GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

Memorandum

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustments

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

BZA
Case No. 16657
Exhibit No. 23

DATE: January 2, 2001

SUBJECT: BZA Application #16657 (Christian Praise Church - The Power to Become Child Care Center)
3626 Alabama Avenue, S.E.

APPLICATION

The application by the Arron Brooks on behalf of *The Power to Become Child Care Center* requests approval of a special exception to allow a child development center, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 and subject to the standards outlined in Section 205.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The proposed location of the *Power To Be Child Care Center* is at 3626 Alabama Avenue, S.E. (Square 5668, Lot 34). The building is an existing two-story plus basement single-family detached house that is referred to as "an annex" to the adjacent Christian Praise Church, and has a total area of 5,668 square-foot. To the rear of the property is a garage that is used by the church for storage of extra church furniture such as tables and chairs.

The subject property is located in a predominantly residential community. To the north, south, and west of the subject property are two-story, single-family detached residences. Approximately 200-feet west of the site is the St. Timothy Episcopal Church and Nursery school. To the east of the subject property are a combination of uses. Directly adjacent to the site is the Christian Praise Church. Across 36th Place is the Anne Beers Elementary School, followed by the Francis A. Gregory Regional Branch Library. To the southeast, going towards Pennsylvania Avenue, is the Fairfax Village residential community, composed of two-story townhouse units and three-story apartment buildings. (See Attachment 1)

PROPOSAL

The application proposes to convert the existing building to accommodate a child development center for thirty children, ages 2.5 to 8 years. Six persons, four licensed caregivers and two aides will staff the center.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
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#23

ANALYSIS

The subject property has been owned by the Christian Praise Church for approximately ten years and has functioned as the church's "annex". The house has been used by the church from time-to-time for various children's activities such as summer school and Sunday school. In recent years, the house has fallen into a state of disrepair and therefore has had only limited use. The garage at the rear of the property will continue to be used by the church for storage.

The applicant has rented the building from the church and is in the process or renovating the building to accommodate the childcare center. The children of members of the church will have priority enrollment at the childcare center but it will also serve the surrounding community. The childcare center will operate weekdays between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Friday evenings between 8:00 p.m. 12:00 midnight, and Saturday between 8:00 a.m. and 12 midnight. (The applicant revised the Friday hours so as not to be in operation for 24 hours). The weekday hours will accommodate children for regular childcare while accommodating children for after-school care, possibly from the nearby elementary school. The late weekend hours will facilitate parents who are attending functions at the church or other late night activities and need childcare. Further, due to its close proximity to the school, the childcare center can facilitate parents who may have a child at the school and another who needs childcare services. The closeness of these facilities could be a convenience to some parents as it will save time travel time when dropping off and picking up their children.

Section 205

The subject site is zoned R-1-B and Section 205 of the Zoning Regulations allows child development centers in the R-1-B district if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment and subject to the following standards and requirements:

205.2 The center shall be capable of meeting all applicable code and licensing requirements.

The applicant has had personnel from the Department of Health visit the site for preliminary review and has been informed that the building can accommodate up to 30 children. If the application for the Special Exception is approved, the proposal will be further reviewed by the Department of Health and DCRA prior to obtaining its Certificate of Occupancy to operate the child development center.

205.3 The center shall be located and designed to create no objectionable traffic condition and no unsafe condition for picking up and dropping off children or elderly persons.

The subject property fronts on Alabama Avenue, a busy four-lane highway. To the rear of the property is a public alley between 36th Place and 36th Street. For the safety of the children and to preclude blocking traffic, drop-off and pick-up of children will be at the rear of the building via the alley. In order not to block access to or from adjacent residences, parents may park for short

periods at the rear of the adjacent Christian Praise Church. The elementary school operates between 9:00 am and 3:00 p.m., that is, after and before the opening and closing times of the center. Therefore, drop-off and pick-up of children at the center will not add to or impact traffic movements to and from the school. It is not envisioned that any traffic problems will be created by the proposed child-care center.

205.3 The center shall provide sufficient off-street parking spaces to meet the reasonable needs of teachers, other employees, and visitors.

Section 2101 of the Zoning Regulations requires 1 parking space per 4 teachers and other employees. The childcare center will have a total staff of 6 persons and therefore 2 parking spaces are required. The applicant is providing two parking spaces at the rear of the property, behind the play area. It is envisioned that children will be dropped-off and picked-up at the rear of the building along the alley and there will not be a need to park for any extended period along the alley. Additionally, the applicant has obtained permission from the church to use its parking area when additional parking spaces are needed. Ample on-street parking is available along Alabama Avenue and 36th Place, and Metrobus service is available along Alabama Avenue.

