

# **Appendix of Prior Zoning Administrator Determination Letters**

*ZA Determination Letter, November 4, 2015 – 1772 Church Street NW*

Summary

The property, St. Thomas Church, is situated on a corner lot with abutting Church Street on the north, 18<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, and a public alley to the south. **The Zoning Administrator confirmed that the height of the building could be measured from 18<sup>th</sup> Street, but the front of the building could be designated as Church Street for the purpose of determining side yards and the rear yard. See Determination ¶ 8.**

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR



NOVEMBER 4, 2015

Cary Kadlecek, Esq.  
Goulston & Storrs, P.C.  
1999 K Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20006

Re: 1772 Church Street NW – Conversion and Addition for new Church and Residential Building

Dear Cary:

This letter confirms our discussion on June 9, 2015 about a proposed new building located at 1772 Church Street NW (Sq. 156, Lot 369) (“**Property**”). The Property is zoned DC/SP-1 and is included in the Dupont Circle Historic District. The Property is a corner lot bound to the north by Church Street, to the south by a public alley, to the east by a flat, and to the west by 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The Property is the site of St. Thomas Church. The east side of the Property is improved with a building, the Parish Hall, which is a contributing building in the historic district. The Parish Hall has a setback at its front along Church Street and a nonconforming side yard to its east. The west side of the Property, to the west of the Parish Hall, contains a private park open to the public with the Church’s permission.

The proposed new project on the Property will be a combined church and residential building. The project will retain the Parish Hall and will add to it vertically and horizontally. The church portion of the building will be on the west side of the Property. The residential portion of the building will be on the east side of the property and will include the Parish Hall. Parking will be provided in an underground garage accessed off the alley.

In particular, I made the following conclusions based on the attached site plan:

1. The proposed setback on the Church Street façade of the addition to the existing structure, identified as “B,” is permitted as a single, irregularly configured court niche. This setback is an architectural feature that continues the front setback of the Parish Hall. The ANC requested the setback for the new structure as an important architectural feature. The HPRB agreed that the setback is an important historically-compatible feature for the project and stated that the residential bays should align more with the setback along Church Street since the church building is the “bookend” landmark of that particular block.
2. The setback on the Church Street façade of the Parish Hall, identified as “D,” is an existing condition; therefore, it is permitted to remain.

3. The proposed setback at the northwest corner of the building, identified as “C,” is a permitted court niche. This niche is an architectural feature that is important to the church design and its main entrance.
4. The proposed triangular setback from the alley at the southwest corner of the proposed addition, identified as “F,” is a permitted court niche. This niche, originated by the ANC’s request to widen the alley from 18<sup>th</sup> street to the garage entrance to minimize 2-way traffic congestion, is an architectural feature important to the church design.
5. The existing nonconforming side yard along the eastern side of the Parish Hall, identified as “A,” may remain. However, the addition above the Parish Hall must provide a side yard. Based on a wall height of 50 feet, under section 535.5, the required side yard is 8’-4”. The proposed side yard will be 7’-4”, which I permit under the minor flexibility authorized in section 2522.1(c). The minor deviation is justified because any larger side yard would create significant structural challenges for supporting the addition above the Parish Hall. This deviation will not impair the purpose of the side yard regulations because it still allows a sufficiently wide side yard in a zone where a side yard is not required.
6. The proposed open court at the southeast corner of the building, identified as “E,” is an irregular court provided in lieu of a rear yard, as permitted under section 534.4. Based on a bounding wall height of 59 feet, this court has a minimum required width of 19’-8” and a required area of 773.6 square feet. The provided court area will be 1085 square feet. The provided court width will be 18 feet, which is the diameter of the largest circle that may be inscribed. I permit this width under the minor flexibility authorized in section 2522.1(c). The minor width deviation is justified because enlarging the court would require removing more of the historic fabric of the Parish Hall, which is disfavored, and because it would result in internal circulation challenges. This deviation will not impair the purpose of the court regulations because the area of the court is much larger than required and it will open onto an alley; thus, adequate light and air will still be provided.
7. The proposed building is an addition to the historic Parish Hall. Therefore, under section 2200.5, no loading is required for the entire proposed building.
8. The height of the building may be determined and measured from 18<sup>th</sup> Street, but the front of the building may be Church Street for purpose of determining side yards and rear yard.

