

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy, Planning and Sustainability Administration

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Sara Bardin  
Director, Office of Zoning

**FROM:** Sam Zimbabwe  
Associate Director 

**DATE:** June 8, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Z.C. No. 15-06– Center for Hellenistic Studies 2015-2025 Campus Plan  
3100 Whitehaven Street, N.W.

**APPLICATION**

The Trustees for Harvard University (the "Applicant") seek approval of the Harvard University's Center for Hellenistic Studies (the "Center") 2015-2025 Campus Plan and a special exception to permit a university use in the D/R-1-A District. The subject site is located north of Observatory Circle and bordered by the Embassy and Chancery of the Kingdom of Denmark to the west and the Chancery of Italy to the east.

The Applicant proposes minor design changes to the campus including the construction of a 7,500 SF addition to the administration building; a new storage facility with three relocated surface parking spaces; automated main entry gate with pedestrian access; redesigned trash enclosure; installation of either hardscape terraces or one-story screened-in porches at the rear of the conference center and the five detached residential buildings; and, reconstruction of an existing pedestrian gate with related hardscape improvements. The improvements are not part of the application and will be pursued as further processing actions.

**ZONING COMMISSION**  
District of Columbia

15-06

## **RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF**

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:

- The site is heavily wooded and screened from neighboring parcels;
- The southern side of Whitehaven Street, N.W. abutting the project site lacks a sidewalk;
- No long-term or short-term bicycle racks are identified;
- The Center has sufficient onsite parking capacity and is not expected to increase on-street parking demand; and
- The action is not expected to generate any new vehicular trips.

DDOT has no objection to the requested action with the following condition;

- Install a minimum of two bicycle racks within the campus with one fixture placed near the administration building and the other adjacent to the multi-unit residential building. The final location of bicycle parking spaces should be identified on the Campus Plan.

## **FURTHER COORDINATION**

As part of future improvements, the Applicant should coordinate with DDOT to determine if a sidewalk can be constructed along the site frontage on the southern side of Whitehaven Street that minimizes impacts to the existing mature trees.

## **TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS**

DDOT requires applicants requesting an action from the Zoning Commission complete a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) in order to determine the action's impact on the overall transportation network. Accordingly, an applicant is expected to show the existing conditions for each transportation mode affected, the proposed impact on the respective network, and any proposed mitigations, along with the effects of the mitigations on other travel modes. A CTR should be performed according to DDOT direction. The Applicant held a scoping meeting with DDOT on May 8, 2014. DDOT determined a CTR is not required given the scale of the action.

The Center occupies a heavily wooded campus that is residential in character and naturally screened from neighboring properties. The Center serves as an educational institution with a fellowship program serving approximately 10 scholars per semester who reside onsite, some

with families. The campus has eleven buildings served by a single private drive that does not include sidewalks. The buildings consist of a conference center near the main entrance, administration building, director's house, five detached two-family dwellings, a multi-unit apartment, and tool shed.

#### Site Access

Whitehaven Street, N.W. is the only public street abutting the Center providing pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access to the site connecting to Massachusetts Avenue to the east. Vehicles are limited to a single driveway entrance at the northwest corner of the parcel adjacent to the entrance for the Embassy and Chancery of the Kingdom of Denmark to the property; Whitehaven Street dead-ends just west of the area.

Pedestrians and bicyclists primarily use the driveway with the secondary pedestrian gate at the northeastern edge of the campus. Whitehaven Street has a sidewalk on the northern side of the street, however the sidewalk on the southern side terminates just east of the site with a small trail connecting to the existing pedestrian gate. A heavily wooded pedestrian path connects the terminus of Whitehaven Street with Connecticut Avenue.



Center for Hellenic Studies

MASTER PLAN 2015 - 2025

### Parking

The site has a total of 38 permanent parking spaces, including two handicapped reserved spaces, identified on the site plan. The central road provides overflow parking for an additional 20 vehicles for occasional large functions that include presentations. Three existing surface spaces will be relocated adjacent to the new 1,000 SF storage shed to maintain the current parking levels.

### Loading

Trash storage occurs at each building with Center staff hauling the refuse to a central, screened, trash enclosure near the main entrance for scheduled removal. The Applicant proposes to install a new automated entry gate and trash enclosure near the main entrance. The Center does not provide a central loading dock or service delivery space.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

According to the Applicant, relatively few vehicles use the campus on a regular or occasional basis, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. The Center lacks sidewalks and pedestrians walk along the internal private roadway network to access the facilities. Several paths wind through the wooded areas of the campus including a link to the pedestrian gate on Whitehaven Street.

The scenic campus provides an ideal opportunity for recreational bicycling for fellows, staff and visitors. DDOT recommends the Applicant install a minimum of two bicycle racks onsite. The bicycle racks should be proximate to the administration building to serve visitors and staff and near the multi-unit residential buildings for fellow use.

The Applicant will install a new pedestrian entrance adjacent to the new automated auto gate at the main entrance and replace the existing pedestrian gate at the northeastern corner of the site. The Applicant should consider installing a sidewalk along the site frontage on the southern side of Whitehaven Street as future improvements.

SZ:lb