

BZA Case No. 21400
The Aidan Montessori School

2700 27th St. NW

(Square 2109, Lot 92)

Presenter: Meridith Moldenhauer of Cozen O' Connor

Members of the Team Present for Questions

Jamie Rue

Head of School



Phillip Katinas

Chief Operations Officer

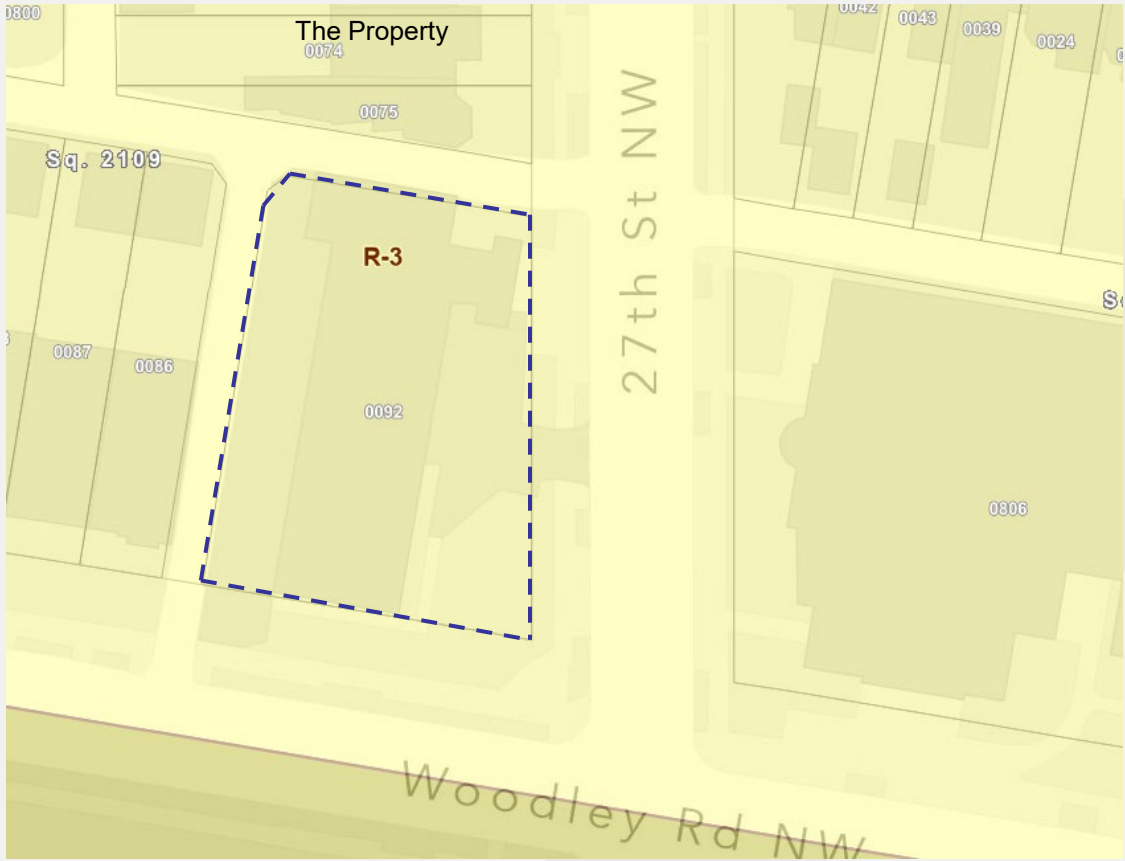


John Oduroe

Principal Architect



Zoning Map – R-3 Zone



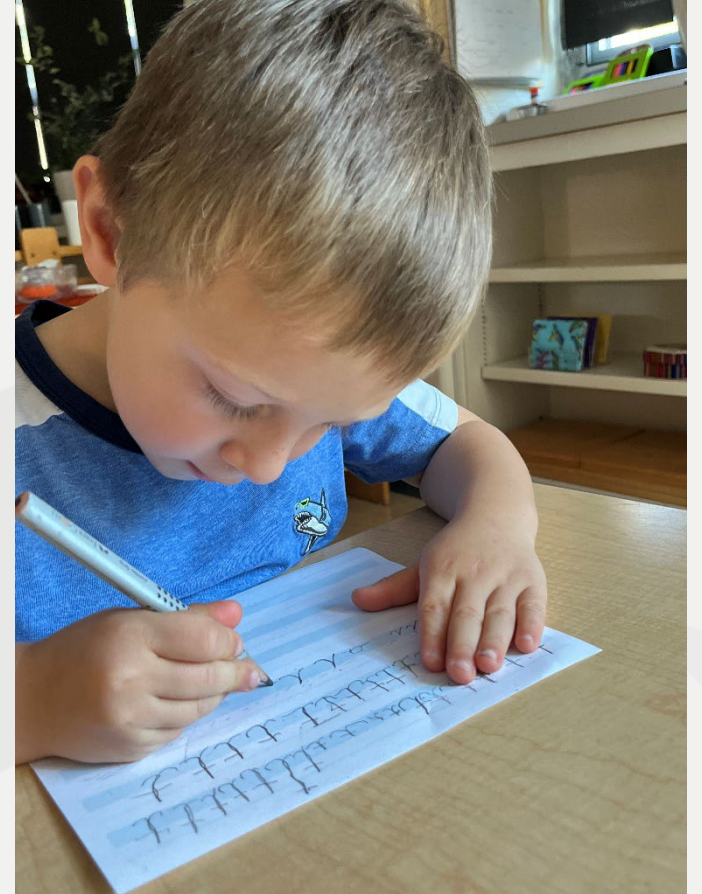