Sincerely, Matthew Le Grant

Matthew Le Grant  
Zoning Administrator

Attachment - Court Analysis

**ZA Determination Letter, February 13, 2017 – 2800 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW**

**Summary**

The proposed project consisted of an addition to the existing Scottish Rite Temple located at 2800 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW (*not the Temple at issue in this appeal*) and included a U-shaped rear addition to the Temple with approximately 176 residential units. The property is located on a corner lot fronting on 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Mozart Place, and Columbia Road NW. **The ZA confirmed that the property owner could determine which street could be used to determine street frontage. In this instance, the owner used Mozart Place as the front of the building for purposes of its yards, with the rear yard located opposite Mozart Place, along 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The building measuring point, however, was located on Columbia Road.**

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**



February 13, 2017

Meridith H. Moldenhauer  
Griffin, Murphy, Moldenhauer & Wiggins, LLP  
1912 Sunderland Place NW  
Washington DC, 20036

Re: 2800 16th Street NW (Square 2578, Lot 25) - Scottish Rite Temple

Dear Ms. Moldenhauer,

This letter is in reference to multiple discussions I had with you and your colleagues in October and November 2016 and on January 26, 2017, regarding your client's intended rear addition to the existing structure at 2800 16th Street NW (Square 2578, Lot 25) (the "Property"). I would like to memorialize the discussion regarding this development under the 2016 Zoning Regulations ("ZR-16"). This letter is also a follow up to the Zoning Determination letter dated November 23, 2015 regarding the required parking for the existing structure on the Property. A copy of that letter is attached hereto at **Tab "A"**, and the findings are incorporated herein.

The Property is located in the RA-4 Zone District and the Meridian Hill Historic District. The Property is bounded by 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW to the east, Mozart Place NW to the west, the Italian Embassy to the south and the Unification Church to the north. The Property satisfies the definition of a "corner lot" at Subtitle B § 100.2 because it fronts on 16th Street NW, Mozart Place NW, and Columbia Road NW, and the intersection of Columbia Road and Mozart Place forms an angle of 124 degrees, as shown on yard diagram attached hereto at **Tab "B"**.

The Property is improved with the Scottish Rite Temple ("Temple") that fronts on 16th Street. Your client proposes to construct a "U- shaped" rear addition to the Temple with approximately 176 residential units, including the required Inclusionary Zoning ("IZ") set aside units, off-street loading, vehicle and bicycle parking spaces and resident amenity space (the "Project"). Your client intends to process this matter under ZR-16, although we had previously discussed the possibility of your client's project "vesting" under the 1958 Zoning Regulations because of the HPRB approval.

In December 2015, your client obtained approval from DDOT's Public Space Committee for Tracking No. 117408 regarding the Project. Furthermore, in April 2016, your client obtained approval for the Project's massing, height and design from the Historic Preservation Review Board ("HPRB") in HPA Case No. 16-309. Further historic preservation review of progressed design plans has been delegated to the Historic Preservation Office ("HPO") staff.

---

1100 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Washington, D.C. 20024  
Phone: (202) 442-4576 Fax: (202) 442-4871

The Project will front on Columbia Road and will be 90' in height as measured from the Building Height Measuring Point ("BHMP") on Columbia Road. As discussed below, the Project will be connected to the Temple through a "meaningful connection". The design also includes an approximately 8,000 sq. ft. closed court between the Project and the Temple. The design also includes bay projections into public space. The size and length of these projections into Public Space are not within the scope of my office, but are subject to the regulations administered by DDOT's Public Space Management Administration. Accordingly, I would encourage your client to coordinate with DDOT and obtain any additional public space approvals that may be necessary.

In summary, at our meetings, I have found the following:

**Temple and Project are Single Building for Zoning Purposes.**

As stated above, your client proposes to construct an addition to the existing Temple that will provide approximately 176 residential units. For the reasons discussed below, the Project is an addition to an existing structure because it is proposed to be connected to the Temple through a proposed connection (the "Proposed Connection") that satisfies the requirements of a "meaningful connection", as that term is set out in 11 DCMR Subtitle § B 309.1, which reads:

For purposes of this chapter, structures that are separated from the ground up by common division walls or contain multiple sections separated horizontally, such as wings or additions, are separate buildings. Structures or sections shall be considered parts of a single building if they are joined by a connection that is:

- (a) Fully above grade;
- (b) Enclosed;
- (c) Heated and artificially lit;
- and (d) Either:

(1) Common space shared by users of all portions of the building, such as a lobby or recreation room, loading dock or service bay; or

(2) Space that is designed and used to provide free and unrestricted passage between separate portions of the building, such as an unrestricted doorway or walkway.

As illustrated in the Proposed Connection diagram at Tab "C", the Proposed Connection between the Project and the Temple satisfies the above requirements because it is (a) above-grade, (b) an enclosed windowed walkway that includes windows that can be opened when weather permits but otherwise will be closed and secured to provide protection against the elements; (c) heated and artificially lit; and (d) common space that is designed and used to

provide free and unrestricted passage between separate portions of the building. To constitute free and unrestricted access, each building owner (your client and the Scottish Rite) must have reciprocal access rights through the Proposed Connection, although access is not required to be provided for occupants of the separate portions of the building.

## **Yards**

*No side yards required*

Generally, no side yard is required in the RA-4 Zone District. 11 DCMR F § 306.1(b). However, Subtitle F § 306.3 requires a side yard “[w]hen a new dwelling, flat, or multiple dwelling is erected that does not share a common division wall with an existing building or a building being constructed together with the new building . . . .” Here, because the Project is an addition to an existing structure, rather than a “new” multiple dwelling, no side yards are required.