205.4 The center, including any outdoor play space provided, shall be located and designed so that there will be no objectionable impacts on adjacent or nearby properties due to noise or activity, or visual or other objectionable conditions.

The house on the subject property is located close to Alabama Avenue, leaving a large open space area to the rear for the children to play. The property is fenced on all sides except for the side adjacent to the Church. The two parking spaces are located outside the fenced area. The play area will not be visually objectionable, as there will not be any large play equipment, and the smaller equipment will be stored away and taken out only at playtime. The play area is located to the rear of the property and will be adjacent to the back yard of the adjacent residence. Due to the age differences, all the children in the center will not have outdoor play at the same time, and they will be supervised. For all these reasons the impact of noise or activity from the childcare center will have minimal impact on adjacent properties.

205.5 The Board may require special treatment in the way of design, screening of buildings, planting and parking areas, signs, or other requirement as it shall deem necessary to protect adjacent and nearby properties.

The existing appearance of the building will not be changed and will continue to present the appearance and sense of the residential community. Therefore, no screening of the building is required. At this time, the applicant is not proposing a sign to advertise the childcare center but has stated that he may request a sign permit sometime in the future. It is recommended that the future sign be small, discreet, and does not detract from the residential character of the neighborhood.

The childcare center will have minimal impact on adjacent properties and therefore will not need any special screening.

205.6 Any off-site play area shall be located so as not to result in endangerment to the individuals in attendance at the center in traveling between the play area and the center itself.

The Francis A. Gregory Regional Branch Library is located at 3660 Alabama Avenue, approximately 500 feet from the subject site. The applicant has coordinated with the library officials concerning the use of their outdoor play area and equipment. To access this facility, the children will not have to cross Alabama Avenue but will be escorted across 36th Place and proceed along the sidewalk to the library. Crossing 36th Place will not endanger the children, as it is a short, one-way street going south and mainly services only eight homes and the elementary school. The children are scheduled to go to the library near the middle of the day when the elementary school is in session and traffic is at it minimum. Therefore, this short walk will not endanger the children.

205.7 The Board may approve more than one (1) child/elderly development center in a square or within one thousand feet (1,000 ft.) of another child/elderly development center only when the Board finds that the cumulative effect of these facilities will not have an adverse impact on the neighborhood due to traffic, noise, operations, or other similar factors.

Southwest of the subject site at 3601 Alabama Avenue is the St. Timothy Nursery School, approximately 200 feet from the proposed center. This nursery school operates between 6:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. and accepts children ages 6 months to 12 years and has a current enrollment of 88 children. Although the hours of operation are nearly similar to those of the proposed center, the traffic movement will not be impacted, as the new center will not have drop-offs and pick-ups along Alabama Avenue. Most of the children attending St. Timothy's Nursery are dropped-off and picked-up at the Suitland Road entrance. Due to the small number of children of the proposed center, the combined operations of the St. Timothy's nursery and the elementary school will not significantly increase the impact of noise and traffic on the adjacent neighborhood.

Section 3104.1

The standard by which the BZA should approve a special exception is set forth in Section 3104.1 of the Zoning Regulations. The following demonstrates how the proposed child development center has met these standards:

. . . special exception will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.

The proposal upholds the general provisions of the R-1 zone as outlined in Section 200 that state:

> ***200.1*** ***The R-1 district is designed to protect quiet residential areas now developed with one-family detached and adjoining vacant areas likely to be developed for those purposes.***
>
> ***200.2*** ***The provisions of this chapter are intended to stabilize the residential areas and promote a suitable environment for family life . . .***

It is the aim of the Zoning Regulations and Map to develop this area with single-family detached units. This endeavor will not be jeopardized, as the proposed childcare center will not detract from this quiet residential area. Therefore, the intent, purpose, and integrity of the Zoning Regulations and Map will be maintained.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The application was reviewed by the Department of Public Works (Attachment 2) who found the proposed child development center would have no significant impact on local traffic or parking. They recommend that caution be exercised in transporting children to and from the library.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At its December 16, 2000 community meeting, ANC 7B voted to recommend approval of the requested special exception.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

