


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: March 25, 2016

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 15-13 – Watkins Alley 1311 E Street, SE

PROJECT SUMMARY

Watkins Alley, LLC (the “Applicant”) proposes a Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) and related map amendment from C-M-1 to R-5-B District to construct a residential development at the premises 1309-1323 E Street, SE and 516 13th Street, SE (Square 1043, Lots 142, 849-851, and 859). The development proposal includes:

- 44 residential units;
- 48 vehicle parking spaces; and
- 48 long-term bicycle parking spaces.

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, multi-administration review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

Site Design

- No new curb cuts are proposed;

- Vehicular access is proposed from the public alley network; and
- Proposed loading management plan is acceptable.

Travel Assumptions

- The action is expected to generate a low number of new vehicle trips; and
- The site is well served by Metrobus and Metrorail.

Analysis

- The Applicant utilized sound methodology to perform the analysis;
- Existing transit service should have capacity to accommodate future demand;
- The Applicant shows adequate long-term bicycle parking facilities;
- The Applicant exceeds zoning required parking spaces by 25 spaces; and
- The Applicant proposes a sufficient Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan intended to further promote the use of non-auto travel options.

Mitigations

DDOT has no objection to the requested PUD.

Continued Coordination

Given the complexity and size of the action, the Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT outside of the Zoning Commission process on the following matters:

- Public space, including design of the curb cut, curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other features within the public rights of way, are expected to be designed and built to DDOT standards. These elements will be further coordinated as part of the public space permitting process;
- Safety mitigations such as signage or pavement markings through the alley system to better manage potential pedestrian and vehicle conflicts; and
- A curbside management and signage plan for E Street.

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 and DDOT coordinated on an agreed-upon scope for the CTR that is consistent with the scale of the action.

The review of the analysis is divided into four categories: site design, travel assumptions, analysis, and mitigations. The following review provided by DDOT evaluates the Applicant's CTR to determine its accuracy and assess the action's consistency with the District's vision for a cohesive, sustainable transportation system that delivers safe and convenient ways to move people and goods, while protecting and enhancing the natural, environmental, and cultural resources of the District.

Site Design

Site design, which includes site access, loading, and public realm design, plays a critical role in determining a proposed action's impact on the District's infrastructure. While transportation impacts can change over time, the site design will remain constant throughout the lifespan of the proposed development, making site design a critical aspect of DDOT's development review process. Accordingly, new developments must provide a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience, enhance the public realm, and serve as positive additions to the community.

Site Access

The site is bounded by E Street to the north and public alleys to the east and south. The west side of the property is abutted by residential row dwellings and a north-south alley that dead-ends at the proposed development. A north-south public alley runs along the eastern edge of the site and connects E Street and G Street. An east-west public alley runs along the southern edge of the site and connects the dead-ended north-south alley along the western edge of the site to the north-south public alley along the eastern edge of the site.

Vehicle and bicycle site access is proposed from the dead-ended north-south alley public alley along the western edge of the site. The Applicant proposes internal courtyards for pedestrian circulation through the site that can be accessed via E Street and the north-south public alley to the east of the site. Multi-modal site access diagrams are shown in Figure 1.

It is expected that the proposed development will increase the amount of pedestrians using the public alley to access transit and other destinations. During the public space permitting process, the Applicant may be expected to provide safety mitigations such as signage or pavement markings through the alley system to better manage potential pedestrian and vehicle conflicts. Such improvements would need to be coordinated with other developments near the site.

Loading

DDOT's practice is to accommodate vehicle loading in a safe and efficient manner, while at the same time preserving safety across non-vehicle modes and limiting any hindrance to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm. This often results in loading being accessed through an alley network.

Due to the proposed development having less than 50 units, no loading facilities are required; however, loading activities such as move-in/move-out and trash pick-up are expected to occur. The Applicant proposes that residents apply for a temporary no parking permit to establish a temporary no parking zone for move-in/move-out activities. Trash trucks are proposed to enter and exit the site via E street and access trash facilities via the surrounding alley network. The Applicant submitted truck turning diagrams showing that back-up maneuvers do not occur across sidewalks, which meets DDOT's standards. In addition, the Applicant submitted a loading management plan that includes the following:

- Designating a loading coordinator who will coordinate all loading activities including deliveries, trash disposal, and residential move-in and move-out activities; and
- Requiring all tenants to notify loading coordinator prior to moving in or out.

DDOT finds the proposed loading management plan acceptable.