*Rear Yard calculated from the Centerline of 16th Street*

As a corner lot, the Project will identify Mozart Place NW as the front lot line, with the rear lot line along 16th Street and the side lot lines as shown in the yards diagram image at **Tab “B”**.

As stated above, there is no side yard requirement because the Project is a single building with the Temple. Moreover, the RA-4 Zone has no front yard requirement.

Accordingly, the only yard requirement is for the rear yard. The rear yard requirement in the RA-4 is 15 ft. or 4 in. per ft. of building height. Subtitle F § 305.1. Here, the proposed height for the Project is 90 ft., resulting in a rear yard requirement of 30 ft. Under Subtitle F § 305.2, because the Property is a corner lot, the depth of the rear yard is measured from the centerline of 16th Street, which is the street abutting the rear lot line. As shown in the 1913 Baist map attached to this letter at **Tab “D”**, the 16th Street right of way is 160-foot wide, making the center line of 16th Street 80 ft. from the Property’s rear lot line. Accordingly, the rear yard calculation more than satisfies the zoning requirements for rear yards in the RA-4 Zone District.

## **Compliance with Other RA-4 Development Standards**

In addition to the aspects of the Project discussed above, you have indicated that the Project will comply with the matter-of-right development standards for the RA-4 Zone District as follows:

### **Floor Area Ratio (“FAR”)**

The maximum permitted FAR in the RA-4 Zone District is 3.5; however, a 20% bonus density is permitted when a development complies with IZ requirements. Subtitle F § 302.1; Subtitle C § 1002.3. As shown on Sheet SK-13 of the Architectural Plans included as **Tab “E”**, the Project and the Temple will have a maximum combined FAR of 4.2 FAR, which is



the maximum permitted in the RA-4 Zone, inclusive of the 20% bonus density provided under IZ.

#### Height

Pursuant to Subtitle F § 303.1, the maximum permitted building height in the RA-4 Zone District is 90 ft. The Project will have a maximum height of 90 ft. as measured from the BHMP on Columbia Road, as shown on Sheets SK-03, SK-06 to SK-08 and SK-13 of **Tab “E”**. The Project’s proposed height was approved by HPRB in HPA Case No. 16-309.

Pursuant to Subtitle B §§ 308.2 and 308.7, the building height has been measured from the existing grade at the mid-point of the Project’s façade closest to the street lot line of Columbia Road, which provides a BHMP of el. 197’, as shown in **Tab “E”**, pages SK-03 and SK-13. Furthermore, in the RA-4 Zone District, building height is measured to the highest point of the roof “excluding parapets and balustrades not exceeding four feet (4 ft.) in height” in accordance with Subtitle B § 308.3. As shown on SK-08, the Project includes a 4-foot tall parapet (shown at el. 291’) that is not included in the Project’s height calculation pursuant to Subtitle B § 308.3, referenced above. Accordingly, the Project satisfies the zone’s height requirements because, as shown in the elevations at SK-06 to SK-08 of **Tab “E”**, the height of the Project is 90 feet (maximum elevation of el. 287’ – BHMP of el. 197’ = 90 feet).

#### Closed Court

The Project proposes a closed interior court between the Project and the rear of the existing Temple. This court satisfies the definition of a “closed court” set out in Subtitle B § 100.2 because it is an “unoccupied space, not a court niche open to the sky” that is “surrounded on all sides by the exterior walls of a building or by exterior walls of a building and side or rear lot lines.” As shown on the Yard Diagram at **Tab “B”**, the interior court is surrounded by side lot lines abutting the Unification Church to the north and the Italian Embassy to the south and the exterior walls of the Temple to the east and the Project to the west. Accordingly, the proposed interior court is a “closed court”.

Under Subtitle F § 202.1, a closed court in the RA-4 zone, for a residential use with more than three units, must have a minimum width of four (4) inches per foot of court height and no less than 15 feet of width. Here, as discussed above, the bounding walls of the court are proposed to be a maximum of 90 ft. in height. Therefore, the minimum width of the court is 30 ft. ( $90 \text{ ft.} \times 4/12 = 30 \text{ ft.}$ ). As shown on SK-13 in **Tab “E”**, the court has a minimum width of 95’-3”. Accordingly, the court satisfies the zone’s minimum width requirement for a closed court.

Furthermore, pursuant to Subtitle F § 202.1, the minimum area of a closed court is “twice the square of the required width of court dimension.” Accordingly, the minimum closed court area is 1,800 sq. ft. (30’ width x 30’ width x 2). In this case, as shown on SK-03 and SK-13 at **Tab “E”**, the Project provides a closed court that is approximately 8,000 s.f. in size, which is more than four times the required area. Accordingly, the Project satisfies the zone’s closed court requirement.

### Penthouse Height

Under Subtitle F § 303.2, the maximum permitted penthouse height in the RA-4 Zone District is 20 ft. This zone permits habitable penthouse uses in one story plus a mezzanine and a second story for mechanical space.

