GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Jerrily R. Kress, FAIA
Director
Office of Zoning

FROM: Kenneth G. Laden
Associate Director for Transportation Planning

DATE: January 3, 2005

SUBJECT: **BZA Application No. 17261 – Special Exception Application by Union Baptist Church to Construct an Accessory Parking Lot at 1419 Jackson Street, NE, Square 4015, Lot 30, in a R-1-B District**

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the subject application and material for the above site. DDOT does not support the application. This memorandum addresses the transportation aspects of the proposal.

The applicant, the Brookland Union Baptist Church (Church), proposes to construct an accessory parking lot on the subject property, currently a vacant grass lot. The site is located near the intersection of 14th and Jackson Street, NE in the Brookland community. Public alleys abut the site to the west and south, and a private residence is located to the east. The adjacent community is generally comprised of single-family homes with the Slowe Elementary School located across the street from the Church on 14th Street, NE. The applicant seeks to construct the accessory parking lot to provide parking spaces for church members and will be available for use by other members of the community.

The project site is located in an R-1-B district and the applicant seeks a special exception as listed under *§214 Accessory Parking Spaces,* to establish the accessory parking lot. Upon reviewing the application DDOT is concerned the proposed project may require special exception approval as listed under *§213, Parking Lots (R-1).* The applicant statement (Attached) includes the following statement:

> "The parking lot could be used for many outside activities and would help subside or to alleviate street congestion. In addition, there is a public school in close

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> proximity; the personnel and parents of the school would be welcomed to use the facility for their convenience on a regular basis."

DDOT requests the Board to make a determination if the proposed use of the property qualifies as an *accessory parking* lot for church members only, or as a *parking lot* available for the general public.

DDOT staff conducted several site visits. On street unrestricted parking spaces were available on 14th and Irving Street adjacent to the church and on Irving Street and Jackson Street adjacent to Slowe Elementary School during the weekday visits. On Sunday site visits, these same parking spaces were mostly occupied during church service hours. The proposed parking lot is located to the rear of the church property across a public alley, with vehicular access from Jackson Street, NE.

A four-foot (4') swing-door is proposed for the rear of the lot to provide pedestrian access to the rear of the church, across a public alley. DDOT is concerned with a potential site distance problem at this location as the door opening is hidden from vehicles in the alley. The main floor of the church is at a higher grade than the alley at the rear, thus an existing three-foot (3') wide handicap ramp, without handrails, provides the only pedestrian access to the church from the parking lot. This entry point would have to be improved by widening the ramp to a minimum width of six-feet (6') and installing handrails to comply with ADA Regulations prior to DDOT approving pedestrian access at this location from the proposed parking lot.

The project calls for paving the entire property with asphalt, and surround the perimeter with raised curbs and a chained linked fence. The design of the lot is not appropriate for a residential community as details for proposed screening, landscaping, or setbacks were not shown on submitted site plans. The proposed parking lot has 90° angled parking spaces located on the east and west edges, with a 40' wide drive lane in the middle. The drive aisle can be reduced to a minimum width of 20', thus providing an opportunity for the applicant to redesign the site and narrow the overall parking lot to 60' instead of the proposed 78' width. The applicant can provide a landscaped buffer between the adjacent residential properties with an additional nine-feet (9') of space on each side of the parking lot. The proposed entrance should be shifted to the south to minimize any queuing of vehicles onto Jackson Street, NE as they wait to enter the lot.

As listed in *§2117.11, "...landscaping with trees and shrubs shall be provided for all open parking spaces provided on a lot where there are more than ten (10) parking spaces provided collectively as accessory to any building or structure. The landscaping shall cover a minimum of 5% of the total area devoted to parking, including aisles and driveways."* The parking lot is also required to provide screening from all contiguous residential properties by a *"solid brick or stone*

wall at least 12-inches (12") thick and forty-two inches (42") high, or by evergreen hedges or trees that are thickly planted and maintained and that are at least forty-two inches (42") in height when planted", as listed in *§2117.12.* In addition, the applicant must provide details on the proposed lighting used to illuminate the parking lot, and minimize glare on adjacent residential properties.

The proposed use of the site only as an accessory parking lot for church members is not clear by the application, nor is the hours of operation, as the adjacent uses will also be allowed to use the parking lot based on the applicant statement. DDOT requests the Board to make a determination if the application on file is for an accessory parking lot or for a general parking lot. The proposed design of the parking lot does not reflect the residential zoning use of the site or the character of the immediate area, and does not meet the design criteria detailed in the Zoning Regulations that outlines the requirements to screen the parking lot from adjacent residential properties. Accordingly, DDOT does not support the application.

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DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO:	FROM:
Jerrily R. Kress	Lewis C. Booker
COMPANY:	DATE:
Zoning Commission	January 4, 2005
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PHONE NUMBER:	SENDER'S FAX NUMBER:
(202) 727-6311	(202) 671-0617
RE:	YOUR PHONE NUMBER:
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