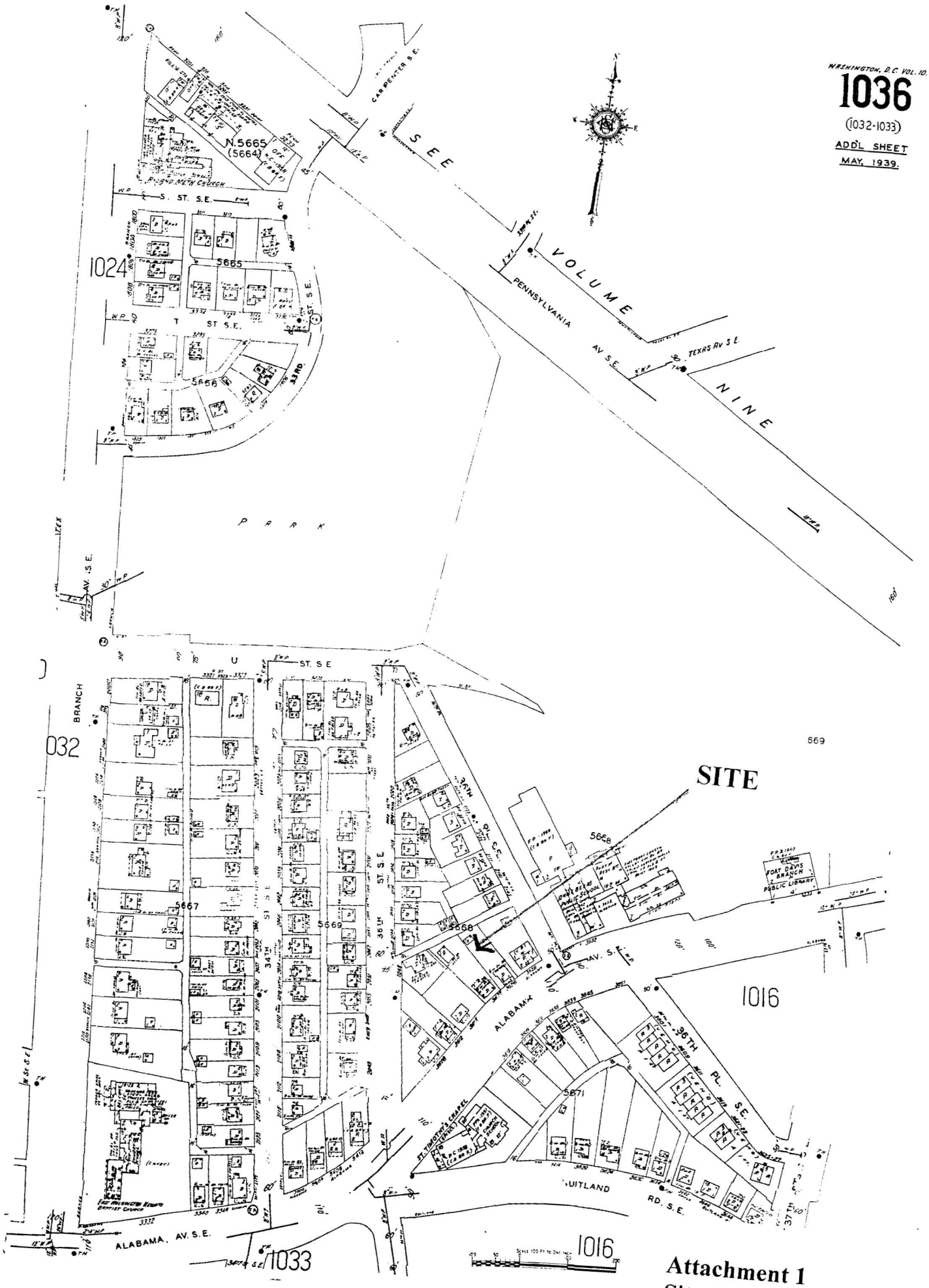
The proposed special exception for the childcare center will be an asset to the community, as it will provide a needed service to parents in the community. In addition, the house will be occupied and become a functioning building within the community. Although this childcare center is another institutional use in the community, its location, small size, and hours of operation will not negatively impact this quiet community. As demonstrated above, the application and meets the standards outlines in Section 205 for approval of a special exception. Additionally, the childcare center will be in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and the Zoning Map and will not adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood. The proposal is strongly supported by the ANC. Based on these facts, the Office of Planning recommends that the Board of Zoning Adjustment **APPROVE** the requested special exception with the condition that any future sign be no larger than 2 feet by 2 feet.

