08 (October, 2005), the CG Overlay was amended to permit the construction of the new ballpark and to establish building and design review criteria. Among the regulations for the Ballpark site was the District's first *maximum* on-site parking limit of 1,225 spaces.

In Zoning Commission case 07-08 (July 30, 2007), the Commission approved amendments to the zoning regulations to allow temporary surface parking lots on specific squares in the general vicinity of the Ballpark. Although surface parking is allowed in many zones, the properties were zoned W-2 and CR, neither of which allows surface parking lots as a principal use. Conditions were approved to limit the total number of spaces at 3,775 maximum, to establish access, surface treatment, landscaping, and lighting requirements, and to set April 1, 2013 as the expiration date for any parking lot certificate of occupancy issued pursuant to this amendment. This text was subsequently amended in 07-08A (May 12, 2008) to include eight additional squares.

At its July 9, 2012 public meeting, the Zoning Commission set down for a public hearing a request submitted by the Office of Planning on behalf of the Nationals organization to extend this surface parking lot permission for an additional five years.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends that the Zoning Commission approve this proposal to amend Chapter 21 the Zoning Regulation text, to extend the previously approved allowance for temporary surface parking lots (changes from the existing text are **bold** and underlined):

#### Chapter 21, OFF STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

#### 2110 TEMPORARY SURFACE PARKING LOTS AND SPACES FOR THE BALLPARK

- 2110.1 Permitted Use - Notwithstanding §§ 602.1 and 902.1 and not subject to any otherwise applicable proximity requirement, a temporary surface parking lot accessory to the Ballpark shall be permitted as a temporary use on Squares 603, 605, 657, 658, 660, 661, 662, 662E, 664, 664E, 665, 700, 701, 707, 708, 708E, 708S, 744S, and 882; Square 658, Lot 7; and Square 767, Lots 44 - 47; Square 768, Lots 19 - 22; and Square 769, Lots 18 - 21 ("the subject squares") in accordance with §§ 2110.3 through 2110.5 and the following provisions:

- (b) Any certificate of occupancy issued pursuant to this subsection shall expire no later than ~~April 1, 2013~~ **April 1, 2018**.

2110.2 Special Exception - If and when valid building permits issued pursuant to § 2110.1 authorize an aggregate of 3,775 or more parking spaces, the construction and use of additional temporary spaces on any of the subject squares shall require approval of the Board of Zoning Adjustment pursuant to § 3104, and in accordance with §§ 2110.3 through 2110.5 and the following provisions:

- (a) Any certificate of occupancy issued pursuant to this subsection shall expire no later than ~~April 1, 2013~~ **April 1, 2018**;

### **3. PROPOSAL**

This proposal extend the existing term limit for the temporary parking spaces from April 1, 2013 to April 1, 2018, an additional five years. No squares or lots would be added to the existing list, and no amendments to any of the other existing conditions related to the parking lots are proposed.

In addition to this action, an amendment to PUD 03-12/03-13, Arthur Capper / Carrollsburg (AC/C) is required, as 4 of the permitted sites are within the boundaries of the PUD. The AC/C PUD was amended to allow temporary parking, also with an expiration date of April 1, 2013. OP has been in discussions with the AC/C development team, and they will submit a request for a minor modification of the PUD in accordance with the direction that the Zoning Commission takes on this case.

### **4. ANALYSIS**

The Nationals organization has indicated to OP that the surface parking spaces remain necessary. Advance allocation to season ticket holders allows the Nationals management to be able to “cross-reference” ticket holders driving to the ballpark from different parts of the region with the parking lot that is most easily and conveniently accessed by them, thereby potentially lessening traffic impacts through DC neighborhoods.

At the public meeting at which the proposal was set down for a hearing, the Zoning Commission raised a number of questions:

- *Which of the approved sites are currently developed for ballpark-associated surface parking lots?*

According a map on the National’s website (refer to Exhibit 1), five of the nineteen identified squares are currently used as surface parking lots. Three are within the Arthur Capper / Carrollsburg PUD area and the other two sites are on Squares 700 and 701, directly to the north of the ballpark. As shown on the map attached to this report as Exhibit 2, there are other parking lots associated with the ballpark in the area, on property zoned to allow a surface parking lot by right, and on the Southeast Federal Center (the Yards) site, as permitted under the zoning for that site.

The bulk of the sites approved for surface parking are in the Buzzard Point area, west of South Capitol Street and south of O Street SW. All of these sites are developed with low density warehouse, recycling, and industrial uses, and none appear to be currently used for parking. OP is not aware of any of these sites being developed, either for surface parking or for a higher use than the existed when the text amendment was put in place. However, some of these sites may be needed for parking in the future, during the construction phase of projects identified for sites currently used as parking.

- *Has there been any indication that the surface parking lots have delayed development of the sites for higher / better uses?*

As noted above, most of the squares identified in the original text amendment as parking lot sites have not been developed for surface parking lots or for any higher use permitted under the zoning. In fact, a number of the sites that currently contain ballpark-related parking are in the approval process for mixed use residential, office, hotel, and retail developments, including Square 822 on the AC/C site for development in accordance with PUD 03-12/03-13, and lots on Squares 700 and 701 to the north of the ballpark, for new mixed use developments (including recent ZC cases 12-05 and 12-19). In addition, the Florida Rock site (PUD 04-14) is being reviewed by the Zoning Commission, although it has not had ballpark related parking.

