

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Elisa Vitale, Case Manager
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: July 17, 2020

SUBJECT: BZA Case 20266, 3400 Connecticut Avenue NW to permit a reduction in the number of parking spaces provided.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Parking, Subtitle C § 703.2, pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.1 (17 spaces required; 13 spaces existing; 0 spaces proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	3400 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Applicant	Goulston & Storrs, agent, on behalf of 3400 Connecticut Partners LLC, applicant.
Legal Description	Square 2069, Lots 817 – 821
Ward, ANC	3 / 3C
Zone	NC-3 - intended to permit mixed-use development at a moderate density.
Historic District	Cleveland Park Historic District – the site is improved with the Macklin, a four-story apartment building, a contributing resource to the Cleveland Park Historic District.
Lot Characteristics	The property, which consists of Lots 817-821 in Square 2069 is irregular in shape and bounded by Connecticut Avenue, NW to the east, Newark Street, NW to the south, and adjoining properties to the west and north. A 15-foot wide improved public alley intersects with the northwest corner of the property.
Existing Development	The property is improved with a one-story structure at the northern property line, a 5-story brick structure in the center of the site, and a 13-space surface parking lot at the east end of the site, which is accessed from a curb cut on Connecticut Avenue, NW.
Adjacent Properties	The properties to the north, that front on Connecticut Avenue, NW are developed with commercial buildings. To the west are detached buildings in single-household residential use.

Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood is mixed-use in character with neighborhood serving commercial on Connecticut Avenue, NW and residential development on the surrounding streets to the east and west of Connecticut Avenue. The Cleveland Park Metro Station, which is served by the Red Line is located approximately 500 feet north of the subject property.
Proposed Development	The Applicant is proposing to construct a mixed-use development to the east and west of the existing structures on the property. The proposed development would result in the retention of 17 existing dwelling units on-site, construction of 35 new dwelling units including new affordable units consistent with Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), the addition of 16,097 square feet of retail, and elimination of the surface parking lot at the east end of the site.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone – NC-3	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief
Height H § 503.1	45 ft. max. (IZ)	35 ft.	45 ft.	None Required
Lot Width	--	218.24 ft.	218.24 ft.	No Change
Lot Area	--	29,923 sq. ft.	29,923 sq. ft.	No Change
Floor Area Ratio H § 502.1	2.4 max. (IZ)	0.80	1.99	None Required
Lot Occupancy H § 504.1	75% max. (IZ)	32%	43%	None Required
Rear Yard H § 505.1	15 ft. min.	Varies	15 ft.	None Required
Side Yard H § 506.1	None req., min. of 2 in./1 ft. height min. but no less than 6' if provided	None	None	None Required
Parking C § 701	17 spaces min.	13 spaces	0 spaces	REQUIRED

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Special Exception Relief from Subtitle C § 703.2, Minimum Parking Number Requirements

(a) Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;

The proposed development would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations. While the proposed development would eliminate existing parking on-site, it would result in the provision of 35 new residential units, in addition to the existing 17 units.

¹ Information provided by Applicant, Exhibit 5, dated February 21, 2020.

(b) Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and

The subject property is located in very close proximity to the Cleveland Park Metro Station and frequent Metrobus service on Connecticut Avenue NW. The Applicant is proposing to close an existing curb cut on Connecticut Avenue that would restore some on-street parking spaces.

(c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.

703.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant a full or partial reduction in number of required parking spaces, subject to the general special exception requirements of Subtitle X, and the applicant's demonstration of at least one (1) of the following:

(a) Due to the physical constraints of the property, the required parking spaces cannot be provided either on the lot or within six hundred feet (600 ft.) of the lot in accordance with Subtitle C § 701.8;

Connecticut Avenue NW is the designated roadway for the NC-3 zone and H § 204.1 prohibits a driveway from a designated roadway to required parking. Although there is an existing driveway from Connecticut Avenue to the on-site surface parking, the surface parking does not comply with existing regulations related to location (C § 710.2(b)(2)) and screening (C § 714). A curb cut could be provided from Newark Street NW; however, the topography of the site, which slopes up significantly from Connecticut Avenue, would make it difficult to provide the required parking at the rear of the site.

