

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Transportation Policy and Planning Administration

Memorandum

TO: Jerrily Kress, Director
Office of Zoning

FROM: Karina Ricks *Karina Ricks for KR*
District Department of Transportation

DATE: January 22, 2009

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case # 08-30 (Square 700)
Capitol Gateway Overlay District Review; 25 M Street, S.E.

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APPLICATION

West Half 1, LLC; West Half 2, LLC; and West Half 3, LLC (collectively, the "Applicants") propose to develop the property with an approximately 700,000 square foot mixed-use development consisting of residential, office and retail uses. The floor area ratio of the project will be 7.9 and the building will have a maximum height of 110 feet. Vehicular access to required parking and loading will be provided from Van Street, SE. The property which is the subject of this application consists of approximately 87,989 square feet of land and is located at 25 M Street, S.E. (Square 700, Lots 33, 802, 840, 841, 850, 857, 864, 865, 868, 871, and 872). The property is bound to the north by M Street, S.E., to the south by N Street, S.E., to the west by Van Street, S.E. and to the east by Half Street, S.E. The property is located in the CG/CR Zone District.

Of particular interest to DDOT, the Applicants seek variance relief from the loading requirements set forth in § 2201 and the step back requirements of § 1607.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

08-30

EXHIBIT NO.

30

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RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

DDOT supports the Applicants' request for the variance relief and special exception relief if the Applicants provide the following steps for increased multi-modal transportation uses:

- Reduction in vehicle parking spaces by 100 parking spaces
- A total of 6 carsharing spaces in the underground parking facility
- Provision of SmartTrip memberships and SmartBike memberships; and
- A delivery management coordinator for the entire premises.

The Traffic Assessment conducted by the consulting firm Gorove Slade provides some information with respect to site circulation and access as well as trip generation impacts.

DDOT finds that the Applicant's transportation study lacks some components. However, we believe these matters may be addressed with DDOT recommendations.

LOADING ASSESSMENT & SITE ACCESS

During a December 30, 2008 meeting, DDOT expressed concerns to the Applicants about the introduction of a great number of turn movements into and out of the proposed 5 curb cuts on Van Street. All vehicular site access, including parking and loading, will be provided from Van Street. Staff indicated that turning vehicles would have to cross a pedestrian thoroughfare, thereby increasing the likelihood of a pedestrian conflict. Although DDOT understands Van Street is proposed to be an area more geared towards residents and less for the post-baseball game masses, we continue to feel this precarious movement for *all* site access may lead to a perilous pedestrian environment. The creation of the conflict points, especially in the peak periods (Monday-Friday; 7AM-10AM, 4PM-7:30PM and during stadium events), could cause a higher incidence of accidents and/or affect the progression of traffic along Van Street.

Loading and unloading through the site's six (6) service bays will entail a coordinated approach. As suggested in the Applicants' January 13, 2009 memo, "Trucks will be able to back in and pull out (head first) from all loading docks. Some truck pull out maneuvers require two parts, depending on the dock used and the direction of departure." As a result of these concerns, DDOT wishes to see a comprehensive truck delivery management program. The management program will allow for the future property management company to monitor all delivery activities into the northern and southern loading docks. The property

management company should hire a Transportation Management Coordinator who will monitor the noted loading activities. This feature should be included in the Zoning order. All deliveries should be made during off peak time periods to allow the pedestrian network to remain unimpeded. The truck delivery management program will need to take into consideration the baseball schedule at the nearby Nationals stadium. The projected average of 76 weekly delivery trips to the site demands the noted oversight to allay undesired impacts. DDOT requests the Applicants to prepare a truck delivery map for the area and publish the map to a website and ensure all truck delivery, as well as service truck drivers have a copy. The restrictions on the timing of deliveries to Van Street loading facilities need strict adherence.

DDOT applauds the Applicants for designing Half Street as a pedestrian friendly street with no access to parking or loading.

