

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sara Bardin
Director, Office of Zoning

FROM: Samuel Zimbabwe 
Associate Director

DATE: July 5, 2016

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 05-40B – Wesley Theological Seminary

PROJECT SUMMARY

Wesley Theological Seminary of the United Methodist Church (the “Applicant”) seeks to modify their approved 2011 Campus Plan (ZC 05-40A). The Applicant is seeking to modify conditions 5, 10(j), and 10(t) to include:

- Allow Straughn Housing to be leased and occupied by not more than 55 non-Wesley students;
- Limit the term of the current Campus Plan to December 31, 2020;
- Suspend traffic monitoring survey requirements as long as enrollment numbers remain below the 2011-2012 academic year (505 headcount); and
- Establish a neighborhood committee that meets three times a year in lieu of twice a year.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation’s capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District’s multimodal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District’s transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- Headcounts have reduced from 505 in 2011 to 427 in 2016;

- Pedestrian access for American University students will be provided by an adjoining gate reducing pedestrian traffic on Massachusetts Avenue;
- Vehicular access to off-street parking will not be allowed for students other than WTS students;
- The Applicant has not conducted a traffic monitoring survey or provided information on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan;
- DDOT cannot determine if the trip caps set in ZC 05-40A (53 morning peak hour trips and 71 evening peak hour trips) have been exceeded.

DDOT has no objection to the requested modifications with the following condition:

- Complete a traffic monitoring survey as specified in ZC 05-40A during the fall semester of 2016 2017. If the Applicant does not exceed their trip caps after two annual traffic monitoring surveys and does not exceed the 505 headcount, then the requirement for traffic monitoring surveys may be suspended. If the Applicant exceeds either of the trip caps, additional TDM measures shall be required.

Continued Coordination

The Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT outside of the Zoning Commission process on the following matters:

- Traffic monitoring surveys are expected to be scoped with DDOT prior to performing the surveys.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

To support the requested modifications, the Applicant proposes to provide pedestrian access to Straughn Hall via an adjoining gate located between American University (AU) and the Applicant, which may reduce pedestrian traffic on Massachusetts Avenue. Vehicular access to off-street parking will not be allowed for students other than WTS students.

The traffic monitoring surveys outlined in condition 10-J were established to monitor the effectiveness of the proposed TDM plan outlined as part of ZC 05-40A .The Applicant has not provided information on existing compliance with their TDM plan and has not performed a traffic monitoring survey as conditioned in ZC 05-40A. Due to the lack of information provided by the Applicant, DDOT cannot determine if the trip caps set in ZC 05-40A (53 morning peak hour trips and 71 evening peak hour trips) were exceeded. If the Applicant does not exceed trip caps after two annual traffic monitoring surveys and does not exceed their 505 headcount, the requirement for traffic monitoring surveys may be suspended. If the Applicant exceeds either of the trip caps, additional TDM measures will be required.

SZ:rj