Furthermore, Subtitle C § 1500.9 states,

Enclosing walls of the penthouse shall be of equal, uniform height as measured from roof level, except that:

- (a) Enclosing walls of penthouse habitable space may be of a single different height than walls enclosing penthouse mechanical space;
- (b) For a penthouse containing no habitable space, enclosing walls of penthouse mechanical space shall be of a single uniform height except walls enclosing an elevator override may be of a separate uniform height; and
- (c) Required screening walls around uncovered mechanical equipment may be of a single, different uniform height.

As shown on Sheets SK-06 to SK-12 of **Tab "E"**, the Project proposes an 11'-tall habitable penthouse that will reach an elevation of 298'. A mechanical penthouse that includes a sun/pool deck will have a maximum elevation of 304'. Sections illustrating the location of the pool sunken within the mechanical plenum are included at Sheets SK-09 and SK-10 of **Tab "E"**. Also, an elevator overrun will have a maximum elevation of 307'. Ramping that is less than 4 ft. in height is also proposed, and it will not exceed the mechanical penthouse elevation of 304'. Accordingly, the maximum height of the penthouse, including habitable penthouse (11') + mechanical penthouse with sun/pool deck (6') + elevator overrun (3') is 20 feet, which is permitted in the RA-4 zone.

### Penthouse Setback

As shown on the penthouse plans at Sheets SK-04 to SK-05 and SK-10, the proposed penthouse will satisfy the penthouse setback requirements of Subtitle C § 1502.1(a), (b) and (c).

First, the 11'-tall habitable penthouse will be set back on at least a 1:1 ratio from the front, side and rear building walls as required by Subtitle C §§ 1502.1(a), (b) and (c). No setback is required from the side roof walls of the Project facing the interior, closed court pursuant to Subtitle C §§ 1502.1(c)(5).

Next, the 6'-tall mechanical penthouse with sun/pool deck will also provide the necessary setbacks, being set back at least on a 1:1 ratio from the necessary building roof walls. In lieu

of a guard rail on this portion of the penthouse, your client will provide terraced architectural embellishments that will not include mechanical equipment or piping. As shown on the enlarged section at Sheet SK-10 of **Tab "E"**, those architectural embellishments are also appropriately set back from the building wall of the roof upon which they are located, although such setbacks may not be required pursuant to Subtitle C § 1502.1. These architectural embellishments comply with Subtitle C §§ 1501.3 because they will "not result in the appearance of a raised building height for more than thirty percent (30%) of the wall on which the architectural embellishment is located". Also, the proposed mechanical penthouse/sun and pool deck's ramping and guard rails surrounding the ramping are less than 4'-in height, and do not constitute a structure. The ramping and the guard rails satisfy the requirement of Subtitle C §§ 1502.1(a), (b) and (c) because they are set back more than 1:1 from the front, rear and side from the building wall of the roofs upon which they are located.

The 3'-tall elevator overrun also complies with the setback requirement because it is more than 1:1 from the necessary front, side and rear.

#### Lot Occupancy

Pursuant to Subtitle F § 304.1, the maximum lot occupancy in the RA-4 Zone District is 75%. As shown on the SK-13 at **Tab "E"**, the Project will have a lot occupancy of 73%, in compliance with the zoning regulations.

#### Green Area Ratio

As shown on SK-13 at **Tab "E"**, the Project will provide a green area ratio of 0.3, which meets the minimum green area ratio ("GAR") of 0.3 that is required in the RA-4 Zone District (Subtitle F § 307.1). The GAR will be achieved through a mix of on-site plantings, green roof and a grass courtyard.

#### Vehicle Parking

Pursuant to Subtitle C § 704.2, new parking spaces are only required for the Project (not the Temple) because the Property is located within the Meridian Hill Historic District.

The minimum parking requirements for the Project are as follows:

- No parking spaces are required for the Temple use : Pursuant to the November 23, 2015 Zoning Determination Letter attached here at **Tab "A"**, the Temple does not require any parking spaces because when it was constructed in 1940, the use "would have required no off-street parking." Also, as set out in the Determination Letter, the existing medical clinic requires 23 parking spaces. The clinic will not be included in the Project.
- 57 Parking Spaces are required for the Project: Under Subtitle C § 701.5, a residential, multiple dwelling development must provide one parking space per three dwelling units in excess of four units. The Project would require 57 parking spaces ( $176 \text{ units} - 4 = 172 \text{ units} / 3 = 57$ ).

As shown on SK-01 and SK-02 at **Tab "E"**, the Project will provide 59 parking spaces in a below-grade garage, which exceeds the required number of spaces (as well as 7 additional

tandem parking spaces not counting towards the minimum). Accordingly, the Project satisfies the parking requirement of Subtitle C § 701.5. Also, as shown on SK-01 and SK-02 at **Tab “E”**, the proposed parking spaces satisfy the minimum dimension for full-sized parking spaces set out at Subtitle C § 712.5. Finally, the Project is also located within 0.3 miles from the Columbia Heights Metro Station. Accordingly, the Project would be eligible for a 50% parking reduction based on transit proximity under Subtitle C § 702.1(a). With this reduction, the number of required parking spaces would be reduced to 29 spaces (57 required spaces x .5 transit proximity reduction).

