


GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Project Review Manager 

DATE: January 26, 2018

SUBJECT: **BZA Case No. 19651** – 2910 Pennsylvania Avenue SE (House of Ruth)

APPLICATION

House of Ruth, Inc (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, requests a special exception under Subtitle U § 203.1(g), to replace an existing child development center with a new facility and increase the number of children from 76 to 88 and the number of staff from 21 to 25. The site is located in the R-1-B and R-3 zones at 2910 and 2916 Pennsylvania Avenue SE (Square 5546, Lots 800, 5, 6, 7, and 8).

The school was previously approved for a child development center in 1996 (BZA Case No. 16312). The action now under consideration consists of the following:

- 17,220 SF facility;
- Eight (8) vehicle parking spaces;
- Increase the staff cap from 21 to 25 staff members;
- Increase the student cap from 76 to 88 students; and
- Four (4) short-term bicycle parking spaces.

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

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commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

Site Design

- Loading activities and trash pick-up are unaffected by this application and are anticipated to continue occurring on private property with head-in and head-out movements via the driveway to P Street SE.

Travel Assumptions

- Based on student surveys, approximately half of children arrive by non-automotive modes;
- The parents that drop off children by personal vehicle park along P Street SE and walk the child to the main door located on Pennsylvania Avenue SE; and
- The increase in peak hour vehicular trips generated, did not trigger a vehicular capacity analysis.

Analysis

- A sidewalk on the south side of P Street SE where parents pick-up and drop-off children is missing;
- The Applicant does not have a pick-up and drop-off plan;
- The Applicant is not proposing to provide any long-term bicycle spaces but is providing four (4) short-term bicycle spaces in front of the building; and
- The 2016 Zoning Regulations (ZR16) requires two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces be located within the building in a secure, accessible space.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has reviewed the Applicant’s request and determined that based on the information provided, this proposed action will have no adverse impacts on the travel conditions of the District’s transportation network. The proposed action may lead to a minor increase in vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle trips. In addition, the project has the potential to generate minor impacts to on-street parking conditions in the area. Vehicle parking demand may increase slightly as a result of the project, inducing a higher level of parking utilization in the immediate area.

Despite these minor potential increases, DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested special exception on the conditions:

- Establish a pick-up and drop-off plan which includes an extension of the sidewalk from its current terminus eastward to allow for a pick-up and drop-off area, subject to DDOT approval; and
- Provide the ZR16 required two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Site Access

The current site has two curb cuts on P Street SE. The Applicant is proposing to close one curb cut and continue using the northeast curb cut which is shared with a neighboring property. The main pedestrian access point is along Pennsylvania Avenue SE, as shown in Figure 1 below. Loading facilities are not required by Zoning. However, the Applicant notes that trash pick-up will take place on private property and can accommodate head-in and head-out maneuvers where the site driveway intersects with the public street network.



Figure 1. Site Plan (Source: Stoiber+Associates, January 16, 2018 Architectural Drawings: BZA-8)

Trip Generation

In order to determine the vehicle trip generation of the proposed increase in student and staff, the Applicant conducted a student and staff survey to better understand the existing mode split. Based on this survey data, about half of the students arrive by single occupancy vehicles, and half use non-auto modes. The Applicant noted that some families have multiple children at the facility and thus the actual number of vehicle trips may be lower. The survey found that about 6% of staff walk, 25% take transit, and 69% drive to the facility.

The trips shown in table 1 below are based on the collected survey data and then are extrapolated into vehicle trips per student and staff under existing and future conditions. The vehicular trips generated did not trigger a vehicular capacity analysis.

	Mode	Parents	Staff	Total
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM				
Existing	Non-Auto Trips	18	3	21
	Vehicle Trips	15	4	19
	Total Trips	33	7	40
Proposed	Non-Auto Trips	21	3	24
	Vehicle Trips	18	5	23
	Total Trips	39	8	47
Net Change	Vehicle Trips	3	1	4
	Total Trips	6	1	7
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM				
Existing	Non-Auto Trips	13	3	16
	Vehicle Trips	18	4	22
	Total Trips	31	7	38
Proposed	Non-Auto Trips	15	3	18
	Vehicle Trips	21	5	26
	Total Trips	36	8	44
Net Change	Vehicle Trips	3	1	4
	Total Trips	5	1	6

Table 1. Trip Generation (Source: Wells + Associates, December 12, 2017 Transportation Assessment: Tables 3, 4 and 5)

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

Currently, parents who pick-up and drop-off their children by vehicle park around the site and walk their children to the building entrance on Pennsylvania Avenue SE. The Applicant currently does not have a pick-up and drop-off plan. However, a sidewalk on the south side of P Street SE is missing which does not allow for safe pick-up and drop-off. The Applicant should work with DDOT to establish a pick-up and drop-off plan which includes extension of the sidewalk from its current terminus eastward on P Street SE to allow for safe pick-in and drop-off.

Vehicle Parking

There are currently two (2) existing parking spaces located at the rear of the property, accessed via a curb cut on P Street SE to the northeast of the building. These spaces will be removed with the redevelopment of the property.

Subtitle C § 701.5 of ZR16 requires 0.5 vehicle parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for a daycare facility. A total of eight (8) vehicular parking spaces are required for a 17,220 square foot facility. The Applicant is proposing to provide four (4) compact spaces, one (1) accessible van space, and three (3) standard parking spaces in a surface lot off of P Street SE to fulfill the zoning requirement.

Bicycle Parking

Subtitle C § 802.1 of the Zoning Regulations require approximately two (2) long-term (1 space for each 10,000 SF) and two (2) short-term (1 for each 10,000 SF) bicycle parking spaces for 17,220 SF of daytime care use. The Applicant is not proposing to provide any long-term spaces but is providing four (4) short-

care use. The Applicant is not proposing to provide any long-term spaces but is providing four (4) short-term bicycle spaces in front of the building. ZR16 requires two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces be located within the building in a secure and accessible space.

Public Space

DDOT's lack of objection to the special exception should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. All elements of the project in public space, such as the curb cut, the play area, the fence, bicycle racks, and benches, require the Applicant to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. The Applicant has applied to Public Space Committee for the proposed play area and curb cut. The proposed fence should not be taller than 42 inches in public space.

The Applicant may refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the DCMR and DDOT's recently released 2017 Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) for specific controls of public space. A summary can also be found in DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual.

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