

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager  
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** July 12, 2016

**SUBJECT:** BZA Application 19293 (19 I Street, N.W.) for an area variance to erect four ninety-foot high light poles and a special exception to increase the size of the faculty from 120 to 125

### **I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following area variances:

- § 400.1, Height of Buildings or Structures (R), (40 feet permitted, 90 feet proposed);
- § 770.1, Height of Buildings or Structures (C), (50 feet permitted, 90 feet proposed)

OP recommends **approval** of the following special exception:

- § 206.1 Public and Private Schools and Staff Residences, to increase staff from 120 to 125

Subject to the following condition as proposed by the applicant:

- The athletic field lights are turned off no later than 10:00 pm.

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

Address	19 I Street, N.W.
Applicant	Gonzaga College High School
Legal Description	Square 622, Lots 93, 844 and 845
Ward, ANC	Ward 6, ANC 6E
Zones	R-4 and C-2-A
Lot Characteristics	Unusually shaped property with frontage on H Street, I Street, K Street and North Capitol Street, N.W. and public alley access
Existing Development	Private school with outdoor track and field
Uses Adjacent the Athletic Field	North: Applicant's private school buildings and a historic church South: Office building and parking lot. Across H Street, the Government Printing Office East: Across North Capitol Street, office buildings West: Mixed use retail and residential building

Surrounding Neighborhood Character	A mixture of offices to the south and east, including ground level commercial uses, with moderate to medium density residential uses to the north and west, including some retail uses
Proposed Development	Construction of four 90-foot monopoles to light existing athletic field and an increase in the number of faculty and staff from 120 to 125

### III. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

#### a. Variance Relief from §§ 400.1 and 770.1, Height of Structures

##### i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The relief requested is for the erection of four ninety-foot high light poles. The height of these poles is dictated by the size and dimensions of the athletic field, and constrained by the needs of the sports for which it is used. Use of shorter poles would require more than four poles, increasing the amount of light spillage away from the field and decreasing the amount of light on the field, adversely affecting surrounding properties and the safety and use of the field.

##### ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The athletic field abuts a mixed-use retail and residential building to the west. To the east, across North Capitol Street, and to the south, are office buildings or parking lots. To the north are the applicant's school buildings and an historic church. Sheet L103, Buchanan Field Proposed Light Level Plan and Calculations (Exhibit 9), demonstrates that light spillage from the proposed light poles to the residential building and the travel lanes of North Capitol Street would be minimal. In combination with the applicant's agreement to shut off the lights by 10:00 pm, there should be no detriment to the public good.

##### iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The proposed light poles would allow this private school, a use permitted by special exception in the R-4 and as a matter of right within the C-2-A, to adequately operate its athletic program on-site without the need to travel elsewhere to fully implement its athletic program.

#### b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 206, Public and Private Schools and Staff Residences

i. 206.2 *The school shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to adjoining and nearby property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or otherwise objectionable conditions.*

206.3 *Ample parking space, but not less than that required in chapter 21 of this title, shall be provided to accommodate the students, teachers, and visitors likely to come to the site by automobile.*

The proposed modification to increase in faculty and staff from 120 to 125 should not result in an objectionable situation. No change to the number of students is proposed. The additional faculty and staff would increase the off-street parking requirement by four, resulting in a parking requirement of 198. There are 278 parking spaces on-site, in excess of the requirement.

**ii. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?**

The proposed increase in faculty and staff would allow this private school, a use permitted within the R-4 by special exception and the C-2-A as a matter of right, to continue to operate and meet its programming needs.

**iii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?**

The increase in the number of faculty and staff is less than one percent, with no change to the maximum number students and no building construction.

**IV. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

DDOT, in an email to OP dated June 28, 2016, indicated that it has no comments on the application.

No other comments were received from other District agencies.

**V. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

The applicant informed OP that ANC 6E is in support of the application, provided the lights are turned off no later than 10:00 pm.

No comments were received from ANC 6E.

Attachment: Location Map