#### Bicycle Parking

Pursuant to Subtitle C § 802.1, residential apartments require one long term bicycle parking space for every three dwelling units and one short-term bicycle parking space for every 20 dwelling units.

The Project proposes 176 units and, accordingly, is required to provide a maximum of 59 long-term bicycle parking spaces and nine short-term bicycle parking spaces.

As shown on SK-02 at **Tab “E”**, the Project provides 80 long-term bicycle parking spaces in an interior bike room located on Basement Level 1. The Project also proposes 13 short-term bicycle parking spaces that are proposed to be located in public space as illustrated on SK-03 at **Tab “E”**. Therefore, the Project will provide the necessary bike spaces on site, and thus comply with the bicycle parking requirement.

#### Loading

Off-street loading facilities are only required for the Project, not for the Temple building/use because the Temple is a contributing structure in the Meridian Hill Historic District. Subtitle C § 901.7.

Therefore, pursuant to Subtitle C § 901.1, a loading berth and a service/delivery area are required for residential developments with 50 or more dwelling units. The Project proposes more than 50 dwelling units, and is required to provide one loading berth and one service/delivery area.

As shown on SK-02 at **Tab “E”**, the 30’ loading berth and 20’ service/delivery space will be located in the Basement 1 Level and will be accessible from Mozart Place. As set out in Subtitle C §§ 905.2 and 905.4(a), loading berths must be a minimum of 12 feet wide, have a minimum depth of 30 feet and have minimum vertical clearance of 14 feet. A loading platform must have at least 100 square feet of area, be at least eight feet wide and have a minimum vertical clearance of 10 feet. Moreover, pursuant to Subtitle C § 905.3, a service/delivery space is required to be a minimum of 10 feet wide, have a minimum depth of 20 feet and a minimum vertical clearance of 10 feet. Loading is to be provided “within the building or structure the berths or spaces are designed to serve.” See Subtitle C § 903.1(a).

As shown on the attached plans, the Project proposes loading and service/delivery areas in satisfaction of the applicable zoning requirements.

### Inclusionary Zoning

Subtitle C § 1001.2(b) states that a development will be subject to IZ requirements when the project proposes new gross floor area that results in ten or more dwelling units. Here, the Project proposes 176 dwelling units in new gross floor area and, therefore, will be required to comply with IZ.

An amendment to the IZ regulations has been adopted by the Zoning Commission as case number 04-33G and will become effective on June 5, 2017. Under the amendment, if a building employs Type I construction, as that term is defined in the Construction Code, then the IZ set aside is 8% of the Project's GFA dedicated to residential use or 50% of achievable bonus density plus 8% of penthouse habitable space. Furthermore, for rental units, the IZ set aside must be dedicated to households earning equal to or less than 60% of Median Family Income.


The Project will employ Type I construction and will provide the necessary affordable dwelling unit set aside to satisfy the IZ requirements in place at the time of building permit approval.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the review of the attached plans and exhibits, the Project on the Property complies with the RA-4 Zone District requirements, and the Project may be permitted as a matter-of-right.

Accordingly, when the building permit application for the Project is filed, my office will approve drawings that are substantially consistent with the maximum zoning information provided on the materials attached to this letter at Tabs "B", "C", and "E".

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,   
Matthew Le Grant  
Zoning Administrator

### Attachments:

- Tab A – November 23, 2015 Zoning Determination Letter
- Tab B – Yard Diagram from Mozart Place
- Tab C – At-Grade Connection
- Tab D – Baist Map (1913)
- Tab E – Architectural Plans

File: Det Let re 2800 16th St NW to Moldenhauer 2-13-17

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

November 23, 2015



Meridith H. Moldenhauer  
Griffin, Murphy, Moldenhauer & Wiggins, LLP  
1912 Sunderland Place, NW  
Washington DC, 20036

Re: The Scottish Rite Lodge property at 2800 16<sup>th</sup> Street N.W. (the "Property")

Dear Mrs. Moldenhauer,

This letter is in reference to discussions at our meeting on September 3, 2015 and subsequent dialogue with you regarding you client's intended development on property located at 2800 16<sup>th</sup> Street N.W., referred to herein as the Property. I would like to memorialize our discussion regarding EastBanc's proposed development of the Property.

**The Property**

The Property is classified within the R-5-D Zone District and is a contributing building in the Meridian Hill Historic District, which was created in 2014. The Property is improved with a building constructed circa 1940 (the "Building"), which serves as an auditorium, banquet facility, and offices for the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the District of Columbia, as well as a parking garage (the "Garage") constructed in 1986, at a time when the Property was not considered historic. The Building contains approximately 26,622 square feet of gross floor area, with approximately 14,174 square feet of cellar floor area, and the auditorium holds 393 seats. In addition, the Building hosts a clinic devoted to the treatment of childhood speech disorders (the "Clinic"), which comprises 7,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area.

