

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: April 12, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 19237 – 3700 14th Street, NW

APPLICATION

Wacap LLC (the “Applicant”), requests a variance from the off-street parking requirements under § 2101.1, to allow the construction of a four-story residential building with four dwelling units above an existing restaurant in C-2-A District at premises 3700 14th Street, (Square 2692, Lot 43). The Applicant is requesting relief from the two parking spaces that are required by zoning.

RECOMMENDATION

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 review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The site has a Building Restriction Line (BRL) that is 15 feet from the property line. The area between the property line and the (BRL) is regulated as public space;
- The Applicant is requesting relief from two parking spaces as required by zoning; however, the Applicant is showing two proposed parking spaces on site plans dated 1/28/16 that will not be part of the final design;
- Public space is currently used for trash storage and parking, which is not allowed unless permitted; and

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia

- The Applicant is proposing a sidewalk café that must be approved by the Public Space Committee.

Mitigations

DDOT has no objections to the requested variance provided that the Applicant restores the public space between the Building Restriction Line (BRL) and property line to landscaping.

Continued Coordination

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

- Final design of sidewalk café along Spring Road and bay window projections on 14th Street.

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

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

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.

The Applicant is requesting relief from the zoning required two parking spaces; however, the Applicant shows two proposed parking spaces that are located in public space. Per the Applicant's representative, these parking spaces are shown in error and not considered part of the final design. DDOT expects the Applicant to restore the public space to landscaping.

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.

The site has a Building Restriction Line (BRL) that is 15 feet from the property line. The area between the (BRL) and the property line is regulated as public space. This area is currently used for trash storage and parking, which requires permit approval. The Applicant should include provisions for trash storage on the property and restore the area between the BRL and the property line to landscaping. In addition, the Applicant is showing provisions for outdoor seating in public space along Spring Road and bay window projections from the second floor along 14th Street. The Applicant is required to seek approval for these items through DDOT's permitting process. Final designs of bay windows and outdoor café will be coordinated during the permitting process.

DDOT's lack of objection to this zoning 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 the sidewalk café and bay windows. 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 the Public Realm Design Manual.

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