

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning, and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe
Associate Director

DATE: March 8, 2016

SUBJECT: BZA Case No.19187– 1212-1218 4th Street, NW

APPLICATION

1212-1216 4th Street, LLC (the “Applicant”), requests variances from lot area requirements under § 401.11, lot occupancy requirements under § 403.2, and a special exception from the nonconforming use requirements under § 2003, to allow the expansion of existing residential building from two dwelling units to 26 dwelling units with nine parking spaces and conversion of office to retail or service use in the R-4 District at premises 1212-1218 4th Street N.W. (Square 513, Lot 155 and 156). Proposed development includes:

- 22 dwelling units;
- 26 parking spaces;
- 15 long-term bicycle parking space; and
- 760 square feet of retail.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation’s capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District’s multimodal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District’s transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive, multi-administration review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

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- In order to accommodate loading without backing in maneuvers, the Applicant had to redesign the surface parking lot, which resulted in a net loss of three parking spaces from the revised submission on 2/29/16; and
- The amount of proposed parking spaces exceeds zoning requirements by 18 spaces.

Mitigations

DDOT has no objection to the requested variances and exception.

Continued Coordination

The Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT outside of the Board of Zoning Adjustment process on the following matters:

- The design of bay window and building projections along Ridge Street and 4th Street; and
- The final design of the 25-foot and a quarter-inch curb cut proposed for access to loading and parking from Ridge Street, which exceeds DDOT's 24-foot standard.

These elements will require approval through DDOT's public space permitting process.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Site Design

Site design, which includes site access, loading, and public realm design, plays a critical role in determining a proposed action's impact on the District's infrastructure. While transportation impacts can change over time, the site design will remain constant throughout the lifespan of the proposed development, making site design a critical aspect of DDOT's development review process. Accordingly, new developments must provide a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience, enhance the public realm, and serve as positive additions to the community.

Site Access

The Applicant proposes closing existing curb cuts along 4th Street and Ridge Street and proposes a new curb cut on Ridge Street to allow for vehicular access to underground and surface parking lot located at rear yard. Primary pedestrian access is located at an entrance on 4th Street and a secondary entrance will be located at the rear of the site.

Loading

DDOT's practice is to accommodate vehicle loading in a safe and efficient manner, while at the same time preserving safety across non-vehicle modes and limiting any hindrance to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm. This often results in loading being accessed through an alley network.

The Applicant proposes trash pick-up to occur in the rear yard via the proposed curb cut off Ridge Street. The Applicant submitted truck turning analysis to DDOT on 3/3/16 that includes truck turning

diagrams showing that truck maneuvers can accommodate movements without backing into public space consistent with DDOT standards.

In addition, the truck analysis diagram showed a revised 25-foot and quarter-inch curb cut in lieu of the 20-foot curb opening showing in the Applicant's drawings submitted on 2/29/16. The 25-foot and quarter-inch curb opening is not consistent with DDOT's minimum standard of 24-feet. The Applicant is expected to continue coordination on the final design of curb cut through DDOT's permitting process.

