GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Ellen McCarthy, Interim Director

DATE: April 19, 2005

SUBJECT: BZA Application No. 17305- Special Exception Request (Southeast D.C. Partners) 4605 2826 Q Street, S.E., Square 5583, Lot 804

APPLICATION

This application filed by Southeast D.C. Partners requests a special exception pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1 and Sections 334 and 352, to establish a community service center in the R-5-A District.

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The Office of Planning recommends **approval** of the special exception application.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject property is in the Randle Highlands neighborhood of Ward 7, located at 2826 Q Street, S.E., Square 5583, Lot 804. The site is at the northeast intersection of 28 Place and Q Street. Pennsylvania Avenue bounds the site to the north Q, Street to the south, 30th Street to the east and 28th Place to the west. The property encompasses 5,166 square feet of land area, with dimensions of 103.32 feet in depth and 50 feet in width. The property slopes gradually approximately ten (10) feet from northeast to southwest and there is a 15-foot public alley on the east side of subject property.

The subject lot was improved in the 1940's with a four-story apartment building. There is also a five-space parking lot on the east side of the property abutting the alley.

Moderate density residential structures are the predominant use in the Randle Highlands community. There is a mix of housing in the community, including garden apartments, row and semi-detached dwellings, as well as some detached units. The subject block is

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between two commercial nodes on Pennsylvania Avenue; one at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues; and the other (Penn Branch Shopping Center) is at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Branch Avenues.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to renovate the subject building and convert it into a community service center to benefit children and adults in the surrounding community. The top floor will be converted to living space with center program space on the remaining floors. The center will offer adult and youth social services, including food and nutrition classes, job and computer training courses, finance and budgeting classes, after school tutoring, arts and crafts, dance instructions, and basketball games.

The center will generally operate Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

The center is anticipated to serve an average of 75 persons daily. The center manager and family of three will live on the third floor of the building. The core staff of the center will include the manager and his wife, an executive director, program manager, and a volunteer recruiter.

Volunteers from across the country will run many of the programs at the center. The volunteers will lease a van for their transport needs. The applicant anticipates there will be approximately 24 volunteer staff on-site at any single period.

The applicant proposes to use an existing five-space on-site parking area, (which is on the east side of the building adjacent to the public alley) to meet the parking needs.

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The subject site is zoned R-5-A, which is a general residence districts designed to permit flexibility of design by permitting in a single district, all types of urban residential development if they conform to height, density and area requirements established for these districts under Chapter 4 of this title.

ANALYSIS

The building was constructed in 1942 and does not meet all the requirements of the current Zoning Regulations as demonstrated in the table below.

ITEM	EXISTING CONDITION	R-5-A	PROVIDED BY PROPOSED	VARIANCE DEVIATION/PERCENT

		REQUIREMENT	CONSTRUCTION	
Lot Area	5,166 square feet	N/A	5,166 square feet	N/A
Lot Width	50.0 feet	40 feet	50.0 feet	N/A
Lot Occupancy	54%	40	54%	14%
FAR	1.7	.9	1.7	1.53
Rear Yard	12.5 feet	20 feet	12.5 feet	7.5 feet
Side yard	27.75	8 feet	27.75	N/A

Parking Requirements

Section 2100 of the Zoning Regulations does not specify parking requirements for a community service center. Currently, there are five on-site parking spaces on the east side of the subject property. The applicant deems the existing parking spaces as sufficient to accommodate the parking needs of the proposed community service center. The Board could use its discretion to determine if the existing parking spaces are sufficient to mitigate any adverse impact on the adjacent community.

The applicant expects the center to serve approximately 75 people per day. A majority of the adults live in close proximity to the center and will walk, and many of the children will be picked up and returned home by a bus provided by the center.

The center will host a dinner once a month for neighborhood mothers (Moms Night Out and the applicant expects a maximum of four mothers to drive to the dinner.

The applicant proposes to use four of the parking spaces for staff and the fifth parking space will be reserved for visitors or as a pickup and drop-off space for the center's vans. There is a 15-passenger van owned by the applicant, and an 8-passenger van owned one of the volunteer that is available to the applicant for transporting center clients to and from activity sites. The vans will only be parked at the center for short period of time. There are adequate parking spaces on public streets surrounding area (without parking regulations) to accommodate any overflow traffic to the center.

352 Special Exceptions

352.1 Any use or structure permitted as a special exception in R-4 Districts under §§ 332.1 and 333 through 335 shall be permitted as a special exception in the R-5 District if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104.

The subject building in which the community service center will be located is in the R-5-A District, a district that permits the construction of those institutions and semi-public buildings that would be compatible with adjoining residential uses and that are excluded from the more restrictive Residence Districts. Community service centers shall be

permitted in the R-5-A District by special exception, if approved by the Board if they meet the requirements in Sections 334 and 352 of the Zoning Regulations.

