

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, AICP
Associate Director 

DATE: January 4, 2021

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 20350 – 401 Anacostia Road SE (Mary’s House for Older Adults)

APPLICATION

Mary’s House for Older Adults, Inc. (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 10, for a use variance from the use requirements of Subtitle U § 203.1(g)(2), and area variances from the driveway width requirements of Subtitle C § 711.6, the side yard requirements of Subtitle D § 206.2, and from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle D § 304.1, to replace an existing principal dwelling unit with a continuing care retirement community for 15 individuals. The site is located in the R-3 Zone at 401 Anacostia Road SE (Parcel 0203, Lot 9).

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 one 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 multi-modal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District’s transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The Applicant is proposing to meet the Zoning Regulations for vehicle parking by providing four (4) off-street spaces;

- The proposed 8-foot wide driveway would allow for one vehicle at a time to or from the rear parking area. Since there are only four (4) vehicle parking spaces proposed, conflicts between entering and exiting vehicles is unlikely;
- Future residents living at the property will be able to obtain “emergency no parking” signs to reserve an on-street parking space for move-in and move-out activities;
- It is unclear from the Applicant’s submitted materials where trash will be stored and how it will be collected. It is unlikely that trash trucks will be able to physically travel on the proposed 8-foot driveway or avoid backing down the driveway through public space. Reverse maneuvers are not permitted, and trash should be wheeled curbside; and
- The opening or closing of any curb cuts on-site will require a public space permit. DDOT has identified the following public space elements that the Applicant should address:
 - The 8-foot curb cut that will accompany the proposed 8-foot driveway does not meet DDOT minimum standard widths of 20 feet for a two-way driveway or 12 feet for a one-way driveway. The Applicant should continue to coordinate with DDOT during the permitting process for an appropriate curb cut design.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicle Parking

Subtitle C § 701.5 of the 2016 Zoning Regulations (ZR16) a minimum of four (4) vehicle parking spaces. The Applicant is proposing to meet the zoning requirement by providing four (4) vehicle parking spaces in the rear of the facility on private property. The vehicle parking area is proposed to be accessed by an 8-foot wide two-way driveway along the southern edge of the property. The Applicant is seeking relief from the requirement of Subtitle C § 711.6 that a driveway be constructed a minimum of 20-foot wide to allow for two vehicles traveling in opposite directions to pass. DDOT finds that this situation is unlikely to occur frequently given the relatively few number of parking spaces provided in the rear.

Residential Permit Parking (RPP)

The site is located on the 400 block of Anacostia Road SE, which is currently not subject to the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program restrictions. Vehicular on-street parking on this block, as well as other nearby blocks of Anacostia Road SE, is currently unregulated. Since this block does not have RPP restrictions, residents will not be eligible to obtain Zone 8 parking permits. However, if residents are interested in establishing RPP parking along Anacostia Road SE, they may petition DDOT.

Loading

Subtitle C §901.1 of ZR16 does not require a loading berth or service delivery space because the proposed residential development has less than 50 dwelling units. Since the site has more than three (3) residential units, the Applicant must contract a private trash collection service. Trash must be stored on private property and collected from the alley. Move-ins and move-outs should occur from the alley, if possible. Future residents may also obtain “emergency no parking” signs through DDOT’s Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) to reserve an on-street parking space for move-ins/move-outs.

RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action may lead to a minor increase in vehicle, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle trips on the localized transportation network. In addition, the project may result in increased pick-up and drop-off activity and slightly reduced availability of on-street parking within the immediate area. Despite these minor impacts, DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application.

PUBLIC SPACE

DDOT's lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of the public realm design. All elements of the project proposed within District-owned right-of-way, such as closing the existing curb cut and opening a new one, require the Applicant to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. DDOT notes that the proposed 8-foot driveway, to which the Applicant is seeking zoning relief in this application, would be accompanied by an 8-foot curb cut that does not meet the minimum standard of 20 feet for a two-way commercial driveway or 12 feet for a one-way commercial driveway, per the Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) 31.2.3.2. The Applicant should coordinate with DDOT on an appropriate curb cut design during the permitting process.

DDOT expects the adjacent public realm to meet all District standards. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the [DCMR](#), the most recent version of DDOT's [Design and Engineering Manual \(DEM\)](#), and the [Public Realm Design Manual](#) for public space regulations and design guidance. A permit application can be filed through the DDOT [Transportation Online Permitting System \(TOPS\)](#) website.

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