PARKING SUPPLY

The Applicants propose 606 underground parking spaces for the site. Since the site will contain 280 residential units (210 parking spaces), 364,000 square feet of office space (304 parking spaces) and 57,000 square feet of retail space (90 parking spaces), DDOT believes the Applicants are providing too much parking given the proximity and frequency of both Metrorail and Metrobus transit service. The parking supply provides an opportunity *not* to walk, bike or use the WMATA Navy Yard Metro station located adjacent to the site. DDOT suggested to the Applicants to lessen the parking supply for the site as a way to create a more integrated transportation system. The Applicants informed DDOT they planned to lease some of the parking supply to those attending Nationals baseball games. This is an undesirable option. The projected parking shortages for the Nationals stadium never materialized. Furthermore, DDOT prefers that stadium patrons use transit and the offer of parking might induce more of them to drive. The study provided no information on the future leased parking spaces. DDOT knows this will create unneeded congestion in an area where intersection level of service is currently good. We would prefer to see the Applicants use the space to their advantage and lessen the number of parking spaces at the site. DDOT prefers to see the number of parking spaces reduced by 100.

DDOT strongly recommends the developer provide SmartTrip cards, with \$60 fare media, to all residents and business owners upon move-in to the new property.

DDOT requests the Applicants offer more of the garage parking spaces for car sharing. We believe the current allocation of 3 car sharing spaces may not serve the entire site. We believe there should be a minimum of 6 car sharing spaces among the projected inventory for the project. Additionally, the developer shall pay for the initial car sharing application fee (\$25) and annual fee (\$50) for one year for all residents, proprietors and office staff inside of the residential, retail and commercial office development to encourage car sharing use.

We credit the developer for reserving space for 157 bicycles inside of the parking garage and prefer to see 30 or more public bicycle racks located on the sidewalks surrounding the future buildings. SmartBikes memberships for 1 year (\$40 annually) should be included for residents and proprietors upon move-in.

TRIP GENERATION

DDOT believes the site generated vehicle trips may reflect better if the above mentioned transportation demand management (TDM) measures are implemented. The Applicants show a total of 3,656 daily weekday trips to and from the site. The Applicants have also shown how 7 neighboring developments may generate up to an accumulated 3,149 daily weekday trips. The Applicants have furnished the underground parking that will attract this number of trips. If the Applicants lessen the parking quantity, it will send a clear message to visitors that driving personal vehicles will not be rewarded. We do believe there can be a “high amount of non-auto trips” as the Applicants state in the January 7, 2009 Traffic Impact Analysis. The office building component of the site will generate the most daily trips (535 AM peak hour trips; 494 PM peak hour trips) and we believe this is accurate.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

DDOT supports the Applicants’ request for the variance relief and special exception relief if the Applicants provide the following steps for increased multi-modal transportation uses:

- Reduction in vehicle parking spaces by 100 parking spaces
- A total of 6 carsharing spaces in the underground parking facility
- Provision of SmartTrip memberships and SmartBike memberships; and
- A delivery management coordinator for the entire premises.

DDOT requests a special focus in the Zoning order on the deliveries as we believe that area may pose many obstacles for the site to be successful. DDOT stresses that the Applicants must develop and enforce a tenant truck delivery

management program, as previously described, to ensure that deliveries occur during off peak hours, to minimize disruption to the surrounding roadways.

Mass transit use is heavily encouraged for all uses of the site. The Applicants have not provided proposed measures to alleviate vehicular use. We strongly urge the Zoning Commission to make the DDOT prescribed elements a condition of its approval. We also recommend that the Zoning Commission require that the applicant prepare an annual report on actual vehicular traffic generation, truck deliveries and transit and bicycle use, and submit the report to the DDOT, Transportation Policy and Planning Administration and the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6D.

As this area continues to develop, DDOT prefers that as much travel as is possible be oriented to transit, biking and walking.