Existing Conditions- Aerial View



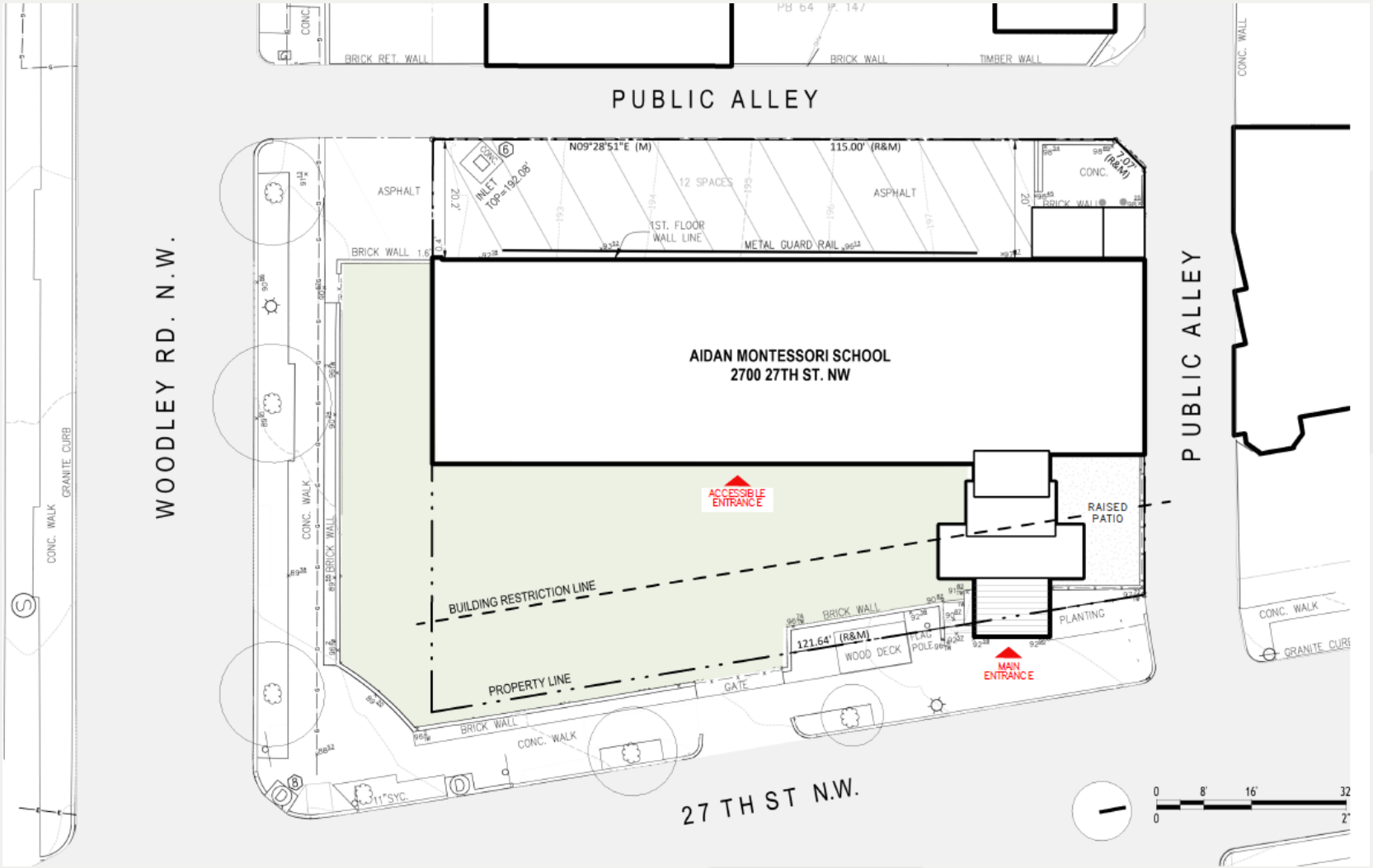
About Aidan

- ❑ Founded in 1961
- ❑ Oldest Montessori School in Washington DC
- ❑ Moved to current location in Woodley Park in 1995
- ❑ 8 classrooms, serving students aged 18 months through Grade 6
- ❑ Current total enrollment: 150 students
- ❑ Nearly half of Aidan's students live within walking distance of the school





