



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Matt Jesick, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: August 28, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA #21337 – 2901 Minnesota Avenue, SE – Special Exception relief to establish a laundromat use

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following requested relief:

- U § 511.1(i), pursuant to X § 900 – Special exception review for a service use not meeting matter of right conditions (2,500 sq.ft. laundry permitted as a matter of right; 7,500 sq.ft. proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Applicant	CFC Inc.
Address	2901 Minnesota Ave., SE
Legal Description	Square 5507, Lot 803
Ward / ANC	7, ANC 7B
Zone	MU-3A, low density mixed use, providing “convenient retail and personal service establishments for the day-to-day needs of a local neighborhood” (G § 101.8)
Historic Designation	None
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	Triangular-shaped lot completely surrounded by streets; Existing 7,500 square foot retail building plus parking area; Two existing curb cuts.
Adjacent Properties and Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Existing commercial uses across Minnesota Ave. to the northwest; Remainder of the immediate neighborhood is characterized by small apartment buildings and semi-detached residential; Pope Branch Park is one block to the northeast.
Proposed Development	Establish a 7,500 sq.ft. retail laundromat. No expansions are proposed to the existing building.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND ANALYSIS

The site is zoned MU-3A, a zone that permits laundromats under 2,500 square feet in size as a matter of right service use:

U § 510.1 The following uses shall be permitted in MU-Use Group D as a matter-of-right subject to any applicable conditions:

[...]

(x) Service uses, both financial and general, subject to the following limitations:

[...]

(2) A laundry or dry cleaning facility shall not exceed twenty-five hundred square feet (2,500 sq. ft.) of gross floor area;

The proposed facility would occupy the entirety of an existing 7,500 square foot retail building, and would therefore require relief. Service uses that do not meet matter of right requirements may be approved by the Board as a special exception use, pursuant to U § 511.1(i):

U § 511.1 The following uses in this section shall be permitted as a special exception if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under Subtitle X, Chapter 9, subject to the provisions of this section.

[...]

(i) Service uses permitted as a matter of right with conditions that do not comply with the conditions;

The criteria of Subtitle X § 900 are reviewed below. No other zoning relief is requested.

Subtitle X § 901.2

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 MU-3A zone permits a range of commercial uses that are intended to serve the immediate neighborhood. Some uses are permitted as a matter of right subject to conditions, and when those conditions are not met, the Board is authorized to approve the use as a special exception. In this case, the proposed use would not meet the matter of right size threshold for a laundromat, but the nature of the use is in line with the intent of the zone. Furthermore, the Regulations anticipate uses that might not always meet the matter of right criteria, and therefore provide for a special exception mechanism, which is being utilized here. Granting the special exception, therefore, would be in harmony with the intent of the Regulations.

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

The use should not tend to adversely impact neighboring properties. The MU-3A zone anticipates uses such as these, and MU-3A is usually found adjacent to lower density residential uses.

- One potential impact of any retail or service use could be traffic. The applicant has discussed the application with DDOT, and OP anticipates that DDOT will submit a report to the record of this case. The site would provide a conforming number of vehicular parking for the use¹, would comply with short term bicycle parking requirements, and provide a long term bike parking space for employees where none is required. Per C § 901.5(a), no loading berth is required, but the design proposes a loading space for delivery vans.
- OP asked the applicant to also address the potential impacts of dryer exhaust. According to Exhibit 20C, “Dryer exhaust will vent through the roof and be directed toward the Applicant’s building and away from neighboring residences.”
- The use is proposed to be open 24 hours a day, so safety and security could be a concern. However, the applicant has proffered that a security guard would be present during the overnight hours. See Exhibit 20C, p. 2.

IV. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of this writing there are no comments in the record from other District agencies.

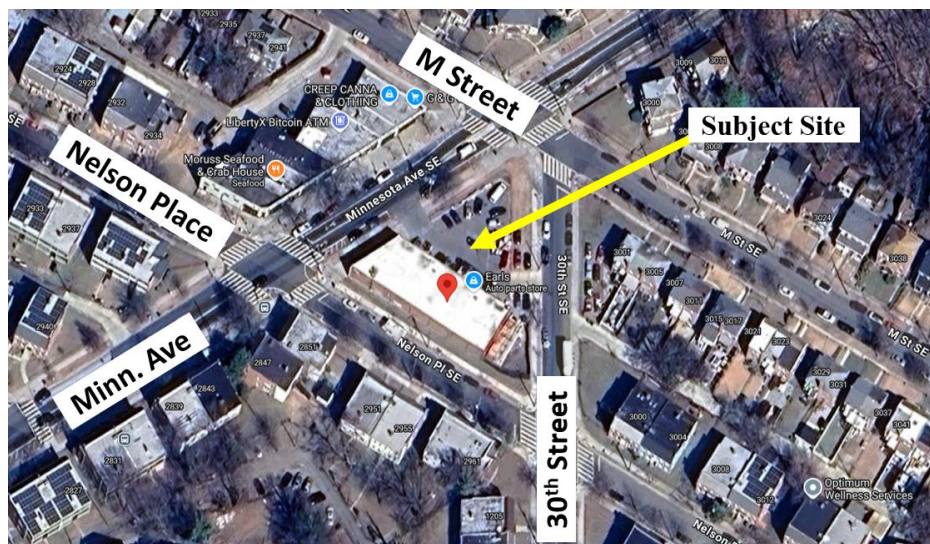
V. ANC COMMENTS

As of this writing the record contains no comments from the ANC.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Exhibit 19B is a petition in support of the application.

VII. VICINITY MAP



¹ Vehicle Parking – Service, General – 1.33 / 1,000 sf in excess of 3,000 sf = 6 spaces required; 7 spaces provided