AA/mbr

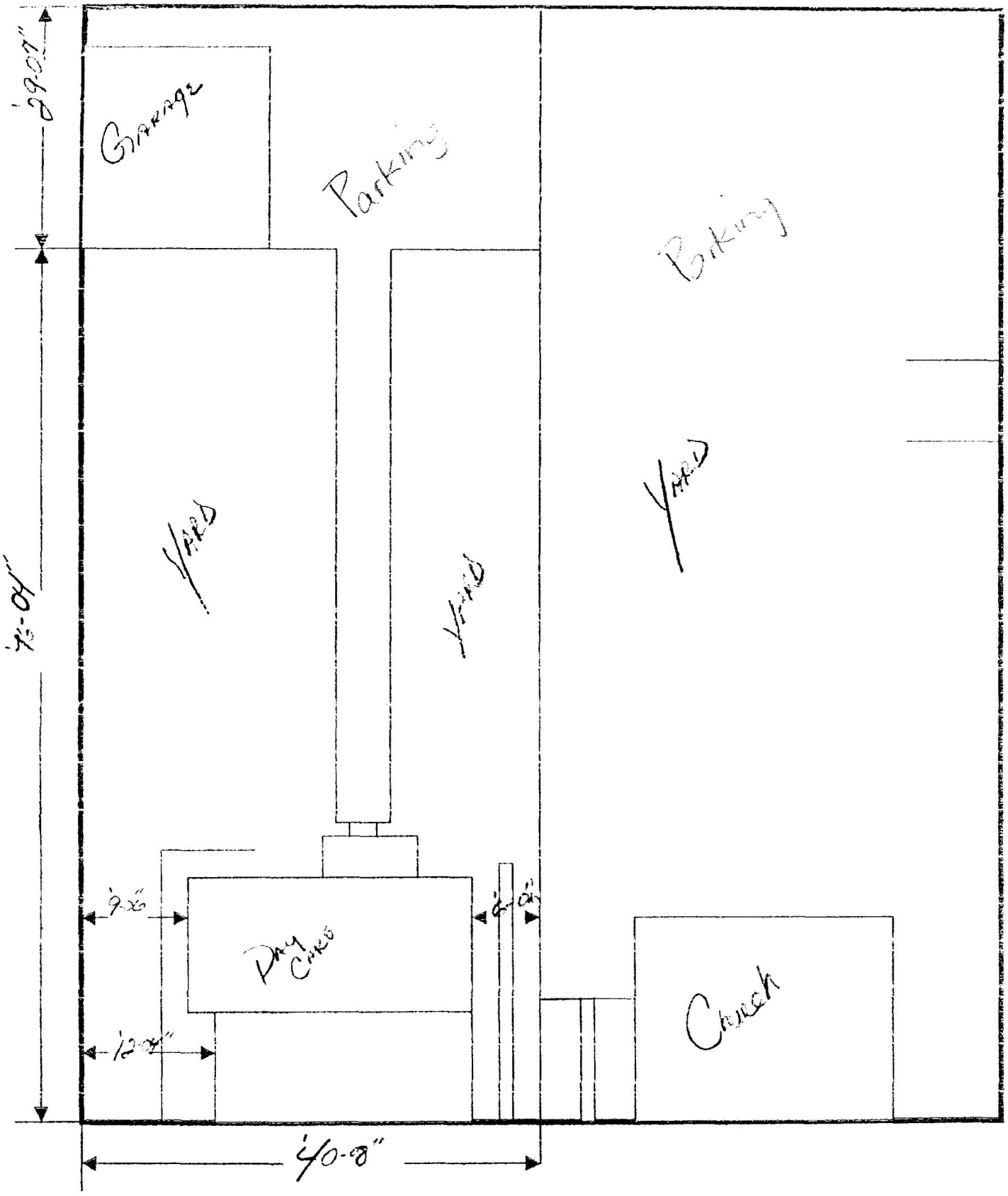
ATT: Attachment 1 – Site Location

Attachment 2 – Site Plan

Attachment 3 – Memorandum from DPW



Attachment 1
Site Location



Attachment 2

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
2000 - 14TH STREET, N.W.
7TH FLOOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009



REPLY TO:
OFFICE OF INTERMODAL PLANNING

MEMORANDUM

TO: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

RECEIVED
DEC 19 2000
OFFICE OF PLANNING

FROM: Kenneth G. Laden
Administrator

DATE: December 12, 2000

SUBJECT: BZA Application # 16665
Christian Praise Church – Child Care Center
3636 Alabama Avenue SE

The applicant proposes to locate a child care center at 3636 Alabama Avenue SE which would include 25 children and 6 care givers. Children would be dropped off and picked up through an alley at the rear of the facility, with access provided from 36th Street.

The Department has reviewed the above referenced application and finds that the proposed land use will have no significant impact on local traffic or parking. We recommend that the Child Care Center exercise caution in transporting the children to and from the outdoor play equipment at the Fort Davis Branch Library.

Attachment 3