Existing Conditions –Site Plan



Existing Conditions-Street View

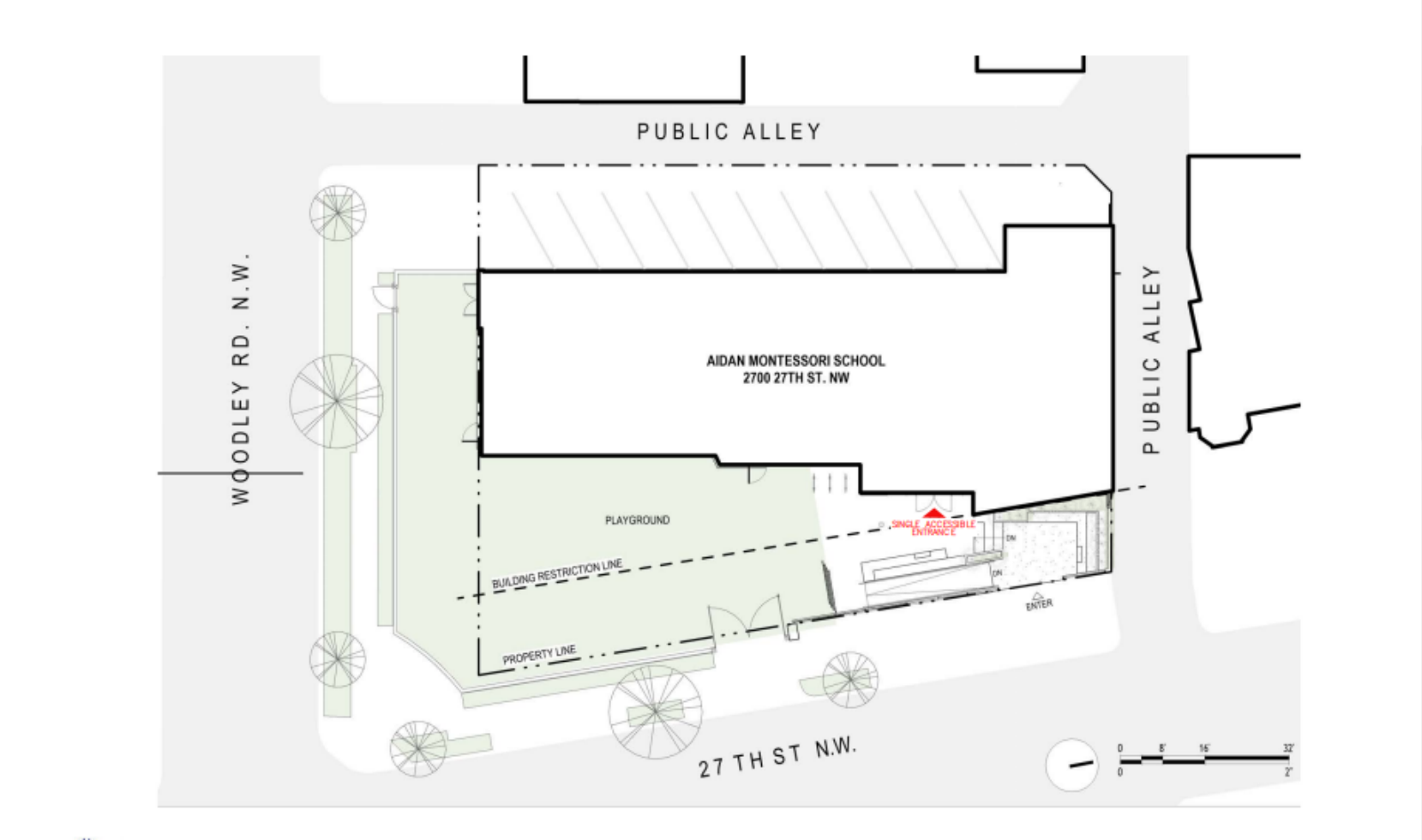


VIEW FROM ACROSS 27TH ST NW

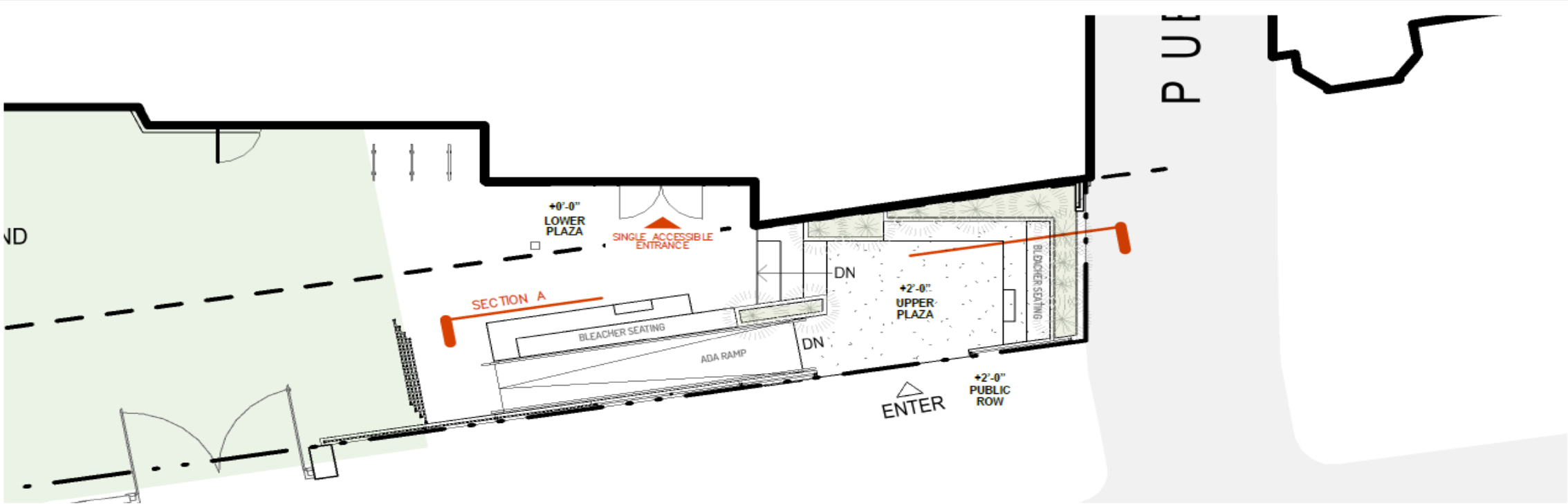


VIEW LOOKING SOUTH ALONG 27TH ST NW

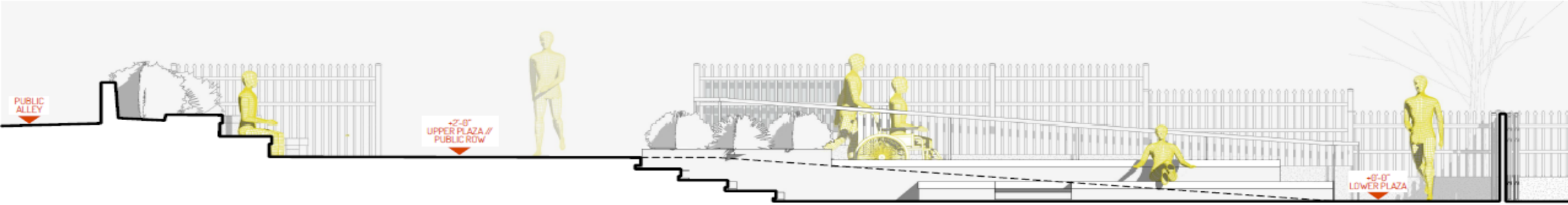
