Board of Zoning Adjustment Application for Zoning Relief
Case Number:_____, 4700 14th Street, NW
Part B of Application: Detailed Statement of Existing and Intended Use

In early 2000, the Applicant Owner Church was given notice to vacate its temporary space at another church in the District of Columbia. The church consists of 30 members at the present time, and has been stable at that number for some time, with small anticipated growth to 100 to 120 persons in a few years.

Applicant Owner Church found a commercial building available that can accommodate 120 persons, including 115 worshipers and five clergy staff, at 4700 14th Street, a former convenience retail store.

The building was the right size to house the current congregation (2,000 square feet), and could accommodate future growth to 120, but was in need of rehabilitation to transform it from a run down convenience store into a nice place for church members to come to worship. The building was affordable by the Church, so after lengthy negotiations and numerous oral assurances by the owner that the building was commercially zoned and that a church is allowed to be there, contracted the purchase of the building and subsequently has gone to closing on the property.

After the closing, the church proceeded to have architects and engineers work on some remodeling plans, and the Church fathers proceeded to the permit division seeking permits to rehabilitate. To their chagrin, they were informed that they would be required to provide one on site parking space for every ten seats. The applicant informed the zoning administrator's representative that they only have 30 church members, however the zoning administrator is concerned about the total capacity of the building to serve as a church, thus the occupant load is 120 persons. This means that the church needs to provide 12 on site parking spaces to satisfy matter-of-right use as a church in a C-1 zone. Due to the fact that the existing building occupies the entire lot, on site parking is not possible. Thus the Applicant appears before you to request a variance from the parking requirements of section 2101.1 of the zoning regulations to allow church use for 120 persons.

The Applicant believes that their use of the building with 120 person occupant load that is used only on Sunday and an occasional wedding or special church holiday function will not create any adverse neighborhood impacts. The hours that the church will be open in early evening hours or on Sunday occur when the businesses along the 4600 and 4700 block of 14th Street are all closed, and there is ample on street parking where there are parking meters along 14th Street, NW, to accommodate the additional 12 car parking increase on the street. In addition, the convenience store attracted a parking burden of four to six cars at all times it was open, for employees and customers. The occasional and

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lighter use as a church will actually have a favorable impact on this neighborhood with respect to parking.

In addition, the convenience store property was and is run down, and is an un-attractive eyesore to the community. Rehabilitation into an attractive place of worship and discontinuing convenience store use will have a huge positive influence on this neighborhood, that does not need another run-down convenience store.

The Owner/Applicant has a hardship with respect to continued use as a convenience store, due to the fact that the building will require substantial rehabilitation to make it viable as a store, and the church does not have the wherewithal to rehabilitate this building into a modern store, and it is questionable if the owner can sell the property as a store or other use in this location for the amount it has invested. It is also doubtful if the current owner can lease the building in its current condition as a viable store or other use without expending substantial funds which it does not have to first rehabilitate it, and it cannot survive on any rental income when the church does not have a place of worship.

The property footprint is only 2,000 square feet. Partial demolition of all of this building would not render sufficient parking on site to accommodate the required 12 parking spaces.

It is for the above stated practical hardships and difficulties that make certain doom for this church if zoning relief is not granted. This church will not cause any adverse impacts such as parking, noise, or block any light or air. The intent of the zone plan and map is not compromised in any way in granting the Applicants requested relief.