

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: July 8, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 20075 – 1050 31st Street NW (Rosewood Hotel)

APPLICATION

CTF Georgetown Hotel LLC (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 C § 703.2 from the minimum parking requirements of Subtitle C § 701.5 to renovate an existing hotel. The site is in the MU-12 Zone at 1050 31st Street NW (Square 1189, Lot 90).

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 a 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.

After reviewing the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The Applicant renovated the property in 2018, which resulted in a reduction of on-site parking from 24 compliant to seven (7) non-compliant spaces. Zoning requires a minimum of 20 spaces;
- The site is well-served by Metrobus, DC Circulator, and other transportation options and is in a dense neighborhood with a variety of goods and services within walking distance;
- The Applicant has committed to a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan, as required by Subtitle C § 703.4 for all parking reduction cases, which DDOT finds acceptable (see TDM plan later in this report);
- The Applicant has stated that they can provide additional parking off-site, if necessary;

- DDOT finds the amount of on-street and garage parking within a two block radius acceptable and supports relief from all on-site vehicle parking with the proposed TDM implemented; and
- DDOT prefers that the Applicant not provide all seven (7) tandem spaces since it would require backing at least three (3) vehicles up the ramp and through public space. Instead the Applicant should provide a maximum of four (4) tandem spaces.

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 because of the project, inducing a higher level of parking utilization in the immediate area.

Despite these minor potential impacts, DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested special exception on the condition that the Applicant implement the following TDM plan, as proposed in the June 10, 2019 Gorove/Slade study (Exhibit 23):

- The hotel will continue to offer a SmartBenefits plan for employees. Pre-tax funds may be deducted to pay for transit, including services from WMATA, VRE, MARC, and vanpool operators;
- The hotel will continue to offer five (5) on-site bicycles for hotel guests to use during their stay;
- The Applicant will identify a Transportation Coordinator (for planning, construction, and operations). The Transportation Coordinator will work with employees to distribute and market various transportation alternatives and options to employees and guests;
- The building management will provide updated contact information for the Transportation Coordinator to goDCgo, conduct an annual commuter survey of employees, and report TDM efforts and amenities to goDCgo staff once per year;
- The Transportation Coordinator will receive TDM training from goDCgo to learn about the TDM conditions for this project and available options for implementing the TDM Plan;
- Front office and customer-facing staff will be provided training by goDCgo (either in-person or webinar) to learn of the non-automotive options for traveling to the hotel;
- The Applicant will provide guests with goDCgo's Get Around Guide by making it available on the property website and in printed format for front office or customer-facing staff;
- The Transportation Coordinator will subscribe to goDCgo's hospitality newsletter;
- The Applicant shall post "getting here" information in a visible and prominent location on the website with a focus on non-automotive travel modes. Also, links will be provided to goDCgo.com, CommuterConnections.com, and transit agencies around the metropolitan area;
- The Applicant will provide comprehensive transportation information and directions on hotel website, including promoting the use of non-automotive modes of transportation and links to website for goDCgo, Capital Bikeshare, DC Circulator, and WMATA;
- The Applicant will provide brochures with information on non-automotive options for traveling to the property available at all times in a visible location in the lobby;

- The Applicant will supply bicycle parking to meet the practical needs of guests, visitors, and employees, including a minimum of seven (7) combined long-term and short-term bicycle parking spaces within the secure garage. The long-term spaces will be provided to employees free of charge and guests/visitors will be able to park their bikes in the garage using a valet system;
- The Applicant will provide a minimum of three (3) lockers within the hotel for employee use; and
- The Applicant will provide employees who wish to carpool with detailed carpooling information and will be referred to other carpool matching services sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) or other comparable service if MWCOC does not offer this in the future.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicle Parking

The Applicant is required to provide and is seeking relief from all 20 vehicle parking spaces. In situations where an Applicant is requesting relief from five (5) or more vehicle parking spaces, DDOT requires an on-street parking occupancy study to understand the action's impact on neighborhood parking conditions. The study area is shown in Figure 1. On-street parking near the site is composed of metered spaces, Residential Permit Parking (RPP) spaces, and time-restricted spaces.

The Applicant also studied the historic parking demand of the site to determine the average capacity of the parking garage. Figure 2 presents the average daily parking usage from January 2017 to October 2018, consisting of both daytime parking and overnight parking. As seen in the figure, the daily averages rarely exceeded seven (7) spaces, with no month averaging more than 10 daily parked vehicles.

