GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING RECEIVED
2002 MAY 24 PM 3:41

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman

DATE: ~~June~~ MAY 24, 2002 26, ~~2002~~

SUBJECT: BZA Case 16875 Special Exception Request

APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: Brigitte L. Adams.
2300 Cathedral Avenue, N.W.
Square 2208, Lots 23-24

Relief Sought: Pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 the applicant is requesting a special exception for the weekday use of up to 17 available parking spaces by contract with the adjacent church (All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church) which owns the parking lot. The parking lot is in the R-4 zoned district.

Relief Sought Under: Subsection 213

Applicant's Justification:

The applicant is seeking to enhance the neighborhood by providing additional weekday parking in an area that has a serious parking shortage.

OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends the subject application be approved.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject site is in the Woodley Park Neighborhood of Ward One. The neighborhood contains moderate density residential development on both sides of Connecticut Avenue,

BZA
Case No. 16875
Exhibit No. 25

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16875
EXHIBIT NO.25

between 29th Street and Cathedral Avenue. Connecticut Avenue, which is located less than a block west of the site, contains high-density residential uses on both sides. The area has one of the largest single concentrations of high-density uses along the Connecticut Avenue Corridor. There is also a high-density residential area just northwest of the subject site, on both sides of Connecticut Avenue.

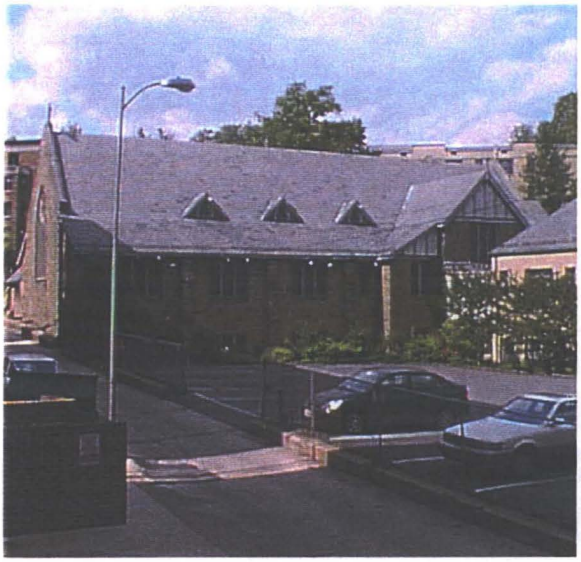
The subject application concerns the parking lot adjacent to and owned by the All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church, (Church) which has continuously been in operation at the subject site since 1913 when the land was purchased and developed. When the church was built, it was surrounded by open land. The area today is a compact community of row houses, large apartment buildings, small retail shops, the National Zoo and considerable vehicular traffic. Parking for residents, business owners, patrons and tourists are extremely limited.



The parking lot is finished and striped in accordance with D.C. Regulations. There are two entrances serving the parking lot, one into Woodley Place, and the other is a 15-foot public alley that runs parallel to Connecticut Avenue. The alley entrance is presently chained closed. The Church has landscaped the borders of both the east and west sides of the subject parking lot with gardens and trees. The east side of the lot fully abuts the Church rectory, which is divided from it by a fence. The entire parking lot, except the entrances, is Surrounded either by fencing or the Church building.



East entrance to parking lot, from Woodley Road.



West entrance to parking lot, from public alley.

AREA ZONING

The subject premises are in the R-4 Zone District. The R-4 districts are designed to include those areas now developed primarily with row dwellings, but within which there have been a substantial number of conversions of the dwellings into dwellings for two are more families. The majority of the land around the subject premises is zoned R-4 and is developed with row dwellings. There are two low-density commercial areas on Connecticut Avenue, which provides retail support to the subject site. The first is on the west side of the Connecticut Avenue, above Cathedral Avenue and is zoned C-2-A, and the second is less than one block to the south of the subject site, at Connecticut Avenue and Woodley Road. This area is zoned WP/C-2-B and contains small retail shops and restaurants. The purposes of the WP Overlay District are to provide for safe and efficient pedestrian movement by reducing conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular traffic, so as to improve access to retail services, the Metro rail station, and other uses in the area.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant, (The All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church) is seeking a special exception under §213 to use up to 17 parking spaces on a 21-space parking lot adjacent to and owned by the Church, for use by individual contract arrangement. The parking spaces would be available on weekdays. The Church only uses 4 of the parking spaces on a regular basis.