The applicant has demonstrated that the property does not have sufficient depth in order to provide a ramp to below-grade parking (See Exhibit 42C, sheet 26). Additionally, the presence of the Macklin building, a contributing resource to the Cleveland Park Historic District, in the center of the site, further constrains the Applicant's ability to provide the required parking in a conforming manner on the Property.

Therefore, providing the required parking on-site would not be feasible due to physical constraints of the property.

(b) The use or structure is particularly well served by mass transit, shared vehicle, or bicycle facilities;

The Property is well-served by transportation, including the Cleveland Park Metro Station approximately 500 feet to the north, as well as Metrobus route (L1 and L2) on Connecticut Avenue and the crosstown H4 bus on Porter Street two blocks to the north. Walkscore gave the site a rating of Very Walkable with Good Transit.

(c) Land use or transportation characteristics of the neighborhood minimize the need for required parking spaces;

The proximity of public transportation and the Cleveland Park shopping area would minimize the need for the required parking spaces on this site.

(d) Amount of traffic congestion existing or which the parking for the building or structure would reasonably be expected to create in the neighborhood;

The addition of the 35 additional dwelling units, including affordable units consistent with IZ, would not be expected to significantly increase existing traffic congestion.

(e) The nature of the use or structure or the number of residents, employees, guests, customers, or clients who would reasonably be expected to use the proposed building or structure at one time would generate demand for less parking than the minimum parking standards;

Not applicable.

(f) All or a significant proportion of dwelling units are dedicated as affordable housing units;

Not applicable – most of the units would be market rate, other than units set aside consistent with IZ.

(g) Quantity of existing public, commercial, or private parking, other than on street parking, on the property or in the neighborhood, that can reasonably be expected to be available when the building or structure is in use;

Not applicable.

(h) The property does not have access to an open public alley, resulting in the only means by which a motor vehicle could access the lot is from an improved public street and either:

(1) A curb cut permit for the property has been denied by the District Department of Transportation; or

(2) Any driveway that could access an improved public street from the property would violate any regulation of this chapter, of the parking provisions of any other subtitle in the Zoning Regulations, or of Chapters 6 or 11 of Title 24 DCMR;

The existing driveway from Connecticut is inconsistent with the limitations of the NC-3 zone, and as noted above, providing adequate parking access towards the rear of the lot is problematic due to the slope.

(i) The presence of healthy and mature canopy trees on or directly adjacent to the property; or;

Not applicable.

(j) The nature or location of a historic resource precludes the provision of parking spaces; or providing the required parking would result in significant architectural or structural difficulty in maintaining the integrity and appearance of the historic resource.

The Property is located in the Cleveland Park Historic District and the Macklin Apartment Building on the site is a contributing historic resource to the Historic District. The project received conceptual approval from the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) at its June 25, 2020 meeting. The presence of the existing apartment building makes the provision of on-site parking more difficult.

703.3 Any reduction in the required number of parking spaces shall be only for the amount that the applicant is physically unable to provide, and shall be proportionate to the reduction in parking demand demonstrated by the applicant.

A total of 17 spaces are required (8 residential and 9 retail) and the Applicant is unable to provide any zoning-compliant spaces on the property; therefore, the reduction is proportionate to the reduction in parking demand.

703.4 Any request for a reduction in the minimum required parking shall include a transportation demand management plan approved by the District Department of Transportation, the implementation of which shall be a condition of the Board of Zoning Adjustment's approval.

The Applicant has submitted a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan².

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) indicated no objection subject to an approved Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan and Loading Management Plan (LMP) (Exhibit 33).

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 3C had not provided comments to the record at the time this report was drafted.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

Comments in support were received at Exhibits 16, 34 – 37, 47, and 50-61. Comments in opposition were received at Exhibits 40, 41, 43, 45, and 62. A party status request in opposition was submitted at Exhibit 44.

Attachment: Location Map

² See Exhibit 29, dated March 20, 2020.

Location Map: 3400 Connecticut Avenue, NW

