

# 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:** March 4, 2022

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case No. 20658 – 1650 Harvard Street NW

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#### APPLICATION

1650 Harvard St NW Washington DC, LLC (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle C § 1504.1 and Subtitle X § 901.2, requests a special exception from the penthouse setback requirements of Subtitle C § 1502.1 to increase the size of an existing residential building from 156 to 182 units. The site is located in the RA-2 Zone at 1650 Harvard Street NW (Square 2589, Lot 847) and is not served by an alley.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action may lead to an 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.

DDOT expects development projects to minimize their potential impact on the transportation network by reducing their automotive travel demand. This can be accomplished by implementing a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. DDOT requests Applicants seeking BZA relief commit to a TDM Plan for residential buildings of 20 or more units when the relief requested is directly related to an increase in density or vehicle activity on-site or a new land use is introduced. In this case, granting relief would allow for an increase in the number of residential units in the habitable penthouse. Accordingly, DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application with the following condition:

- The Applicant shall implement the following Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan for the entirety of the building, for the life of the project, unless otherwise noted:

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- Unbundle the cost of vehicle parking from the lease or purchase agreement for each residential unit and charge a minimum rate based on the average parking rate within a quarter mile;
- Identify Transportation Coordinators for the planning, construction, and operations phases of development. The Transportation Coordinators will act as points of contact with DDOT, goDCgo, and Zoning Enforcement and will provide their contact information to goDCgo;
- Transportation Coordinators will develop, distribute, and market various transportation alternatives and options to the residents, including promoting transportation events (i.e., Bike to Work Day, National Walking Day, Car Free Day) on property website and in any internal newsletters or communications;
- Transportation Coordinators will subscribe to goDCgo’s residential newsletter and receive TDM training from goDCgo to learn about the transportation conditions for this project and available options for implementing the TDM plan;
- Provide welcome packets to all new residents that should, at a minimum, include the Metrorail pocket guide, brochures of local transit lines (Streetcar, Circulator, and Metrobus), carpool and vanpool information, CaBi coupon or rack card, Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) brochure, and the most recent DC Bike Map; and
- The long-term bicycle storage room will contain a minimum of 55 long-term spaces and at least 50% of them will be located horizontally on the ground. A bicycle repair station will be included in the long-term bicycle parking storage room.

## **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 the demand for parking, such as the availability of high-quality transit, frequency of transit service, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, and the demographic composition and other characteristics of the potential residents.

The Applicant is required by zoning to provide 32 off-street parking spaces according to the Zoning Self-Certification Form. Per the Applicant’s Architectural Plans, the Applicant is providing 43 off-street parking spaces, which meets the zoning minimum. The parking spaces are accessed through a curb cut on Quarry Road NW. DDOT notes that the site has an excellent parking ratio, consistent with the January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*.

### Bicycle Parking

Zoning requires a minimum of 55 long-term bicycle parking spaces (1 per 3 units up to 50 spaces then 1 per 6) and 9 short-term spaces for a 182-unit residential building. To meet these requirements, the Applicant is proposing approximately 58 long-term bicycle parking spaces in a storage room and 10 short-term spaces (5 inverted U-racks). The Applicant should ensure that a minimum of 50% of the long-term spaces will be located horizontally on the floor and that larger bicycles like cargo and tandem bikes are accommodated. The Applicant should work with DDOT during public space permitting to determine a final location for the short-term bike racks, ideally in the ‘furniture zone’ near the edge of the street.

### 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. DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm. Access to this building for loading and unloading, delivery and trash pick-up is an important consideration, and DDOT expects the Applicant to comply with DDOT's standards for loading.

The existing loading dock and trash pick-up are located at the rear of the property via a curb cut to Quarry Street NW. These operations are planned to continue as they presently occur after renovation to the building has completed.

### **STREETScape AND PUBLIC REALM**

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 require the Applicant to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. The Applicant has an active public space permit application TOPS #384496. The Applicant is encouraged to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with DDOT and the Office of Planning (OP) to discuss the following public space comments.

The following items proposed in public space will need to be further reviewed with the Applicant during permitting:

- Circular Driveway – the development is proposing to retain the two (2) existing curb cuts on Harvard Street NW for a circular driveway in addition to the two (2) existing curb cuts off Quarry Road NW for access to the 43-space parking garage and loading dock area. The Applicant should close the circular driveway, restore the on-street parking spaces, and restore the 'public parking' area to green space.
- Short-term Bike Racks – short-term bike racks must meet the DDOT design and spacing standards. The Applicant must submit a specifications sheet for proposed bike racks with the permit.
- Anything else non-standard like the vaults and transformers in public space will require Public Space Committee approval.

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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