

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: *KB* Kelsey Bridges
Neighborhood Planning Branch Manager

DATE: July 17, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 21474 – 1459 Columbia Road NW

APPLICATION

Emory United Methodist Church (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 of the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)*, requests a Special Exception from the rear addition requirements of Subtitle E § 207.1 to construct a seven-story plus cellar addition and convert a two-story plus bell tower religious building into an 87-unit apartment house. The site is in the RA-4 Zone at 1459 Columbia Road NW (Square 2672, Lot 718) and is served by a 20-foot public alley.

RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action will not have adverse impacts on the District’s transportation network. DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested relief.

STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM

DDOT’s lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of the public realm. All elements of the project proposed within District-owned right-of-way or the building restriction area, such as leadwalks and areaways, require the Applicant to pursue a public space construction permit. It is noted that the site has a 20-foot Building Restriction Line (BRL) along the Columbia Road NW frontage. The area between the property line and BRL is the building restriction area, which is regulated like DDOT public space and should remain “park-like” with landscaping.

DDOT expects the adjacent public realm to meet all District standards. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the [DCMR](#), the most recent version of DDOT's [Design and Engineering Manual](#), and the [Public Realm Design Manual](#) for public space regulations and design guidance. A permit application can be filed through the DDOT [Transportation Online Permitting System](#) (TOPS) website.

HERITAGE AND SPECIAL TREES

According to the District's [Tree Size Estimator map](#), there are three (3) Special Trees on and around the property. DDOT expects that the Applicant coordinate with the Ward 1 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Special trees as well as the planting of new street trees in bioretention facilities or a typical expanded tree planting space.

Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special Trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by DDOT's Urban Forestry Division, a Tree Protection Plan will be required.

KB:eo