

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Crystal Myers, Development Review Specialist  
 JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** February 13, 2025

**SUBJECT:** FBZA Case # 21267 Application of Embassy of the Republic of Poland pursuant to 11 DCMR Subtitle X § 201.8

### **I. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning recommends that the FMBZA **not disapprove** the request to convert to a chancery use, the existing 8-story commercial building in the MU-1/DC zone at 1740 Massachusetts Avenue NW.

*The property is within the Massachusetts Avenue and Dupont Circle Historic Districts and is not subject to review and recommendations of the Historic Preservation Review Board or Commission of Fine Arts, as no additions or external changes to the building are proposed.*

### **II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1740 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Applicant:	Embassy of the Republic of Poland
Legal Description	Square 158, Lot 82
Ward / ANC	Ward 2; ANC 2B
Zone	MU-1/DC
Historic District or Resource	Massachusetts Avenue and Dupont Circle Historic Districts. However, the building is not listed as a contributing structure within these districts.
Lot Characteristics	The lot is an irregularly shaped mid-block parcel on the south side of Massachusetts Avenue, between 17 <sup>th</sup> Street and 18 <sup>th</sup> Street NW.
Existing Development	8-story commercial building formerly used as an academic and administrative building
Adjacent Properties	The adjacent properties are also diplomatic offices of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the west and Republic of Chile to the east.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Moderate to medium density mixed use neighborhood that is predominantly residential. The neighborhood is within a quarter mile of the Dupont Circle Metrorail station

### III. LOCATION MAP



### IV. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

The Embassy of the Republic of Poland proposes to convert this former John Hopkins' academic and administrative building into a chancery. This would allow them to consolidate their diplomatic operations from three separate locations into this one location. The site is zoned MU-1/DC, and no external physical changes to the building are proposed at this time.

### V. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

#### **Compliance with § 201.3**

*For applications requesting to locate, replace, or expand a chancery in a low- to medium-density residence zone, before applying the criteria of Subtitle X § 201.8, the Board of Zoning Adjustment after a hearing on the application shall determine whether the proposed location is in a mixed-use area determined on the basis of existing uses, which includes office and institutional uses.*

Not Applicable. The proposed use is for a property zoned MU-1/DC, which is a mixed use zone.

## VI. OFFICE OF PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

### **Compliance with § 201.8**

As part of its review, the FMBZA is required to evaluate the application within the six factors set forth in the Foreign Missions Act (FMA).

- (a) *The international obligation of the United States to facilitate the provision of adequate and secure facilities for foreign missions in the Nation's Capital;*

OP's recommendation to the FMBZA to not disapprove this application would be favorable in fulfilling the international obligation of the United States and is supported by the Department of State noted in its report at Exhibit 19.

- (b) *Historic preservation, as determined by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. In carrying out this section, and in order to ensure compatibility with historic landmarks and districts, substantial compliance with District of Columbia and federal regulations governing historic preservation shall be required with respect to new construction and to demolition of or alteration to historic landmark;*

This request does not include additions or external changes to the building so Historic Preservation comments are not applicable in this case.

- (c) *The adequacy of off-street parking or other parking and the extent to which the area will be served by public transportation to reduce parking needs, subject to such special security requirements as may be determined by the Secretary of State, after consultation with federal agencies authorized to perform protective services;*

Parking on the site is adequate. The property has an existing 25-space surface parking lot in the rear which exceeds the zoning parking requirement. Furthermore, it is well served by public transportation, as it is within a half mile of Dupont Metrorail station and multiple Metrobus routes.

- (d) *The extent to which the area is capable of being adequately protected, as determined by the Secretary of State, after consultation with federal agencies authorized to perform protective services;*

Federal agencies performing protective services have determined that the subject site and area are capable of being protected pursuant to federal regulations 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d) (4), as stated in Exhibit 19.

- (e) *The municipal interest, as determined by the Mayor of the District of Columbia; and*

The District of Columbia appreciates the project adaptively reusing an underutilized building and the Applicant locating their Chancery services in Dupont Circle should help to revitalize and support the economic development of the area.

- (f) *The federal interest, as determined by the Secretary of State.*

The U.S. Department of State's memo stated that there is a federal interest in the project and "...cooperation was essential for successfully achieving the Federal Government's mission of providing safe, secure, and functional facilities for the conduct of U.S. diplomacy and the promotion of U.S. interests worldwide." Exhibit 19.

## **VII. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

As of the writing of this report, no other District Agency has submitted a report on this case.

## **VIII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION**

As of the writing of this report, there is no report from ANC 2B in the record.

## **IX. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE**

As of the writing of this report, there are no comments from the community in the record.