Proposed Conditions –Site Plan



Entry-Plan- Proposed



ENLARGED ENTRY PLAN



SECTION A - THROUGH ENTRY PLAZA LOOKING EAST

Entrance Rendering

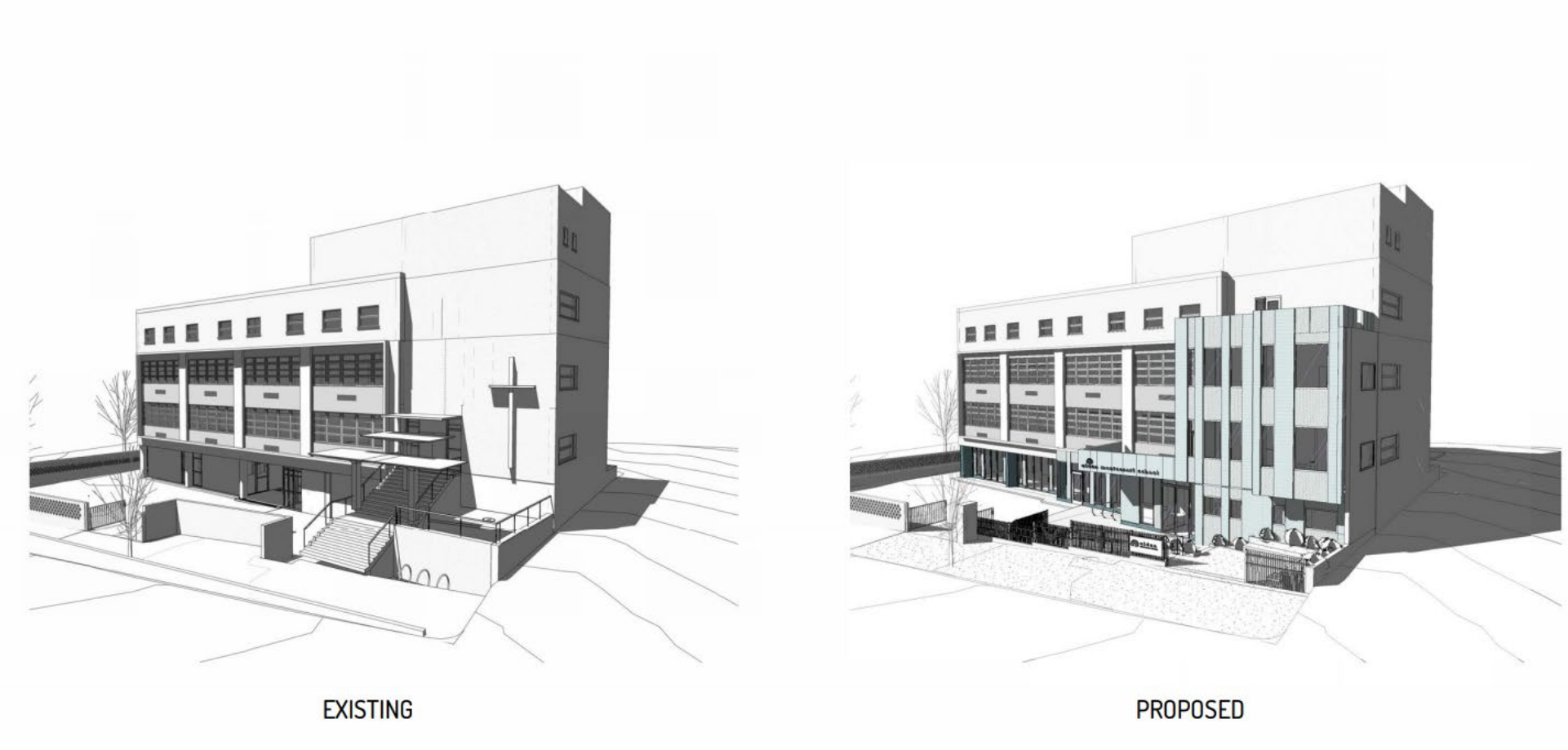


Proposed Addition- Street View Renderings



*The visualizations shown are conceptual and intended to convey the overall design character and massing. Exact Façade composition, fenestration materials, colors, and detailing are preliminary and will be refined during later phases of design.

