



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: March 9, 2018
SUBJECT: **BZA Case 19703-** Application of Capitol Hill Day School, pursuant to 11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapter 9, for a special exception under the use provisions of Subtitle U § 320.1(a) and Subtitle U § 203.1(1), to permit a private school use on the third floor of an existing office building in the RF-3 Zone at premises 218 D Street S.E. (Square 763, Lot 2).

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval of special exception relief** to permit the private school use by Capitol Hill Day School in an office building, in accordance with U § 203.1(1), subject to the following conditions:

1. The hours of school operation shall be from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm;
2. The total number of students at the location shall not exceed 90 students at any one time;
3. All event parking for this location shall be at the main campus at 210 South Carolina Avenue.

The applicant has agreed to these conditions.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION:

Address:	218 D Street, S.E.
Legal Description:	Square 0763, Lot 0002
Ward:	6/ANC6B
Lot Characteristics:	The 4,652 square feet lot is irregularly shaped, abutting private property east and west.
Zoning:	RF-3 – schools are allowed subject to special exception approval.
Existing Development:	The existing development is a three-story office building with an accessory garage on the first floor, a gym on the 2 nd floor, and vacant office space on the third level. The building has vehicular access from D Street, and to the alley system at the rear.
Historic District:	Capitol Hill HD; The building is a contributing structure to the district.
Adjacent Properties:	The immediate neighborhood consists primarily of single-family row dwellings, churches, parks, and other public and private schools. The adjacent properties to the east and west are commercial properties; Directly to the south is Folger Park, which is bounded by 2nd and 3rd Street and D Street. Brent Elementary School and row dwellings within the Capitol Hill Historic District are to the east, west and south of Folger Park. It is a block and a half from Pennsylvania Avenue, where there are small commercial uses.



III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION IN BRIEF

Applicant	Capitol Hill Day School (CHDS)
Proposal:	CHDS proposes to lease 5,839 square feet of the 12,020 square feet building, including the third floor and mezzanine area (929 sf) as classrooms, ancillary rooms, administrative and storage space for the main school, which is located at the historic Dent School at 210 South Carolina Avenue, SE, three blocks south of the proposed site. This location would serve as classrooms for students from grades 6-8 for math and humanities instruction, as well as middle school assemblies.
Relief Sought:	§203.1 (1) – special exception relief to permit a private school use on the second floor of an existing office building.

IV. BACKGROUND

The Capitol Hill Day School operated in the Capitol Hill neighborhood in 1969 from two churches, for kindergarten to grade 6 for 160 students. In 1978, the District leased the Dent School to CHDS, to alleviate the inadequate and inefficient operations of the school in two locations. Order 12860 approved CHDS’s operations at the Dent School in March 7, 1979. That special exception did not have a term limit and therefore does not expire. The school subsequently purchased the Dent Building in 1998. The following is an outline of the school’s past orders and related relief:

Year	Case Number	Request	BZA Decision
March 7, 1979	BZA 12860	SE for the establishment of a school for 200 up to grade 8 preschool and elementary school students and 14 full time and ten part-time staff at 210 South Carolina Avenue S.E.	Approved with conditions
August 12, 1988	BZA 14780	SE for approval for 225 students and 38 faculty and staff. Twenty parking spaces. 3 bus parking spaces.	Approved with condition
1990	BZA 15386	SE for 214 South Carolina Avenue building by the School for five years.	Approved with conditions
1996	BZA 16120	SE renewed for the use of 214 SC Avenue building for 10 years.	Approved with conditions
June 11, 2007	BZA 17540, 17541	Variance relief for addition to the Dent building. (255 students 43 faculty and staff).	Approved with conditions
May 31, 2011	BZA 18208	Variance relief from parking and SE relief to permit modular classrooms for one year. (255 faculty and 43 staff).	Approved with conditions

V. OP ANALYSIS

U § 203.1 (l) **Private School** ... (RF-3)

- 1) *Shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions;*

Noise:

It is unlikely that CHDS's use of the building would result in noise that would be objectionable to the neighborhood. Based on the submitted plans for the third floor's redesign, there would only be two classrooms and the majority of assigned space would be devoted to office and ancillary uses. The mezzanine does not show build-out for classrooms. The applicant explains further that this campus would accommodate up to 90 students and six full-time faculty and staff. Classroom times would be consistent with the main campus' operation between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Traffic:

Student drop-off and pick-up would continue at the main campus on South Carolina Avenue. Students will walk to this location from the main campus when assigned. Therefore, it is unlikely that there would be objectionable traffic conditions based on drop-off and pick-ups. Based on a prior application for office space at this location (BZA 19319), ten off-street parking spaces on the site are currently allocated to the gym use to which the proposed use would be adjoined. No parking is provided for the school's use.