The Applicant is also proposing to provide additional vehicle parking off-site. An agreement between the Applicant and Colonial Parking is being finalized to allow guests and employees to use up to 26 spaces at the parking garage one block east at 1050 Thomas Jefferson Street when parking at the hotel is at capacity. In addition to this garage, there are several parking facilities within a quarter mile of the hotel, as shown in Figure 3. Many of these facilities offer overnight parking, providing options for hotel guests and employees.



Figure 1. Inventory of Curbside Management and On-Street Parking (Source: Gorove/Slade, CTR, Figure 8, 6/10/2019)

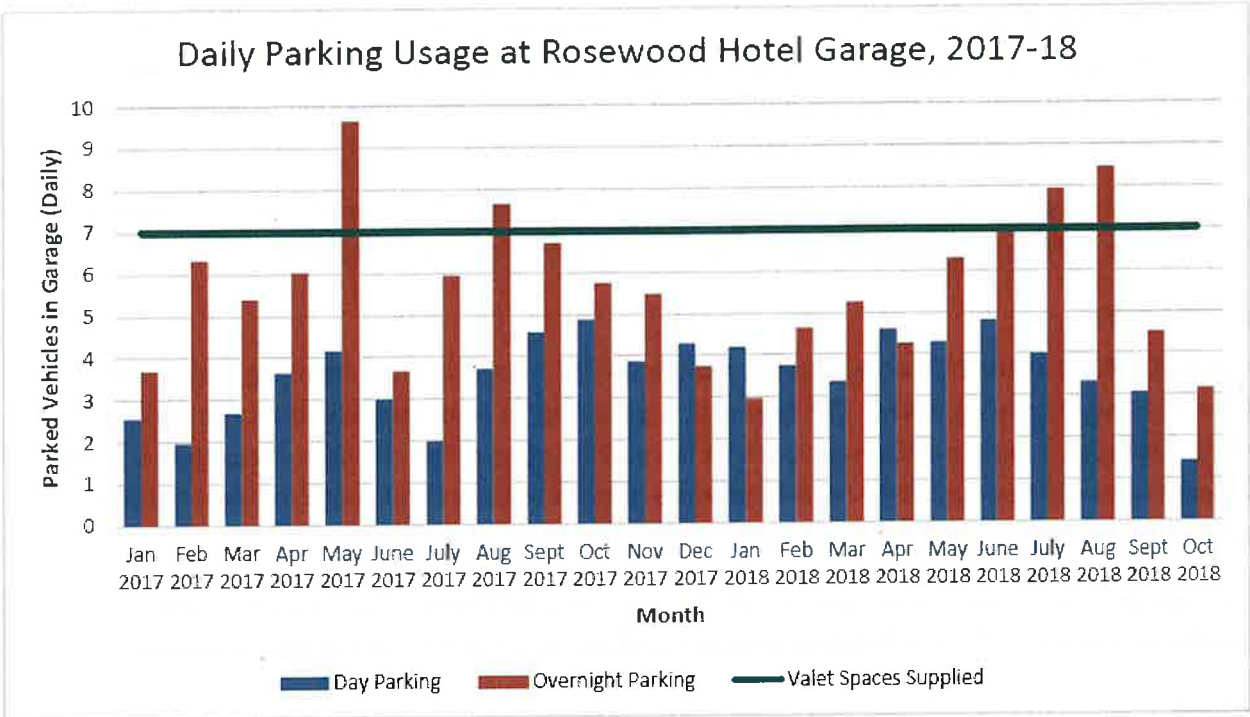


Figure 2. Daily Parking Usage, January 2017-October 2018 (Source: Gorove/Slade, CTR, Figure 6, 6/10/2019)