The Garage was constructed in connection with the placement of the Clinic on the Property. At the time of the Clinic's inception, the Property was not considered historic and was not subject to any exemptions from the 11 DCMR Chapter 21 (the "Parking Regulations"). Based on the plans we have reviewed, it was determined in 1986 that 93 spaces were required to allow the expansion of the Building to include the Clinic, and a total of 132 were constructed in the Garage. A recent survey you provided shows that there are 115 striped spaces in the Garage, though we do not have any information on whether those striped spaces conform to the dimensional requirements of the Parking Regulations.

## Parking

As mentioned above, the Building is a contributing resource in the Meridian Hill Historic District, which qualifies any further changes to the Building or Property for an exemption from the Parking Regulations pursuant to 11 DCMR § 2120.3<sup>1</sup>; however,

*In the case of a building or structure for which the Zoning Regulations now require more parking spaces than were required when the building or structure was built, the following shall be required:*

- (a) *If the existing number of parking spaces now provided is less than or equal to the minimum number of parking spaces now required by this chapter, the number of parking spaces cannot be reduced; and*
- (b) *If the existing number of parking spaces now provided is more than the minimum number of parking spaces now required by this chapter, the number of parking spaces cannot be reduced below the minimum number of parking spaces required by this chapter.*

11 DCMR § 2100.10. In this case, the Zoning Regulations in effect at the time it was built required no parking. With the addition of the Proposed Development, the Zoning Regulations now require more parking spaces than were required when the Building and Garage were constructed, and the existing number of parking spaces now provided is more than the minimum number of parking spaces now required; therefore, subsection (b) above applies and the parking cannot be reduced below the minimum number of parking spaces required for the associated uses on the site. It follows, then, that we must first clearly determine the number of spaces that are required based on the old and new uses.

At the time of construction in 1940, the Building would have required no off-street parking. Beginning as recently as 1979, the Parking Regulations required that “when the use of a structure is changed to another use which requires more parking spaces than required for the use existing immediately prior to such change...parking spaces shall be provided for the additional requirement in the amount” but only if “the addition or additions increase the intensity of use of such structure by more than 25% of the aggregate.” Zoning Regulations, §§ 7201.3 and 7201.4

---

<sup>1</sup> A historic resource and any additions thereto are exempt from the requirement of § 2100.4 to provide additional parking as a result of a change of use and from the requirement of § 2100.6 to provide additional parking as a result of an increase of intensity of use, except that parking shall be required for any addition where:

- (a) The gross floor area of the historic resource is being increased by 50% or more, and
- (b) The parking requirement attributable to the increase in gross floor area is at least four (4) spaces.

(1979). In 1986, at the time of the addition of the Clinic, the Scottish Rite elected to construct the Garage based on the entire parking requirement in effect for new construction at that time. See Plans prepared by John S. Samperton Associates for Scottish Rite Lodge 11/18/1986, which note that 69 spaces were required for the existing Building (based on 1 space per 600 square feet of Gross Floor Area and cellar floor area for 41,480 square feet) and 24 spaces for the Clinic (based on 1 space per 300 square feet of Gross Floor Area and cellar floor area for 7,000<sup>2</sup>). Only parking for the 7,000 square foot Clinic, amounting to 23 spaces, would have been required at the time.

Nevertheless, 132 spaces were constructed, and 115 remain today. Under 11 DCMR § 2100.10(b), 23 spaces must remain on the property on which the Building sits. Additionally, because the Building is now deemed a historic resource, under 11 DCMR § 2120, any new addition to the Building is exempt from providing new parking spaces unless the addition seeks to add more than 50% of the *gross floor area* of the existing building and, if parked, that additional square footage would carry a requirement to provide four or more spaces. The Gross Floor Area of the Building is approximately 26,622; therefore any addition above 13,311 square feet would likely generate a requirement to park the additional square footage – but not the original 26,622 square feet.

Your client is seeking to add approximately 115,000 square feet of new residential Gross Floor Area, which would generate a parking requirement of 1 space per 3 dwelling units (based on 118 units, you would need to provide 39 parking spaces). Thus, in addition to a minimum of 23 spaces generated by existing uses (“Existing Requirement”), which must remain on the premises, the Proposed Development would require approximately 39 new parking spaces, for a total of 62 parking spaces (“New Requirement”).

Alternative development options would modify the parking requirement. If you relocated the clinic off site; then the only parking requirement would be for the new dwelling units created at the Property at a 1 space per 3 dwelling unit ratio. For an addition of 118 units, and relocated the clinic, the parking requirement would be 39 parking spaces total.

Alternatives:

Residential Units	Parking Requirement (w/o Clinic)	Parking Requirement (with Clinic)
82	27	50
115	38	61
117	39	62
122	41	64
135	45	68

---

<sup>2</sup> The Plans also show that the Clinic may have been either 7,784 or 7,000. (The difference would be either 25 required parking spaces or the above referenced 23 required parking spaces.)