Number of Students

The subject location would accommodate approximately 90 students at one time. The maximum number of students and staff at CHDS are not proposed to be increased in conjunction with the use of the subject location. The proposal is intended to satisfy the space needs of the school's programming and is not related to a student increase.

- (2) *Ample parking space, but not less than that required by this title, shall be provided to accommodate the students, teachers, and visitors likely to come to the site by automobile; and*

As a historic resource within the Capitol Hill Historic District, additional parking would not be required for the school use, since the change in use of the former office space would not result in an expansion of the building. The school would not be assigned parking spaces on the subject property, as all school-related parking would remain on the main campus at 210 South Carolina Avenue (the Dent Building). Most students reside within the neighborhood and walk to school. There are currently 20 car parking spaces and three bus parking spaces located behind and to the east of the Dent Building. Visitors who may come to the offices at the subject location may use on-street parking or parking available at the main campus.

- (3) *After hearing all evidence, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may require additional parking to that required by this title;*

OP does not recommend additional parking for the proposed school use.

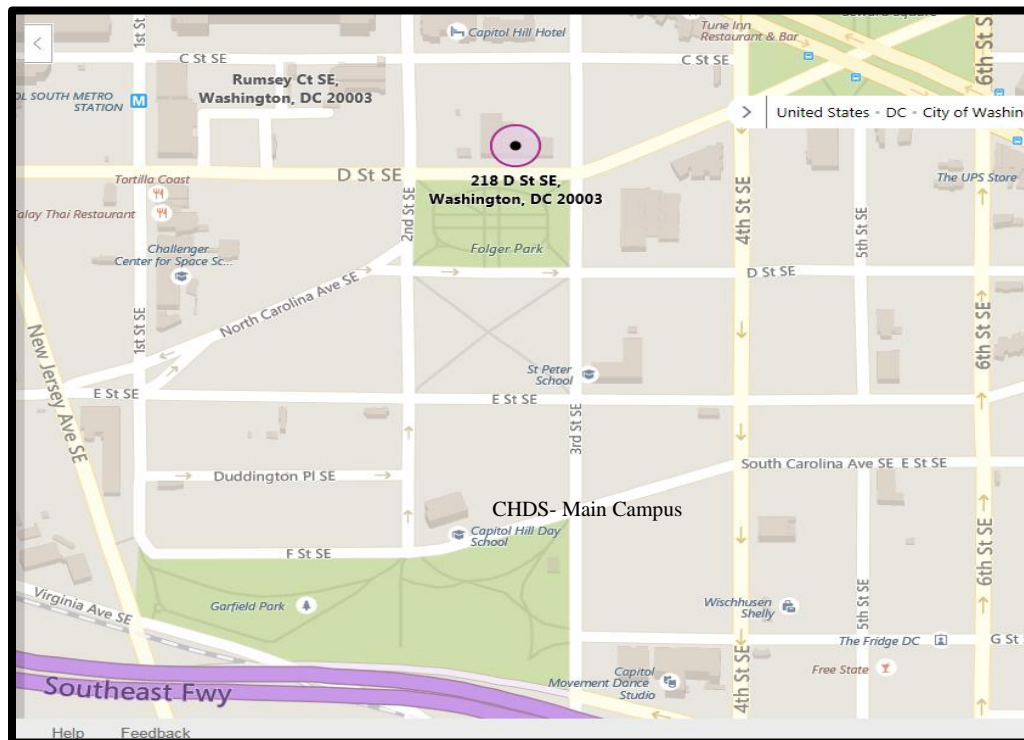
VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

At the writing of this report, other agencies comments were not received to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The ANC 6B, at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 13, 2018 voted unanimously to support the application.

Letters of support from the adjoining business and from neighbors in the vicinity of the subject property are noted in Exhibits 17,18, 34 and 35.



Location Map