

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Stephen J. Mordfin, Case Manager  
*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** June 1, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 19769 (1700 Columbia Road, N.W.)

**I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception:

- U § 513.1(I), Veterinary Hospital<sup>1</sup>.

**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1700 Columbia Road, N.W.
Applicant	MR 1700 Columbia Retail LLC
Legal Description	Square 2562, Lot 52
Ward, ANC	Ward 1, ANC 1C
Zone	MU-5A
Lot Characteristics	Irregular quadrilateral-shaped corner lot with no alley access
Existing Development	Six-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial space and residential uses above
Adjacent Properties	North and South: Mid-rise apartment buildings East: Across 17 <sup>th</sup> Street, mid-rise mixed-use building with ground floor retail West: one-story commercial buildings followed mid-rise apartment buildings
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Moderate to medium residential with locally serving retail
Proposed Development	Veterinary hospital in ground-floor commercial space

**III. APPLICATION**

The applicant requests to establish a veterinary hospital for cats and dogs within a 2,545 square-foot space on the ground floor of an existing mixed-use building. The ground floor is improved with

<sup>1</sup> This provision was the subject of ZC 18-02, for which final action is expected to be taken by the Commission on June 11, 2018.

three commercial spaces, the other two of which are occupied by a hardware store and an exercise gym. The applicant proposes to locate within the third space, located at the corner of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road. The remainder of the building is dedicated to residential use, including 80 apartment units on the five upper floors. No apartment units are located on the ground floor.

The main entrance to the veterinary hospital would face the intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road. Within the building the subject space would abut common walls with the hardware store and the residential lobby, but have no access to those areas.

#### **IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS**

##### **Special Exception Relief pursuant to U § 513.1 (l), Veterinary Hospital**

*Veterinary office or hospital, or veterinary boarding hospital subject to the following conditions:*

- (1) *A veterinary hospital or veterinary boarding hospital may board any animal permitted to be lawfully sold in the District of Columbia, pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 8-1808(j)(1);*

The applicant proposes to establish a veterinary hospital for cats and dogs as permitted by the D.C. Official Code.

- (2) *No more than fifty percent (50%) of the gross floor area of the veterinary hospital may be devoted to the boarding of animals;*

The applicant proposes to board animals for convalesce only. Boarding as an independent line of business is not proposed.

- (3) *The veterinary hospital or veterinary boarding hospital shall be located and designed to create no objectionable conditions to adjacent properties resulting from animal noise, odor, or waste;*

The proposed use would have its own private exterior entrance to the building, physically separate from all other users of the building. It would also be in conformance with Criteria No. 4, described below.

- (4) *The veterinary hospital or veterinary boarding hospital shall not abut an existing residential use or a residential zone; unless the existing residential use is in a mixed use building and the Applicant demonstrates that:*

- (A) *The building was designed and constructed or will be re-designed and renovated to mitigate noise to limit negative impacts on residential units that the use will abut, including the use of acoustical tiles, caulking to seal penetrations made in floor slabs for pipes, and spray-on noise insulation;*

The applicant proposes to install sound mitigation walls one inch off all existing demising walls to prevent sound from emanating to either the adjoining retail space or the residential lobby. The ceiling would be insulated with six-inch fiberglass batt insulation, floor penetrations for pipes would be sealed with caulk, and spray-on insulation would be utilized to mitigate noise impacts on the apartment units above.

- (B) *The windows and doors of the space devoted to the veterinary hospital or veterinary boarding hospital use shall be kept closed, and all doors facing a residential use shall be solid core;***

All windows and doors would be kept closed and no doors face a residential use.

- (C) *Animal waste shall be placed in closed waste disposal containers located in enclosed areas or away from abutting or confronting residential windows and doors; and shall be collected by a waste disposal company at least twice weekly;***

The application indicates that animal waste would be placed in enclosed containers within an enclosed trash room at the rear of the property, collected twice weekly.

- (D) *Odors will be controlled by means of an air filtration system or an equivalently effective odor control system; and***

The applicant proposes to install an air system with carbon filters to control odors.

- (E) *Floor finish material, areas intended to be wet, and wall finish materials measured a minimum of forty-eight inches (48 in.) from the floor, shall be impervious and washable;***

The application indicates that fiberglass reinforced plastic would cover all walls in the wet areas of the lab space, dog runs, maintenance rooms and treatment areas 48 inches from the floor. Floors would be ceramic tile.

- (5) *External yards or other external facilities for the keeping of animals shall not be permitted;***

No external yards or facilities are proposed.

- (6) *Pet grooming, the sale of pet supplies, and incidental boarding of animals as necessary for convalescence, are permitted as accessory uses; and***

The applicant is aware of this provision.

- (7) *The Board of Zoning Adjustment may impose additional requirements as it deems necessary to protect adjacent or nearby properties; and***

OP makes no recommendations for additional requirements.

## **V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

No comments from other District agencies were received as of the date of the filing of this report.

## **VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

ANC 1C:

1. The Planning, Zoning and Transportation Committee reviewed the application on May 16, 2018.

2. The full ANC is expected to review the application at its regularly scheduled meeting of June 6, 2018.

One building resident submitted a letter in support of the application.

No other community comments were received as of the date of the filing of this report.

Attachment: Location Map