View of rear of church structures and parking lot.

Area business owners, on behalf of employees, have approached the church about the possibility of using portions of the Church's parking lot for employee parking. Additionally, the Woodley Park Community Association adopted a resolution supporting and encouraging the church's efforts to obtain the necessary approvals from the D.C. Government to allow its parking lot to be used by non-church persons, for weekday parking purposes. The Vestry, (the governing body of the Church) agreed to pursue obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for that purpose.

The Church intends to allow weekday parking on its accessory parking lot on a contract basis by area residents, business-owners and employees who work at nearby businesses. By entering into individual contracts, the Church will maintain control over the use of its parking lot, and require contact information regarding vehicle owners, in the event a vehicle needs to be moved. A monthly fee will be charged to each contract holder. Those with valid contracts will be allowed to park on the Church's parking lot between mid-night Sunday and mid-night Friday, excluding Christmas. Parking spaces will be leased on a month-to-month basis.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE APPLICATION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan set policies in support of general transportation objectives. Comprehensive Plan Section 502.2 (c) outlines a policy to "stimulate shopping, restaurant, and other retail activities, encourage increased, adequate short-term, on and off-street parking to meet the current and expanded needs of increased retail development while reducing traffic congestion in designated locations, including the provision of increased weekend on-street parking spaces in areas such as loading zones and commercial buildings entrances in the Downtown retail area."

The Comprehensive Plan Generalized Land Use Map depicts the subject site in the ***Moderate Density Residential Land Use*** category. Row houses and garden apartments are the predominant uses in this category. The portion of Connecticut Avenue (between Cathedral Avenue and Woodley Road) is developed with mid and high-rise apartment buildings. Woodley Place, which is east of the subject site, consists mostly of row houses.

The proposal will be consistent with the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, and the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations. If approved, the change will not affect the use of neighboring properties.

ZONING RELIEF

The proposed use of 17 of the Church's 21 parking spaces, by business-owners, employees and residents, through individual contract arrangement, during weekdays will require relief from the requirements of §213.

§ 213.2 –A parking lot shall be located in its entirety within two hundred feet (200 ft.) of an existing Commercial or Industrial district.

There are two commercial districts on Connecticut Avenue, in close proximity to the subject parking lot, however neither is within 200 feet. The first district is south of Woodley Road, and is approximately 750 feet from the southern-edge of Lot 24. The second commercial district is north of Cathedral Avenue, and approximately 900 feet from the Church.



Commercial district south of Woodley Road.

§ 213.3 – A parking lot shall be continuous to or separated only by an alley from a Commercial or Industrial district.



Commercial district north of Cathedral Avenue.

The subject parking lot **is not** continuous to or separated only by an alley from a Commercial or Industrial district. Neither of the commercial districts is within 200 feet of the Church, nor is the parking lot separated from either of the commercial district only by an alley. However, it is the owners of some of the businesses in the two referenced commercial districts, and their employees, who are seeking to contract parking arrangements with the Church, because the Woodley Park neighborhood lacks sufficient parking to accommodate the demand for parking spaces.

§ 213.4 – All provisions of chapter 23 of this title shall be complied with.

The proposed parking lot will satisfy the requirements of Chapter 23 of the Zoning Regulations. §2303 requires that:

(i) **The parking lot surface be a minimum of four inches in thickness and paved with material approved by DPW as being all weather impervious;**

The subject site has functioned as a parking lot for over twenty years. It meets all of the DPW standards for surface parking lots in the District of Columbia.

(ii) **No vehicle using the parking lot shall project over any lot line or building line.**

Vehicles using the parking lot will not project over any lot line or building line because the entire western perimeter of the lot is fenced in, with the exception of an entrance to the east/west alley. There are Church buildings, which define the parking lot to the north and south and a combination of fencing, parking blocks and the Church building to the north, which prevent vehicles parked on the parking lot from projecting over a lot line.

(iii) No other use be conducted on the subject site and no other structure stand on the lot except those uses or structures otherwise permitted in the R-4 District.

