



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: *JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
Karen Thomas, Case Manager
DATE: August 26, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21331 - Special exception relief pursuant to Subtitle C § 1312 – to install five building mounted antenna on the roof at 300 7th Street S.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the requested special exception to permit seven antennas on the roof of the building at 300 7th Street S.W, not meeting the requirements as follows:

- C § 1305.1 (a) Antenna Projection: **Required:** The top of the antenna shall not extend above the top of the wall, or roof of the building; **Proposed:** 5 antennas, including 3 whip antennas projecting 16 feet 6 inches above the mechanical enclosure located on the roof and 2 GPS antennas 1 foot 6 inches above the rooftop structure.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	300 7 th Street S.W.
Applicant	WMATA
Legal Description	Square 464, Lot 26
Ward / ANC	6/ ANC 6B
Zone	D-5– Intended to permit high-density mixed-use development
Lot Characteristics	The lot is an triangle-shaped lot surrounded by streets at each property line.
Existing Development	The property is developed with an 11-story building owned by WMATA as the headquarters for its regional operations. Other antennas at this site were approved in BZA 20799.
Adjacent Properties	The property abuts a Reservation parcel to east, Virginia Avenue SW to the north, 7 th Street to the west and D Street to the south.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The immediate neighborhood is a mix of federal buildings and institutions. The L'Enfant Metro Station is immediately opposite D Street SW.
Proposed Development	WMATA proposes to install five new building-mounted antennas affixed to the mechanical enclosure on the roof, with each mounted whip and GPS antenna exceeding the top of the wall to which it is mounted.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Subtitle C § 1305.1(a) requires building-mounted antennas to not extend above the structure to which it is mounted. Per Subtitle C § 1305.2 building-mounted antennas which do not comply with this requirement may be permitted by special exception pursuant to the criteria of Subtitle C § 1312. In this instance, WMATA's proposed 3 building-mounted whip antennas would each have a total mounted height measuring approximately 16 feet 6 inches above the top of the rooftop structure. In addition, 2 GPS antennas would be placed approximately 1 foot 6 inches above the rooftop structure. Therefore, the following relief is requested:

- Special exception from the building-mounted antennas requirements of Subtitle C § 1305.1(a), pursuant to Subtitle C § 1305.2, Subtitle C § 1312, and Subtitle X § 901.2

IV. OP ANALYSIS – C § 1312

Section	Criteria	OP Response
<i>C§ 1312.1</i>		
(a)	<i>A map of area to be served by the new antenna;</i>	The proposed antennas would be added to the antennas on WMATA's headquarters and are necessary to support continued operation of Metrorail, Metrobus, and Metro Transit Police. Transmitting and receiving antennas are intended to service all existing above- and below-grade facilities, District and region- wide. A map in this instance would not be necessary as antennas at this site were recently approved under BZA 20799 .
(b)	<i>A map and explanation of the area being inadequately served that necessitates installation of the proposed antenna</i>	
(c)	<i>A map indicating the location of any other antennas and related facility sites providing service by the applicant, and any antenna tower or monopole of any provider, within a two (2) mile radius, including public space, of the proposed antenna site, with identified heights above grade;</i>	Other installations in the District that support WMATA, including the tower installations at 6001 Georgia Avenue, are out of range. The current antennas serve a two-mile radius, and the proposed location would continue to provide the necessary range required for the essential functioning of WMATA's operations.
(d)	<i>A site, and roof plan if applicable, showing all structures and antennas on site;</i>	The submission includes the site plan and roof plan showing the antennas' proposed location. (Exhibit 5, Sheet C0001 and C0107, C0108)
(e)	<i>Elevation drawings of the structure and proposed antennas from all four (4) directions;</i>	These are provided as Exhibit 5 , Sheet C0202
(f)	<i>A picture of the proposed antenna;</i>	The whip antennas would not be substantially different from existing ones and those depicted in the photos of Exhibit 5, Sheet A0501 .

Section	Criteria	OP Response
(g)	<i>The total mounted height of the antenna relative to the tops of surrounding trees as they presently exist within one-quarter mile (.25 mi.) of the proposed location; and</i>	There are no trees within the defined area that are the building's height of 130 feet or taller.
(h)	<i>Other information as may be necessary for impact assessment of the antenna.</i>	OP does not require additional information to assess the impact as viewed from public space.
C§ 1312.2	<i>the Board of Zoning Adjustment may impose conditions pertaining to screening, buffering, lighting, or other matter necessary to protect adjacent and nearby property</i>	OP does not suggest screening or other conditions related to the installation due to the building height of 130 feet, and that it is the only building within the square in which it is located.