334 Community Service Centers

334.1 A community Service Center to accommodate organizations created for the purpose of improving the social or economic will-being of residents of the neighborhood in which the center is proposed to be located that may include but not be limited to centers for job training, family counseling, consumer cooperatives, and such other facilities as are similar in nature and purpose, shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-4 District if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.

The three organizations combined their resources and created the Southeast D.C. Partners, for the purpose of providing community adult and youth social services to the residents of the Randle Highlands neighborhood.

Student volunteers will operate many of the center's programs. The volunteers are college students who will volunteer to work with the children of the neighborhood, during school breaks and in the summertime. The volunteers will stay in one of four dormitory rooms that will be located on the third floor of the center. A typical stay for a group of volunteers is expected to be about 4 days, and the total amount of time the applicant expects that the dormitory rooms will be in use throughout a year is about 16 weeks. The number of volunteers who will stay in the dormitory will range anywhere from 3 to 36, and the applicant expects an average of about 24 volunteers to stay at one time. There will be 36 bunk beds available for used by volunteers who visit the site from out of town. When no volunteers are visiting the site, the dormitory rooms will not be in use.

334.2 A community service center shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring properties because of noise or other objectionable conditions.

The adjacent and surrounding community will not be negatively impacted by noise or other conditions at the proposed community service center. All center activities will be inside the building. Most programs at a community center, (education, job skill training and resume building classes, computer lab/library/media center) by their very nature, are not excessively noisy. Therefore, normal sounds that occur inside the building will be buffered from neighboring properties by the structure. The exception will be the large two-story room that will be used for basketball games, general sports, and recreation and dance studio. The applicant will use insulation on the walls and ceiling to reduce the likelihood these activities might become objectionable to neighboring properties because of noise. Further, there will not be windows in the recreation portion of the building.

334.3 No structural changes shall be made except those required by other municipal laws or regulations.

The applicant does not plan to make any structural changes to the brick exterior of the subject building. The interior will be modified to accommodate the programs. Proposed modifications to the interior will meet municipal laws and regulations.

334.4 The use shall be reasonably necessary or convenient to the neighborhood in which it is proposed to be located.

The proposed community service center is intended to serve the immediate and surrounding Randle Highland neighborhood with social services that are currently lacking in the community. There is a sufficient amount of multi-family buildings located in close proximity to the subject center, with residents that can take advantage of the programs proposed for the center. The location of the proposed center is conveniently located one block from Pennsylvania Avenue, which is a principal transportation arterial and a Metro bus route.

334.5 A community service center shall not be organized for profit, and no part of its net income shall inure to the benefit of any shareholder or individual.

The proposed community service center will be a not- for- profit organization with 501(C) 3 certification.

DOES THE APPLICATION MEET THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION TEST

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

Yes. Special exception uses are uses considered compatible with the underlining uses in a particular zone district, but which the Board must review. Community Service Centers are permitted by special exception in the R-5 District, if they can meet the requirements in Section 332.1 and 333 through 335 of the Zoning Regulations. The requested special exception will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Map

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

No. The requested special exception if granted will not tend to adversely affect the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Map. The site of the proposed community service center currently contains a vacant multi-family apartment building that is currently vacant and not contributing to the community.

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DDOT)

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 7B, at its regularly scheduled meeting, held in March 2005 voted to support the requested special exception, with two conditions:

(1) A second means of egress from the 4th floor; and

(2) A safeguard for the certificate of occupancy that if ownership of the building changed, the certificate of occupancy would remain the same, and the building would not be used for other purposes.

The proposal to renovate the building and convert is into an attractive community service center is supported by the community because there is a need for the services the center will provide.

OP SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the application submitted by the Southeast D.C. Partners, requesting a special exception to permit a community service center in a R-5-A District, the Office of Planning recommends that the Board **approve** the application. The Office of Planning finds that the applicant has satisfactorily met all the tests specified in Section 3104.1, and subsections 334 and 352 and concluded the application will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.

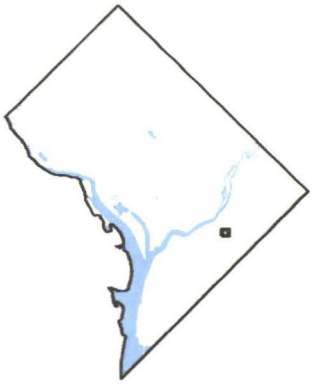
The Office of Planning supports the applicant's position that five on-site parking spaces are sufficient for the proposed community service center.

The Office of Planning further supports condition (1) proffered by ANC 7B, regarding a second means of egress. Regarding condition (2) if the building change ownership, the new owner can reuse the property for any matter-of-right use permitted in the R-5-A District. However, any non-permitted use will require a special exception by the Board. Therefore, OP does not support condition (2).



OPID0005794

Aerial Oblique Photos
BZA Application # 17303



★ ★ ★ **Government of the**
District of Columbia
Anthony A. Williams, Mayor

Office of Planning ~ March 24, 2005

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