

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: July 11, 2025
SUBJECT: Extension Request – BZA Case 19823A, 3920 Alton Place NW

I. RECOMMENDATION

OP recommends that the requested two-year time extension be **approved**, on the assumption that the Board determines that the request was filed in a timely manner,

II. LOCATION AND SUMMARY

Address	3920 Alton Place NW
Applicant	Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church
Legal Description	Square 1779, Lot 14
Ward, ANC	Ward 3, ANC 3E
Zone	R-1-B - Predominantly detached houses on moderately sized lots; a church is permitted as a matter-of-right use, and a continuing care retirement community is permitted by special exception.
Lot Characteristics	The subject property is an irregularly shaped lot having 35,443 square feet of area.
Proposed Development	Continuing care retirement community
Date of Order Issuance:	February 14, 2020; the applicant states that the Order became valid following issuance of court decisions regarding appeals on May 1, 2023
Date of Order Expiration:	May 1, 2025. ¹
Requested Extension:	First extension, 2 years to May 1, 2027

III. EVALUATION OF THE EXTENSION REQUEST

(a) The extension request is served on all parties to the application by the applicant, and all parties are allowed thirty (30) days to respond.

The application was submitted to the BZA is dated June 3, 2025 and has been in the public record since filing. As part of Exhibit 4 of the record is an indication that the request has been served on ANC 3E as well as parties in opposition to the original case.

¹ Information as provided by the applicant.

- (b) There is no substantial change in any of the material facts upon which the Board based its original approval of the application that would undermine the Board’s justification for approving the original application.**

Zoning Regulations:

The original BZA approval was under the current zoning regulations, which have not been modified in a way to substantively impact the original review or approval.

Surrounding Development:

OP is unaware of any new development in the immediate area which would substantially change the material facts upon which the BZA made its original decision.

Proposed Development:

The application indicates that no changes to the approved use are proposed as part of this extension request. The filing notes that the owner will be seeking a new development partner for this site; should that result in any changes to the requested relief for this proposal, a request to the BZA to modify the approval would be required.

- (c) The applicant demonstrates that there is good cause for such extension, with substantial evidence of one or more of the following criteria.**

- (1) An inability to obtain sufficient project financing due to economic and market conditions beyond the applicant’s reasonable control;**
- (2) An inability to secure all required governmental agency approvals by the expiration date of the Board’s order because of delays that are beyond the applicant’s reasonable control; or**
- (3) The existence of pending litigation or such other condition, circumstance, or factor beyond the applicant’s reasonable control.**

The applicant notes the extensive time delays caused by an appeal of the original approval and by the pandemic. They also note the “increased construction costs, and the extraordinary changes to financial markets” as well as the departure of the former development partner (Sunrise) and the need to seek a new development partner.

IV. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of the date of this report, no other agency comments had been filed to the record.

V. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the date of this report, comments from ANC 3E had not been added to the record.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

Letters in opposition to the requested extension are at Exhibits 9 and 11, from parties in opposition to the original case.