GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 12, 2004

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director

SUBJECT: Board of Zoning Adjustment Case No. 17226
ZIPS Cleaners – 4418-20 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

Summary

The applicant is seeking special exception relief to expand an existing dry cleaning establishment to more than 5,000 square feet per §743.2 of the Zoning Regulations. The Office of Planning **recommends approval** of the requested relief based on the analysis of the special exception tests below.

Site and Area Description

The subject property is located at 4418-20 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Square 1971, Lot 815. The lot is 7000 square feet, of which the building occupies 100%. The building contains two stories. Currently, the first story is shared by ZIPS Cleaners and a hair salon. There is a parking lot associated with this building across the alley to the west. The subject property and the properties to the north, south, and east along Connecticut Avenue are zoned C-3-A. Properties in the neighborhood to the west are zoned R-1-B. This block of Connecticut Avenue has a wide variety of commercial uses. To the north are high-density residential uses and to the west is a low-density residential neighborhood. See Figure 1.

Project Description

The application is for the expansion of an existing dry cleaning establishment. The current use occupies 4,907 square feet of the ground floor. Approval of this application will result in expansion of the dry cleaning business into the space occupied by the existing hair salon to a total 6,066 square feet. Currently, ZIPS Cleaners has twelve parking spaces in the parking lot across the alley. If the expansion takes place, the applicant will acquire two more spaces currently used by the hair salon. There are no exterior changes proposed to the building.

BZA
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Figure 1: Site Area

Special Exception

The applicant is seeking a special exception for the expansion of an existing dry cleaning establishment to more than 5,000 square feet per §743.2 of the Zoning Regulations. Since the building is existing there are no other zoning issues. Enlargement of a dry cleaning establishment in the C-3 zone requires compliance with the standards of §729 of the Zoning Regulations in addition to the special exception criteria of §3104. These criteria are listed below with staff analysis.

Section 729

1. Any noise or odor shall not adversely affect the neighborhood.

The expansion of the existing use by 1,159 square feet will not substantially alter the noise or odor produced by the establishment. The neighboring area is commercial in nature, including a Burger King, a car wash, and a hotel in the immediate vicinity. OP is aware of no complaints from these neighbors, nor from residential uses further away, regarding the noise or odor from the establishment.



Figure 2: Views of Completed Building

2. Dangerous or otherwise objectionable traffic conditions shall not be created.
The current use leases twelve parking spaces in the parking lot directly across the alley. The hair salon uses two more that will be taken over by ZIPS. The lot is clearly marked and adequate for day-to-day use of the cleaners as well as for meeting the zoning parking regulations.

The neighborhood has expressed concern about double parking on Connecticut Avenue. The street is clearly marked as a "no parking" area, but neighbors report unauthorized short-term parking and double parking. A potential condition of approval may be signage at the front of the building directing cars to the parking in the rear.

A traffic report has been submitted by the applicant. The report concludes that there will be no additional traffic as a result of the proposed change and that no objectionable traffic conditions exist or will result. This report has been forwarded to DDOT, however no response has been received as of the date of this report.

3. The Board may impose additional requirements as to the location of the building and other structures, the location of equipment, and other requirements as the Board deems necessary to protect adjacent or nearby property.
As the building is existing and no changes are being proposed to the exterior, OP has no recommendations for additional requirements on the applicant.

Based on the same arguments above, OP believes that the application also meets the standards listed under §3104. The application is determined to be in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and will not have a significant adverse impact on the neighboring properties.

ANC Recommendation

The ANC is scheduled to meet on this application on October 18, 2004. A report should be forwarded to the Office of Zoning prior to the public hearing. Currently, the main issues that have been brought to the attention of OP are the signage for and access to the parking in the rear of the building as well as double parking in the front of the building.

Agency Comments

A copy of the traffic report has been sent to DDOT and a response has been requested. As of the date of this report, no response has been received from DDOT.

Recommendation

The Office of Planning concludes that the applicant has met the burden of proof, pursuant to 11 DCMR 411.11 and 3104.1 of the Zoning Regulations, for the granting of the requested special exception. The request can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent, purpose, and integrity of the Zoning Regulations.

The Office of Planning **recommends approval** of the requested relief by the Board of Zoning Adjustment to allow the expansion of ZIPS Cleaners per §743.2 of the Zoning Regulations to a total of 6,066 square feet at 4418-20 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

AA/tp