Subtitle X § 901

901.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment is authorized under § 8 of the Zoning Act, D.C. Official Code § 6-641.07(g)(2), to grant special exceptions, as provided in this title, where, in the judgment of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the special exceptions:

(a) Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;

The antennas would be in harmony with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Regulations. They should not detract from the streetscape in this high-density neighborhood of primarily office structures as they would be located up to 21 feet from the roof edge. The view would not be appreciably changed as existing ones present minimal views from a distance. The smaller GPS antennas would project 1.5 feet above the mechanical enclosure to which they would be attached and due to the building's height, they are not anticipated to be visible from public space.

(b) Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and

The roof installations would be for WMATA's critical communications and operations center which facilitate optimal operations of its Metrorail, Metrobus and Police operations. The antennas must be located at the proposed heights above the rooftop structure to provide optimal unobstructed reception and transmission to and from its operation center within the building to support its effective communication functions to WMATA's equipment.

The proposed installation should not adversely affect the use of surrounding property. All property in the immediate vicinity is within the same zone district and do not have residential uses. This deviation of the antennas height above the roof should not adversely affect the use of the neighboring properties.

(c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.

The application and installation would satisfy other conditions specified for building mounted antennas under C § 1312 as shown.

IV. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT informed OP by email on 8/26/2025 that DDOT has no objection to the approval of the application.

Comments from other District agencies have not been received to the record as of the date of this report.

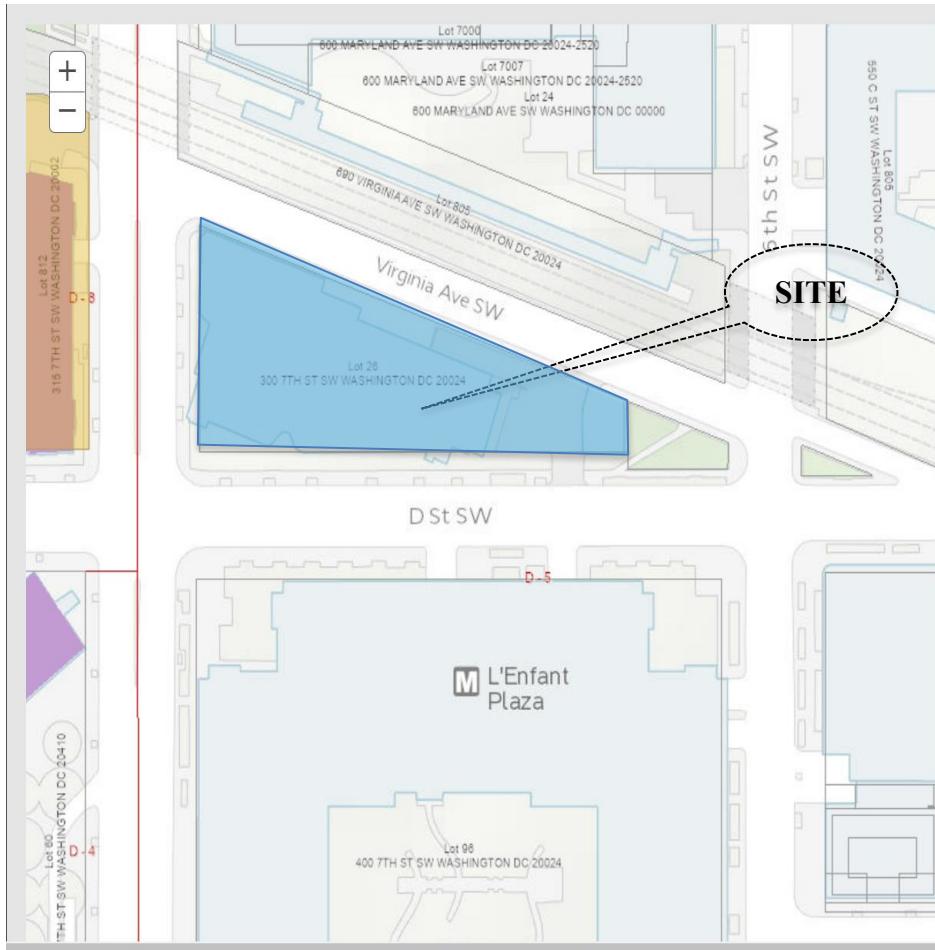
The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) submitted a letter of no objection to the installation at [Exhibit 12](#) of the record.

V. ANC COMMENTS

A report from ANC 6D report had not been added to the record at the writing of this report.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

There are no community comments in the record to date.



LOCATION MAP