

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: *KB for* Meredith Soniat
Associate Director

DATE: February 27, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 20492A – 2405 Alabama Avenue SE

APPLICATION

2405 Alabama Ave, LLC (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 of the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)*, requests a Modification with Hearing to Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) Order No. 20492. The modification seeks:

- A Special Exception from the minimum vehicle parking requirements of *DCMR* Subtitle C § 701.5 to allow zero (0) off-street vehicle parking spaces for a previously approved 16-unit residential building that required two (2) spaces after taking the allowable 50% reduction for being within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of high-frequency Metrobus service (Routes C21 and C53); and
- An Area Variance from the side yard requirements of *DCMR* Subtitle F § 208.3(a) to shift the building 3 feet west to accommodate a pedestrian walkway on-site.

The subject property is located at 2405 Alabama Avenue SE (Parcel 221, Lot 66) and is zoned RA-1. The site is currently vacant and was previously approved for a new, detached, three-story residential building with cellar and penthouse ([BZA Case No. 20492](#)).

Under the original approval, the Applicant proposed five (5) parking spaces accessed via a shared driveway easement with the adjacent property at 2425 Alabama Avenue SE. However, the easement was never recorded, and the adjacent property’s new owner does not wish to enter into an easement. As a result, the Applicant cannot provide the originally approved parking.

The site’s physical constraints, including its irregular lot shape, lack of alley access, and DDOT’s curb cut policies, make providing the parking on-site impractical. The property is well-served by transit and pedestrian infrastructure, supporting the requested relief.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieving an exceptional quality of life by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. 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 and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action.

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

- Zoning requires two (2) off-street vehicle parking spaces for the approved 16-unit residential building after taking the allowable 50% reduction for proximity to high-frequency Metrobus service (Routes C21 and C53) along Alabama Avenue SE;
- The Applicant is requesting relief to provide zero (0) parking spaces due to the inability to utilize the previously anticipated shared driveway easement and the site’s physical constraints;
- The property lacks alley access, and DDOT’s curb cut policies strongly discourage creating a new curb cut because it would remove on-street parking and introduce pedestrian conflict points;
- The site is well-served by transit, including multiple Metrobus routes, and is located in a walkable neighborhood with access to essential services and amenities;
- Title 11 of the *DCMR*, Subtitle C §703.4 only requires a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan if relief from five (5) or more spaces is requested or if the project includes 20 or more residential units. Therefore, a TDM Plan is not required in this case;
- DDOT supports the requested relief given the site’s proximity to transit, lack of alley access, and the impracticality of providing parking without creating a new curb cut. The impacts on the transportation network are expected to be minimal.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, price, and supply of parking spaces. However, in urban areas, other factors contribute to parking demand, such as the availability of high-quality transit, frequency of transit service, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the demographic composition of potential residents.

The Applicant is required by Zoning to provide two (2) off-street parking spaces after taking the allowable 50% reduction for proximity to high-frequency Metrobus service (Routes C21 and C53) along Alabama Avenue SE. The Applicant is requesting relief to provide zero (0) spaces due to the inability to utilize the previously anticipated shared driveway easement and the site’s physical constraints.

The property lacks alley access, and DDOT’s curb cut policies strongly discourage creating a new curb cut because it would:

- Remove at least one (1) on-street parking space;
- Introduce a conflict point between vehicles and pedestrians; and

- Reduce green space and street trees.

DDOT policy prioritizes alley access and inter-parcel connections over new curb cuts and only permits curb cuts when leading to multiple parking spaces and when no other access option exists. Given the site's location near high-frequency Metrobus service and the impracticality of providing parking without creating a new curb cut, DDOT expects the impacts on the transportation network to be minimal.

Residential Permit Parking (RPP) Pass Eligibility

The site is located on the 2400 block of Alabama Avenue SE, which is currently in the DDOT and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Residential Permit Parking (RPP) [database](#). Accordingly, residents on site are eligible to obtain Zone 8 parking permits from the DMV.

Bicycle Parking

The Applicant is required by Zoning to provide zero (0) short-term and five (5) long-term bicycle parking spaces for a 16-unit residential building. The previously approved plans included a bike storage room in the cellar level and two (2) short-term spaces (one inverted U-rack) at the front of the property. DDOT expects these facilities to remain and meet the design requirements of *DCMR* Subtitle C §805 and DDOT's [Bike Parking Guide](#).

Loading

DDOT's practice is to accommodate loading operations safely and efficiently, while prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle safety and limiting negative impacts to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place on private property and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm.

Per Title 11 of the *DCMR*, Subtitle C § 901.1, buildings with fewer than 50 units are not required to provide a loading berth. As such, future residents should obtain "emergency no parking" signs from DDOT to reserve an on-street parking space for move-ins and -outs. Since the site has more than three (3) units, the Applicant must contract a private trash collection service, and trash must be stored entirely on private property and out of the view of the sidewalk.

However, the site's loss of driveway access creates a significant operational challenge for trash collection and deliveries. DDOT policy strongly discourages externalizing these operations into public space; however, curbside loading is necessary to facilitate the proposed site plan, and the Applicant will need to:

- Commit to a Loading Management Plan (LMP) during public space permitting to offset impacts to roadway operations. The LMP should include restrictions on delivery times, frequency, and truck size, and identify contingency plans if curbside space is unavailable; and
- Coordinate with DDOT's Curbside Management Division (CMD), which may opt to sign a "No Parking Zone" or implement alternate curbside restrictions rather than establish a formal metered commercial loading zone, depending on street characteristics and competing curbside demands.

STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM

DDOT's lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of the public realm. All elements of the project proposed within District-owned right-of-way require the Applicant to pursue a public space construction permit.

The following items impacting public space will need to be resolved by the Applicant during permitting:

- **Curbside Management for Loading and Trash** – Because the site no longer has driveway access, curbside space will need to accommodate trash collection and move-ins and -outs. DDOT will review a formal request for curbside restrictions, such as a No Parking Zone, during public space permitting. The decision will consider street width, competing curbside uses, and neighborhood context. Any signage or curbside changes will require coordination with CMD and must comply with District Standards.
- **Pedestrian Connectivity** – Plans do not show a lead walk connecting the main building entrance to the public sidewalk. DDOT expects this direct pedestrian connection to be added to ensure safe and accessible access.

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](#), 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.

The Applicant is encouraged to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with DDOT and the Office of Planning (OP) to discuss the public space comments in this report.

HERITAGE AND SPECIAL TREES

According to the District's [Tree Size Estimator map](#), the property has up to four (4) Special Trees on-site or directly adjacent in public or private space with overlapping critical root zones. DDOT expects the Applicant to coordinate with the Ward 8 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Special Trees, as well as the planting of new street trees per DDOT Green Infrastructure Standards.

Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special Trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by DDOT's Urban Forestry Division, a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) will be required.

MS:pj