

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: May 31, 2016

SUBJECT: BZA Case No.19271 – 4800 Meade Street NE. (Ron Brown Collegiate Preparatory High School)

APPLICATION

The District of Columbia Department of General Services (the “Applicant”), requests a special exception from the off-street parking space requirements under §2108, to operate a public high school in the R-2 District at premises 4800 Meade Street NE (Square 5159, Lot 801). The Applicant is seeking relief of 56 parking spaces from the 142 parking spaces that are required by zoning which will serve 100 staff and support auditorium uses.

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 86 existing parking spaces;
- Approximately 270 parking spaces of the 431 on-street parking spaces are available when staff and auditorium uses could overlap;
- Most of the streets surrounding the site have Residential Parking Permit (RPP) restrictions;
- The Applicant is not showing long and short-term bicycle parking spaces; and,
- The Applicant has not submitted a Transportation Demand Management Plan.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.19271

DDOT has no objection to requested special exception with the following conditions:

- Provide way finding information on all media (website, fliers, mailers, etc.) used to advertise events at the auditorium to encourage the use of non-auto modes of transportation, and provide directions to the campus using transit and other non-auto modes; and
- Per Zoning Regulations of 2016, provide 24 long-term bicycle parking spaces securely located on site, protected from the elements, and 70 short-term bicycle parking spaces located in public space.

Continued Coordination

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

- Public space, including curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks and lead walks, and other features within the public rights of way, are expected to be designed and built to DDOT standards.

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 site is bounded by Meade Street to the south, 48th Street to the west, 49th Street to the east. Deanwood Recreation center directly abuts the site to the north. Vehicular access to the parking lot at the rear of the site is proposed from existing curb cut at 49th Street. Primary pedestrian and bicycle access is proposed from Meade Street and secondary access is located at the rear of the site from the parking lot. Truck access for kitchen deliveries and trash pick-up is proposed to occur from an existing curb cut at 48th Street. Access to main delivery zone is proposed from the parking lot 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.

Trash pick-up and kitchen deliveries are proposed to occur from the loading facility located at the southwest corner of the site. The Applicant has proposed a redesign of this area and provided truck turning diagrams to ensure that backup maneuvers do not occur in public space, which DDOT supports.

The Applicant proposes to use the main loading facility located at the rear of the site for large deliveries that consists of school supplies and for access for emergency services vehicles. The Applicant has provided truck turning diagrams to ensure that the parking lot can accommodate truck turning maneuvers without backing out across public space or impacts to parking spaces.

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.

The Applicant is seeking relief for 56 parking spaces from the 142 parking spaces that are required by zoning. Zoning requires the Applicant to provide two parking spaces for each three teachers (100 staff; 67 parking spaces) and 1 parking space for every 10 seats in the auditorium (750 seats; 75 parking spaces). The site has 86 existing off-street parking spaces, which is sufficient for either use separately. DDOT would expect the demand for parking to be highest when staff and auditorium uses overlap during the day.

To determine if the streets surrounding the site have the capacity to meet parking demands generated by the requested special exception, the Applicant performed a parking occupancy study during the week of May 2, 2016 that included an inventory of existing curbside signage within two blocks of the site.

Of note, the majority of streets surrounding the zoned Residential Parking Permit (RPP) from 7:00AM to 8:30PM and the Applicant expects the auditorium to be in use during the times of RPP restrictions.

The site is located approximately 0.2-miles, approximately a five-minute walk, from the Deanwood Metro Station that serves the Orange line. A metro bus bay is located at the Deanwood Metro Station, which serves the following routes:

- R12 – Kenilworth Avenue Line
- U7 – Deanwood to Minnesota Avenue Station Line
- V14 – District Heights – Seat Pleasant Line
- W4 – Deanwood – Alabama Avenue Line

Bicycle Facilities

The District is committed to enhancing bicycle access by ensuring consistent investment in bicycle infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including bicycling trips.

Per discussions with the Applicant and to serve bicycle needs, DDOT expects the Applicant to provide long and short-term bicycle parking spaces in accordance with Zoning Regulations of 2016, subtitle C, § 802; 24 long-term bicycle parking spaces (1 space for every 7,500 square-feet of gross floor area) securely located on site, protected from the elements, and 70 short-term bicycle parking spaces (1 space for every 2,000 square feet of gross floor area; after the first 50 bicycle parking spaces are provided for a use, additional parking spaces are provided at half of the specified ratio) located in public space. The Applicant is expected to pursue approval of short-term bicycle parking through DDOT's public space permitting process. Locations of the short-term bicycle parking spaces will be coordinated during the permitting process.

Transportation Demand Management

DDOT requires the Applicant to produce a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan to help mitigate an action's transportation impacts. TDM is a set of strategies, programs, services, and physical elements that influence travel behavior by mode, frequency, time, route, or trip length in order to help achieve highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation facilities. In the District, this typically means implementing infrastructure or programs to maximize the use of mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods.

As discussed, the Applicant has not submitted a TDM plan. To minimize parking demand, in particular where staff and auditorium uses could overlap, DDOT requests the following measures to be included in the Applicant's TDM plan:

- Provide way finding information on all media (website, fliers, mailers, etc.) used to advertise events at the auditorium to encourage the use of non-auto modes of transportation, and provide directions to the campus using transit and other non-auto modes; and,
- Provide 24 long-term bicycle parking spaces securely located on site, protected from the elements and 70 short-term bicycle parking spaces located in public space.

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.

This review pertains only to zoning issues and does not consider potential impacts to District owned public space. DDOT's lack of objection to these zoning variances should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. If any portion of the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. 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.

SZ:rj