Comparison



Comparison



EXISTING



PROPOSED

Relief Requested-Area Variance

Aidan Montessori requests area variance relief from the Lot Occupancy requirements of Subtitle D § 210.1.

- The Project increases lot occupancy from 44% to 47%, which is a 7% deviation above the 40% maximum permitted in the R-3 Zone.
- The Project otherwise complies with all applicable zoning requirements.

BZA Relief Requested-Exceptional Condition

The Property is affected by a confluence of conditions that qualify as exceptional:

- ❑ The School Building was constructed in 1964 and now requires modernization in order to meet contemporary accessibility standards.
- ❑ The Property is also uniquely bounded by public alleys on both its northern and western edges, in addition to its frontage on 27th Street and Woodley Road.
 - This double-alley condition is atypical for R-3 properties and compresses the buildable envelope. It also means the lot is effectively fixed in size. Unlike other properties, the School cannot acquire or consolidate adjoining parcels to reduce its lot occupancy percentage.

BZA Relief Requested-Practical Difficulty

Aidan Montessori will face practical difficulty with strict zoning compliance:

- Without relief Aidan would be forced to provide an accessible entrance and functional lobby within its existing footprint displacing programming spaces that are essential to the School's educational mission.
- Because the lot's configuration (bounded by alleys and streets) eliminates rear or side expansion, strict compliance with lot occupancy prevents the School from making necessary improvements.

BZA Relief Requested-No Harm

The variance relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good or Zoning Regulations

- The proposed addition is limited in scope and will not increase enrollment, intensity of use, or traffic to the site.
- It will replace the existing monumental stair with a safe, ADA compliant entrance, improving accessibility for students, families, and visitors.
- The design has been carefully crafted to ensure compatibility with the surrounding Woodley Park Neighborhood and will maintain the residential character of the block. The design has undergone HPRB review and was approved at the HPRB's meeting on November 20, 2025.

Special Exception Relief Sought

Subtitle X § 901.2 | Subtitle U § 203.1(m)

Relief sought to permit the renovation of an existing private school in the R-3 zone under Subtitle X § 901.2. The Board may grant special exceptions when relief is in harmony with the Zoning Regulations and will not adversely affect neighboring property. If the applicant meets the specific requirements, the Board must ordinarily grant the application.

Conditions Required Under Subtitle U § 203.1(m)

- (a) Noise, Traffic & Students:** The school must 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.
- (b) Ample Parking:** Parking space, not less than required by the Zoning Regulations, must be provided to accommodate students, teachers, and visitors likely to come to the site by automobile.
- (c) Additional Parking:** After hearing all evidence, the Board may require parking beyond what the title requires.

Meeting the Standard for Special Exception Relief

Harmony with Zoning Intent

- **R-3 zone expressly permits** private school uses by special exception
- **Property operated as a school since 1964.** BZA Order No. 7184 (1963) approved the use up to 240 students; confirmed by Zoning Administrator in 1994.
- **Addition** does not alter character, increase max permitted enrollment or generate additional traffic or noise.

No Adverse Effect on Neighbors

- **Physical scope is modest:** small bump-out on 27th St NW.
- **Consent to Max 180 Enrollment Cap.** Although BZA Order 7184 permitted 240 max enrollment, Aidan is willing to accept a binding enrollment cap of 180 students.
- **ANC 3C** voted unanimously to support the application on December 15, 2025.

Special Conditions § 203.1(m)

- **Noise:** No change to current operations. No objectionable conditions created.
- **Traffic:** 0.2 mi from Woodley Park Metro; Project improves drop-off operations and alley sightlines. DDOT (Ex. 26) filed no objection.
- **Ample Parking:** 12 on-site spaces adequate. Board found ample parking in 1963 and DDOT found no objection to minor buildout.

Questions?