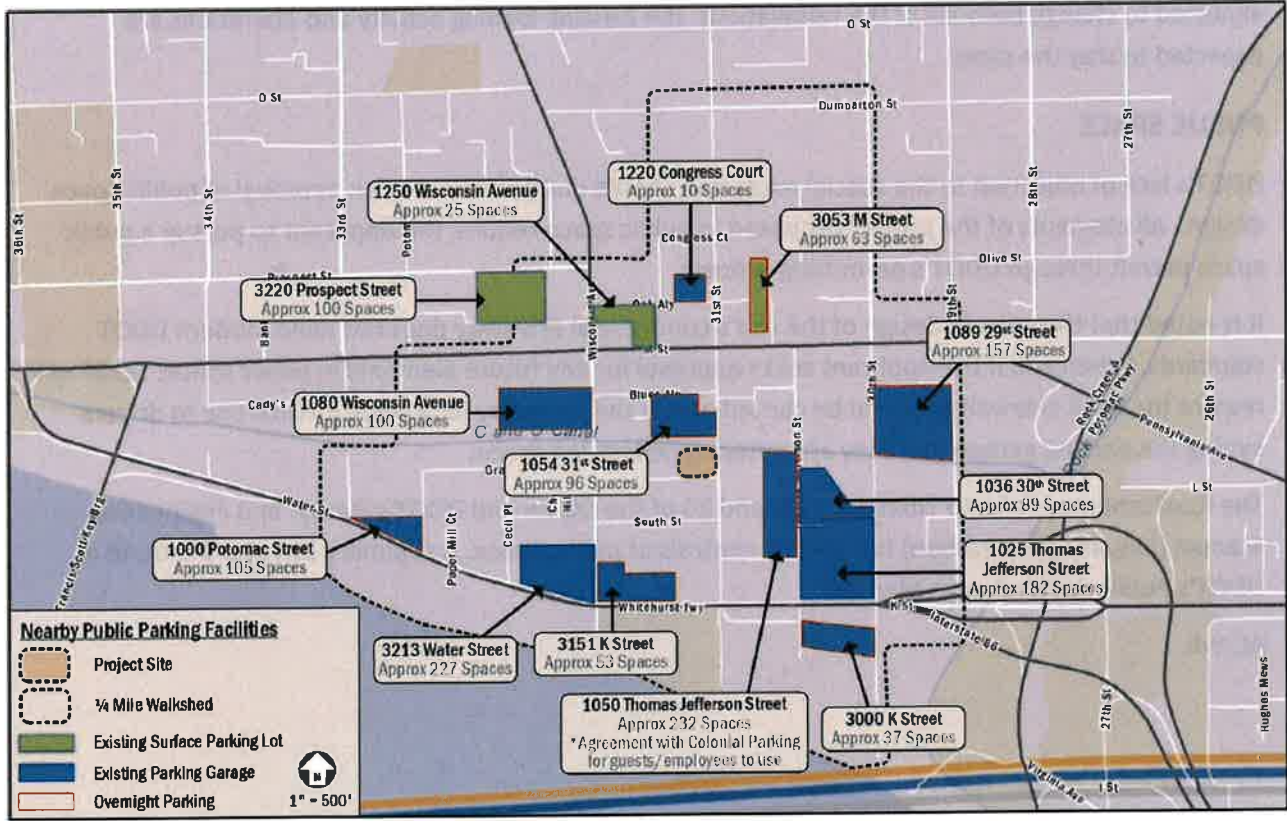


Figure 3. Nearby Parking Facilities (Source: Gorove/Slade, CTR, Figure 7, 6/10/2019)

Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations requires that any request for a reduction in the minimum number of required parking spaces include a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan that has been approved by DDOT. To meet this requirement, the Applicant has committed to implement several TDM measures, listed previously in this report.

DDOT finds the amount of available on-street and garage parking within a two block radius sufficient to meet the needs of the project in conjunction with the above referenced TDM plan.

Bicycle Parking

Subtitle C § 802.1 of the Zoning Regulations require five (5) long-term bicycle parking spaces and two (2) short-term bicycle parking spaces. The Applicant is proposing to accommodate its bicycle parking demand through a single parking supply within the parking garage. This will have a minimum of seven (7) spaces and will be accessed by hotel employees. Visitors and guests parking bicycles will utilize a valet system. Employees will also have access to a minimum of three (3) lockers.

The Applicant also provides hotel guests with the use of five (5) bicycles that are kept on site and branded with the hotel's logo. These bicycles are available as an additional amenity for guests.

Loading

Subtitle C § 901.1 of the Zoning Regulations requires one (1) loading berth for a hotel property under 50,000 square feet gross floor area. As the daily operations and event operations at the hotel are not expected to change because of the renovations, the existing loading activity and operations are expected to stay the same.

PUBLIC SPACE

DDOT's lack of objection to the special exception should not be viewed as an approval of public space design. All elements of the project proposed in public space require the Applicant to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process.

It is noted that the current design of the site's commercial driveway does not need modern DDOT standards. When and if the Applicant seeks approval for any future elements in public space, DDOT will require the brick sidewalk material be carried across the driveway to provide a visual cue to drivers exiting the parking garage that they are entering pedestrian space.

The Applicant may refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the DCMR and DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual (January 2019 edition) for specific controls of public space. A summary can also be found in DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual.

AC:tvh