**Bicycle Parking Requirement**


The proposed plan specifies that there will be approximately 118 residential units. According to the Bicycle Commuter and Parking Expansion Act of 2007, a residential building owner shall provide at least one secure bicycle parking space for each 3 residential units for all new residential buildings that have eight or more units. Based on these regulations the development would require 39 bicycle parking spaces.

**Loading Requirement**

The Scottish Rite temple does not have a loading requirement. Pursuant to 11 DCMR §2200.5, no additional loading berths, loading platforms, or service/delivery spaces are required for a historic landmark or a building or structure located in a historic district that is found to be a contributing building to the historic district. However, as with the parking requirement, when an addition to the existing building increases the structure by more than 25%, the additions must satisfy the loading requirements. The proposed additions will increase the gross floor area by more than 25%, and therefore must satisfy current loading requirements.

Pursuant to 11 DCMR §2200.1, a multiple dwelling structure with 50 units or more requires one loading berth at least 55 feet deep, one loading platform with at least 200 square feet of area and one service/delivery loading space at least 20 feet deep. The clinic has an existing 30 foot deep loading berth and one loading platform 171 square feet in area. If the Clinic is maintained on the Property then the loading must be maintained; however, if you relocated the Clinic off site then you would only need to provide the residential loading.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,   
Matthew Le Grant  
Zoning Administrator

**ZA Determination Letter, December 17, 2013 – 1920 N Street NW and 1233 20<sup>th</sup> Street NW**

Summary

Project consisted of a new 130-foot office and retail building, including an architectural embellishment comprised of a glass box with a structural beam skeleton and structural support elements on its exterior that extended to a height of 140.5 feet, which is in excess of what is otherwise permitted under the 1910 Height Act, unless it is determined to be an architectural embellishment. **The ZA determined that the project complied with the Zoning Regulations and the Height Act and concluded that, although the embellishment would feature structural support, its role was “design driven” and its purpose to contribute to the aesthetics of the building. The ZA concluded, “the mere fact that a portion of the top occupiable floor’s ceiling happens to be the top of the Embellishment does not render the portion of such space over 130 feet occupiable.”** The ZA cited numerous examples of publicly accessible atriums through the District:

- 1875 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (the WilmerHale building, which contains an embellishment located immediately adjacent to the street frontage and extended for the entire depth of the building);
- 1818 H Street, NW (the World Bank building);
- 555 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (Columbia Square);
- 1430 K Street, NW;
- 1331 F Street, NW;
- 1625 I Street, NW;
- 601 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (the Homer Building);
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Headquarters I at 19<sup>th</sup> and H Streets, NW;
- IMF Headquarters II at 1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW;
- 1501 K Street, NW (the Investment Building);
- 1400 M Street, NW (the Westin DC City Center);
- 555 12<sup>th</sup> Street, NW; and
- The Convention Center Hotel.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

December 17, 2013

By US Mail and Email PDF



Allison Prince  
Goulston & Storrs  
1999 K Street, NW, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20006

Re: 1920 N Street, NW and 1233 20<sup>th</sup> Street, NW – Lots 75 and 76<sup>1</sup>, Square 116  
(the “Property”)

Dear Ms. Prince:

This letter confirms the issues we discussed on September 10, 2013 relating to a proposed new office and retail building at the Property. During this meeting, we discussed the architectural embellishment for the proposed building described further below. It is my understanding that the owner is designing a 130 foot office and retail project on the Property. The new structure at 1920 N Street, NW will be combined with the existing structure at 1233 20<sup>th</sup> Street, NW to form one building. I have concluded that the proposed Embellishment as shown on Exhibit A (the “Plans”), and as defined below, complies with the Zoning Regulations and the Act to Regulate the Height of Buildings in the District of Columbia (“Height Act”) (D.C. Official Code §§ 6-601.01 to 6-601.09) as described below.

The Property has frontage on 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and N Streets, NW. The Property is zoned in the C-3-C Zone District and the New Downtown Transferable Development Rights (“TDR”) Receiving Zone. [1709.16] The C-3-C Zone District and New Downtown Receiving Zone permit a maximum building height of 130 feet at the Property, based on the Height Act. [1709.21] The Height Act allows a building on a business street (which includes a street in a commercial zone district) to be built to a height equal to the width of the widest abutting street plus twenty (20) feet, with the overall maximum building height of 130 feet. The building may achieve a maximum FAR of 10.0, provided that the Property receives sufficient TDRs. [1709.21] In addition, the proposed building may occupy 100% of the lot. [772.1] The rear yard may be measured to the middle of the adjacent street. [774.11]

The Plans propose an architectural embellishment on the eastern portion of the Property which will extend to a height of 140.5 feet, or 10.5 feet above the 130 foot limit (the “Embellishment”). The enclosed area of the Embellishment will be approximately 100 feet long and 52 feet wide and comprise an area of approximately 5,200 square feet<sup>2</sup>. These

<sup>1</sup> These parcels will be combined with Lots 59, 60, 61, 809, and 833 in Square 116.