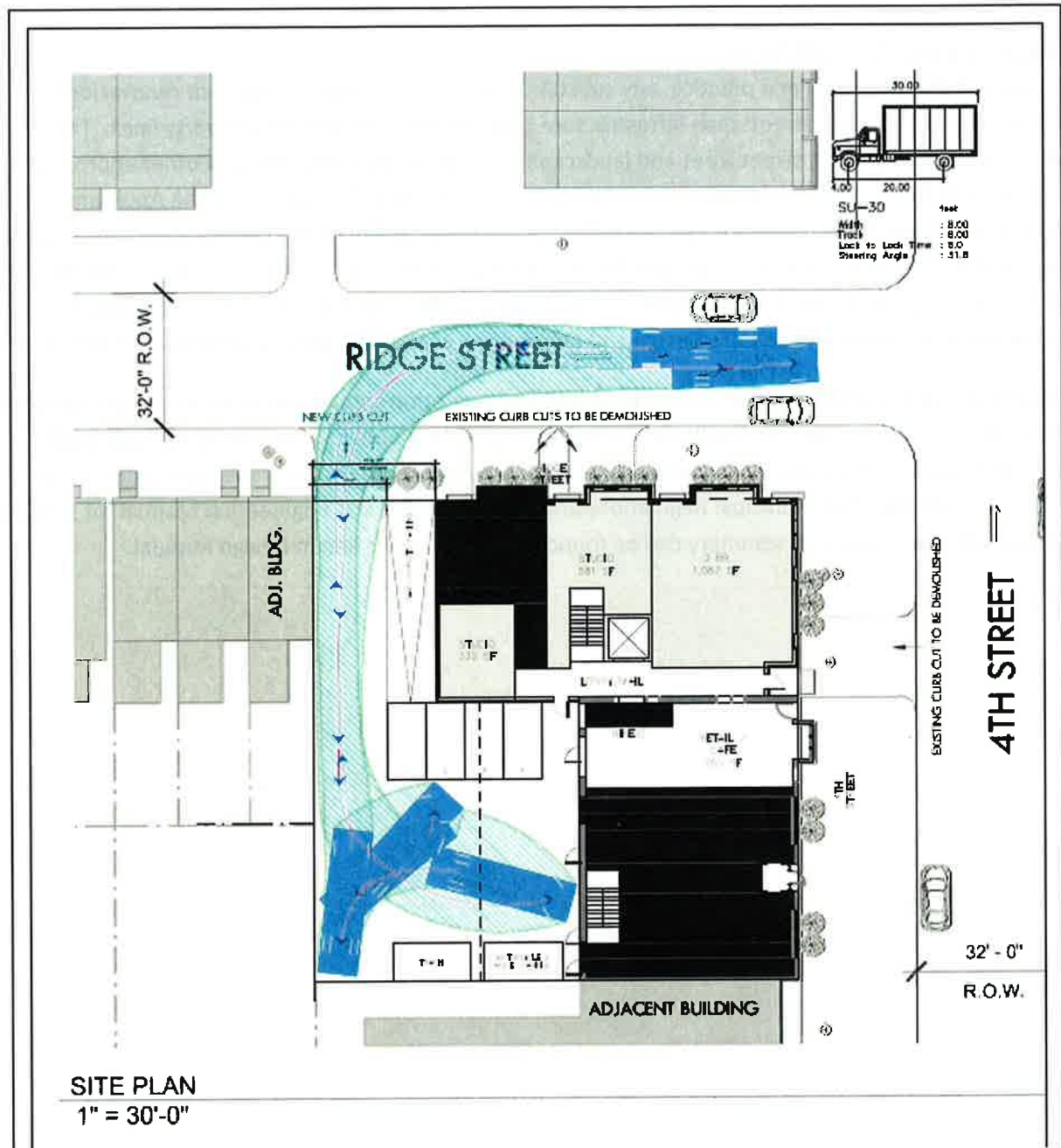


Figure 1 Truck Turning Analysis (Source: Gorove/ Slade)

Off-Street Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, and price/supply of parking spaces. However, in urban areas, other factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high quality transit, frequency of transit service, and proximity to transit.

As mentioned, the Applicant submitted truck turning movements that revised the number of surface parking spaces from seven to four spaces. In total, the Applicant is proposing 26 parking spaces to accommodate residential and retail uses, which exceeds zoning requirements by 18 spaces.

Streetscape and the Public Realm

In line with District policy and practice, any substantial new building development or renovation is expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines. This includes curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site. As part of this process, the Applicant must work closely with DDOT to ensure that the design of the public realm meets current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape for public users needing to access the property or circulating around it. The Applicant may refer to the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual for specific controls of public space.

DDOT's lack of objection to these zoning variances and exception should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. The Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process for approval of the curb cut and bay window projections. The Applicant may refer to the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual for specific controls of public space. A summary can be found in DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual.

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