There will not be any other use conducted of the subject parking lot, during the weekday periods (mid-night Sundays to mid-night Fridays when the subject parking lot has a valid Certificate of Occupancy, and has functioned for parking purposes for over twenty years. There are no other structures on the lot, with the exception of a trash dumpster.

§ 213.5 – No dangerous or otherwise objectionable traffic conditions shall result from the establishment of the use, and the present character and future development of the neighborhood will not be affected adversely.

There is no history that the subject parking lot has caused dangerous or otherwise objectionable traffic conditions in the neighborhood. In addition, the Woodley Park Community Association adopted a resolution supporting and encouraging the Church's efforts to obtain the necessary approvals from the D.C. Government to open its parking lot for weekday use, by drivers in need of parking space.

§213.6 – The parking lot shall be reasonably necessary and convenient to other uses in the vicinity, so that the likely result will be reduction in overspill parking on neighborhood streets.

There is a critical shortage of parking spaces, (both public and private) in the Woodley Park Community. This situation is at its most extreme along the Connecticut Avenue Corridor. Because of its location, (one block to the east of Connecticut Avenue) the subject parking lot offers convenient parking opportunities for community business owners, merchants employees and some residents. If the Board approves the requested special exception, competition for parking spaces in the vicinity of Connecticut Avenue will be reduced by 17 spaces.

§213.7 – A majority of the parking spaces shall serve residential uses or short-term parking needs of retail, service and public facility uses in the vicinity.

All of the 17 available parking spaces will serve residential uses or short-term parking needs of nearby retail establishments. The parking spaces will be offered by individual contract arrangements.

DOES THE APPLICATION MEET THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION TEST?

It is obvious from field inspections that the area lacks adequate public and private parking. Based on the project description, the Church proposes to use 17 of its 21 parking spaces for use by business-owners, employees and residents, through individual contract arrangement. The 17 spaces are in excess of church parking needs, from mid-night Sundays to mid-night Fridays. During this period, the church only requires four of the 21 parking spaces on the lot.

Will the special exceptions be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map?

The applicant has satisfactorily provided support for the requested relief from the requirements of Section 3104 of the Zoning Regulations, by demonstrating that the proposed parking arrangement can be in harmony with the general purpose of the Zoning Regulations and will not tend to adversely affect adjacent properties.

Will the granting of the special exception tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map?

The granting of the special exception will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map. The subject parking lot is an approved parking lot, and has had a valid Certificate of Occupancy for over twenty years. There is no evidence of complaints from neighboring property owners, as a result of the operation of the parking lot. Additionally, it was members of the community, (Woodley Park Community Association) which adopted a resolution supporting and encouraging the church's efforts to obtain the necessary approvals from the D.C. Government to allow its parking lot to be used by non-church persons, for weekday parking purposes.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

On April 22, 2002, at its regular public meeting, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3C approved Resolution 2002-009, Resolution To Support All Souls Church Special Exception Request. The resolution referenced the Church's application to the Board requesting a special exception in order to provide weekday use of their parking lot by neighborhood/businesses; and stated that the extremely limited street parking in Woodley Park is further stressed by events at local businesses, as a result of which residents are often forced to search for street parking and to park far from their residence; the additional parking proposed by the Church will help alleviate the neighborhood parking shortage; and that the special exception request has the full support of the Woodley Park Community Association. Therefore, ANC 3C resolved to fully support the application of the All Souls Memorial Church for a special exception (16875) to allow

weekday use of their parking lot by neighborhood/businesses. The resolution was approved by ANC 3C by a unanimous vote, with a quorum present.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The District Division of Transportation (DDOT) supports the proposed parking arrangement between the All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church and business owners, employees and residents in the Woodley Park community. It is DDOT's position that there is a serious overflow of vehicular traffic in the Woodley Park community, generated by customers of retail establishments on Connecticut Avenue, business owners and employees of those establishments. Because parking is at a premium in the area, overflow traffic is forced into residential areas, creating competition between residents and visitors. If the BZA approves the referenced parking arrangement, it would help to alleviate some of the parking shortages in the community.

OP SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is OP's conclusion that although the applicant has not fully met all of the criteria, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104, Section 213 for special exception relief, the addition of 17 parking spaces in an area where parking is at a premium, would serve a greater need in the community.

The applicant has demonstrated that the relief will not affect adversely the use of neighboring property and that the requested can be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.