<sup>2</sup> The Plans depict an example of the Embellishment described in this letter. The dimensions of the final design of the Embellishment will be within two percent (2%) of the dimensions described in this paragraph.

1920 N Street, NW  
December 17, 2013

dimensions have been reduced since the September 10, 2013 meeting. The initial length of the Embellishment was 130 feet and its area was approximately 6,100 square feet. The vertical space comprising the Embellishment actually begins at a building height of approximately 117 feet. The structural beams contained within the glass enclosure extend west from the enclosure and are exposed to the elements a distance of approximately 30 feet.

Based on the presentation by the project architect at the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, I understand that the Embellishment will be comprised of a glass box with structural support elements on its exterior (minimized to allow for maximum translucence) surrounding an iconic structural beam skeleton. As mentioned, a portion of the structure will extend beyond the glass enclosure to the west. According to the architect, the primary driver for the Embellishment is its aesthetic effect; the structure will become the ornament. Based on the presentation and my review, I agree that the Embellishment is design driven – it is a translucent and modern interpretation of a tower. The tower encases a unique structural form. Although the steel beam skeleton will have a function to support portions of the building, the Embellishment would not exist but for its role in the aesthetics of the building. As further evidence of the ornamental nature of the Embellishment, that portion of the proposed building is the continuation of a bay window beginning approximately 36 feet, 8 inches above grade. Such bay window is an integral part of the building's design.

Although the ceiling of the portion of the top floor comprising the Embellishment is the top of the Embellishment, the upper volume of such space, including that above 130 feet is not usable by building occupants on the top floor. As a corollary, if there were a ceiling constructed all the way across the proposed building, at a height of 130 feet, the portion of the Embellishment above 130 feet would not be able to function as a non-compliant roof space since it is obstructed by the beams and the ceiling height would be too low. Further, the portion of the Embellishment over 130 feet will not contain any air-handling ductwork or other mechanical items to render it as occupiable space. The Embellishment is also separate from, has no direct communication with, and is below the height of the project's roof structure.

The mere fact that a portion of the top occupiable floor's ceiling happens to be the top of Embellishment does not render the portion of such space over 130 feet occupiable. In fact, there are similar situations in buildings all over the city where the ceiling of an occupiable floor is located above the relevant Height Act height. Such situation occurs in publicly accessible atriums all over the city. In such situations, although the users of occupiable space are located at the ground level of a building, there is no structure, and no ceiling, separating such users from the ceiling of the atriums above 130 feet. Such precedent exists in cases both approved by the D.C. Zoning Commission and similar bodies as well as those that proceeded as a matter-of-right. Such condition exists in the following precedential cases: 1875 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (the Wilmer Hale building, which contained an embellishment located immediately adjacent to the street frontage and extended for the entire depth of the building); 1818 H Street, NW (the World Bank building); 555 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (Columbia Square); 1430 K Street, NW; 1331 F Street, NW; 1625 I Street, NW; 601 13<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (the Homer Building); the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Headquarters I at 19<sup>th</sup> and H Streets, NW; IMF Headquarters II at 1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW; 1501 K Street, NW (the Investment Building); 1400 M Street, NW

1920 N Street, NW  
December 17, 2013

(the Westin DC City Center); 555 12<sup>th</sup> Street, NW; and, most recently, the Convention Center Hotel, approved by Z.C. Order No. 08-13.

Similarly, facades have been permitted to extend above 130 feet for aesthetic reasons throughout the City. In such cases, the extension of the façades did not create roof structures as defined under the Zoning Regulations, but rather constituted architectural embellishments. As a result, such architectural elements were not required to be set back from the exterior walls of the respective buildings. Such condition exists in the following precedential cases: 1875 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (the Wilmer Hale building); 1430 K Street, NW; 1501 K Street, NW (the Investment Building); 1160 1<sup>st</sup> Street, NE; 900 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers building); and 1225 Connecticut Avenue, NW.

As mentioned above, the Embellishment comprises approximately 5,200 square feet of area. The roof area of the building is approximately 43,000 square feet. Therefore, the Embellishment comprises approximately twelve percent (12%) of the roof area, and an even smaller percentage of the building footprint.

As an architectural embellishment, the Embellishment is also not a roof structure under the Zoning Regulations. It does not house any mechanical equipment, stairways, or elevator overrides. The Plans propose a separate roof structure that will contain such “back of the house” elements of the building which will be set back from the exterior walls of the building.

In light of the above discussion, the Zoning Regulations and the Height Act permit architectural embellishments above 130 feet and the Embellishment is permitted as designed.

If you have any questions about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



---

Matt Le Grant  
Zoning Administrator

Attachments: Plan Set for Architectural Establishment

File: Det Let re 1920 N St NW to Prince 12-17-13