At this time, it is not known what, if any, parking associated with those sites might be available for ballpark patrons once developed, but current surface spaces would be “lost” to the Nationals, at least during the construction phase of those developments.

All of this indicates that use of a site for temporary ballpark related parking does not seem to be a deterrent to development of the site for higher and better uses. The Nationals organization has also advised that existing agreements with owners of the parking sites include a cancellation clause to permit development of the site.

- *What is the National’s long term parking plan?*

OP has requested that the Nationals organization attend the Zoning Commission hearing to discuss their current and long term parking and ballpark access plans. As shown in Exhibit 3, the Nationals website does include information regarding alternative means to access the stadium, including by bicycle, water taxi, car-share, bus, and metro.

- *Do Circulator buses pass through this area?*

According to the DDOT website, the Union Station – Navy Yard Circulator bus terminates at the Navy Yard Metro Station, one block north of the ballpark. Summer hours are typically 6 am to 9 pm, although the website notes that there is extended service on Nationals game days. This Circulator route connects ballpark patrons directly to the Eastern Market metro station on the orange and blue lines, and to the red metro line, other circulator and WMATA bus routes, trains, and the parking garages associated with Union Station.

In addition, over a dozen WMATA bus lines run proximate to the ballpark site, and the Navy Yard metro station, on the Green line, is one block away. Water taxis currently connect the site to Alexandria VA and to the Georgetown waterfront.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

As noted in OP reports submitted as part of the original approval, OP is generally not supportive of surface parking lots. OP has strongly encouraged the use of mass transit and encourages the Nationals organization to continue to promote and incentivize the use of mass transit and other alternatives to the private automobile.

However, the concern remains that, in spite of these initiatives and DDOT's aggressive street parking management program in the area, a shortage of parking available to patrons could lead to illegal parking on streets and private property in the surrounding area, additional street traffic as ballpark patrons search for parking spaces, or a drop in ballpark attendance. In addition, there are signs of an upswing in development in this area, as evidenced by recent applications to the Zoning Commission for review of new mixed use developments. Some of these are on sites currently dedicated to ballpark parking.

As such, OP is supportive of the five year extension request, with no other change to the ballpark parking provisions.

In closing, OP congratulates the Nationals on making the playoffs!

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Map of ballpark associated sites, copied from the Nationals website.
2. Site Map of existing sites used or approved for parking.
3. Screenshot from the Nationals website highlighting alternative means of access.

JLS/jl

Map from the Nationals website showing designated parking locations - **Exhibit 1**



**LEGEND**

**Parking Permitted under 07-08:**

- approved sites, not currently used for parking
- approved sites, currently used for parking

**Parking Not Covered By 07-08:**

- On-site parking locations
- Parking permitted by zoning


**Government of the  
District of Columbia**  
**Vincent C. Gray, Mayor**  
**Office of Planning ~ June, 2012**

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate.



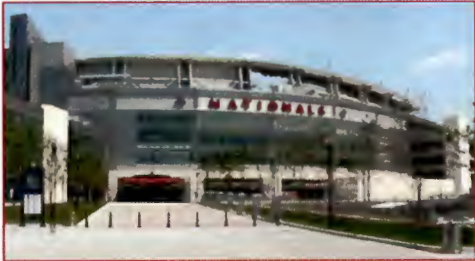
Screenshot of Nationals Website page showing accessing options to the stadium - **Exhibit 3**

**WASHINGTON NATIONALS**nationals.com

NEWS VIDEO SCOREBOARD STATS SCHEDULE ROSTER COMMUNITY FANS NATIONALS PARK

Nationals Park » The Way to Go to Nationals Park

### The Way to Go to Nationals Park



**Location:**  
Nationals Park is located in Southeast Washington along the Anacostia River bounded by South Capitol Street to the west, N Street to the north, First Street to the east and Potomac Avenue to the south.

**Our address is:**  
Nationals Park  
1500 South Capitol Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003-1507

Fans are advised to purchase parking in advance or consider the other options listed below.  
Save time and purchase parking online! ADA-accessible parking is also available!

[Parking Options »](#)



**METRO RAIL**

Metro is the quickest and easiest way to Nationals Park. It's the way to go to the ballgame. Take the Green Line to the Navy Yard station.

[More Info »](#)



**METROBUS & DC CIRCULATOR**

Get to Nationals Park via six Metrobus routes or by taking the Navy Yard route of the DC Circulator Bus.

[More Info »](#)



**BICYCLE RIDERS**

Bicycle riders can cheer. Nationals Park is bicycle friendly, with over 250 bike racks all around the ballpark.

[More Info »](#)



**WALKING**

Walking to Nationals Park is a great way to get your exercise while helping to reduce traffic and pollution.

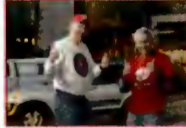
[More Info »](#)



**TAXI**

Leave the driving to someone else and take a taxi to and from Nationals Park.

[More Info »](#)



**SHARE A RIDE**

If you're driving to Nationals Park, don't be a lone ranger. Consider taking another Nats fan or two.

[More Info »](#)



**CHARTER BUS & LIMOUSINE**

It's door-to-door service if your group comes to the game in a chartered bus or limousine.

[More Info »](#)



**WATER TAXI**

A number of operators offer water taxi service on the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers to Diamond Teague Park Pier, located directly across from Nationals Park.

[List of Operators »](#)

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