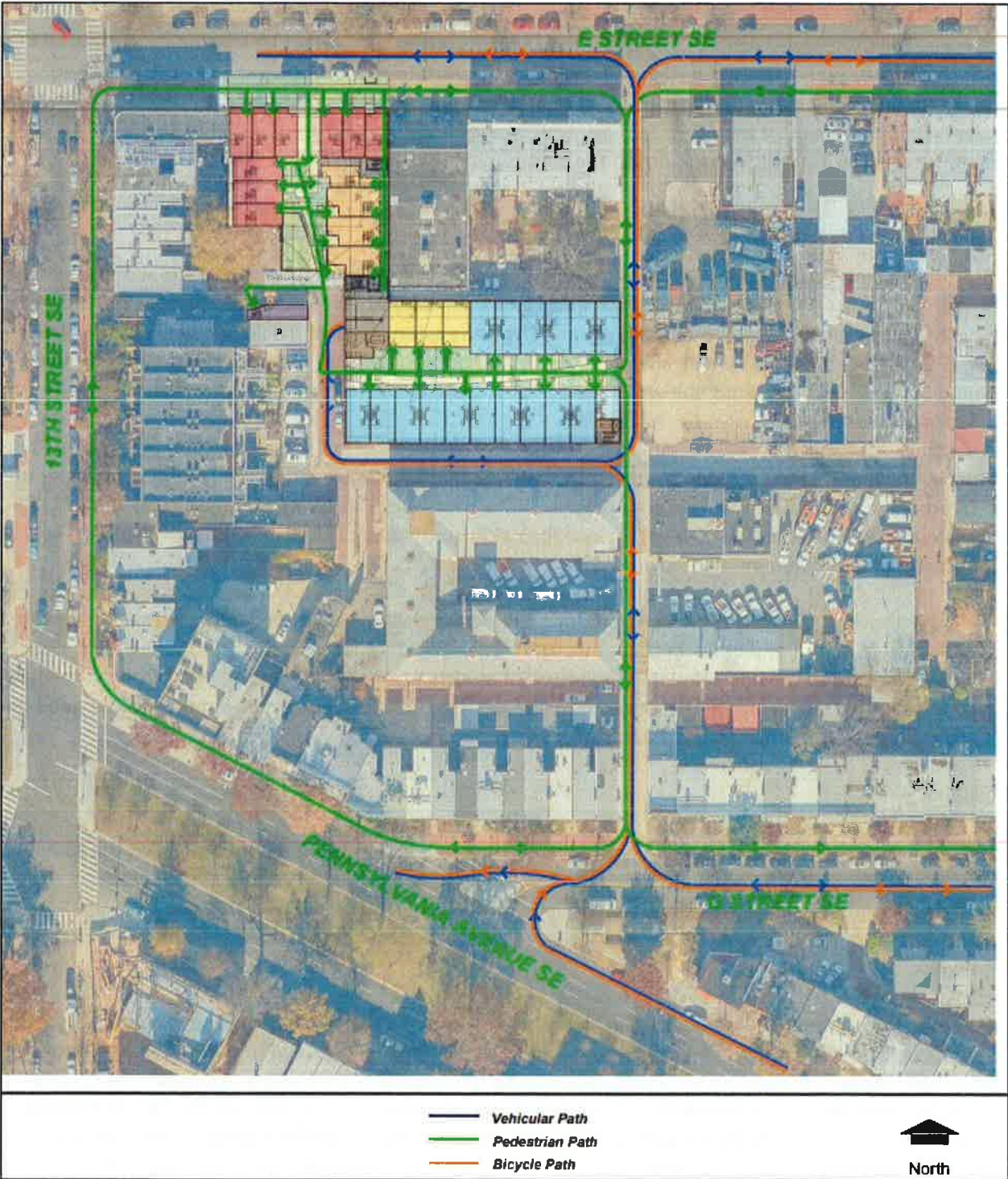


Figure 1 - Site Access Plan (Source: Well & Associates)

Streetscape and Public Realm

In line with District policy and practice, any substantial new building development or renovation is expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines. This

includes curb and gutters, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

The Applicant will be required to close all existing curb cuts on E Street that will no longer be needed for vehicle site access to the site. The eastern-most curb cut spans the subject site as well as the neighboring property. The Applicant will need to close the portion of the curb cut that serves the subject site and leave the other portion open to serve the adjacent site. In addition, the Applicant will be required to provide a curbside management and signage plan for E Street to manage the new curbside uses enabled by closing a series of existing curb cuts on E Street.

The Applicant must work closely with DDOT and the Office of Planning to ensure that the design of the public realm meets current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape for public users needing to access the property or circulate around it. In conjunction with the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations, DDOT's *Design and Engineering Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant. DDOT staff will be available to provide additional guidance during the public space permitting process.

Travel Assumptions

The purpose of the CTR is to inform DDOT's review of a proposed action's impacts on the District's transportation network. To that end, selecting reasonable and defensible travel assumptions is critical to developing a realistic analysis.

Trip Generation

The Applicant provided trip generation estimates utilizing the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. The Applicant used Land Use Code 230 (Townhouse Condominium) in their trip generation estimations.

Each trip a person makes is made by a certain means of travel, such as vehicle, bicycle, walking, etc. The means of travel is referred to as a 'mode' of transportation. A variety of elements impact the mode of travel, including density of development, diversity of land use, design of the public realm, availability and cost of parking, among many others. The site is located in a highly urbanized setting, with a robust transit network, pedestrian access to goods and services within a quarter-mile of site, and an adequate bicycle network. In addition, the site is in close proximity to transit and amenities within walking distance. Due to the site's close proximity to transit, the Applicant used the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Ridership Survey data and Census Data to assume a 45 percent non-auto mode split for analysis. DDOT finds the Applicant's methodology acceptable.

Based on the trip generation and mode split assumptions discussed above, the Applicant predicted the following level of weekday peak hour trip generation:

LAND USE TRIP TYPE	AM PEAK HOUR			PM PEAK HOUR		
	IN	OUT	TOTAL	IN	OUT	TOTAL
CONDOMINIUM - LUC 230 (44 DU)						
Total Trips ¹	5	22	27	21	10	31
Non-Auto Reduction ²	2	10	12	9	5	14
Transit	2	8	10	7	4	11
Bike	0	1	1	1	0	2
Pedestrian	0	1	1	1	1	1
Vehicle Trips	3	12	15	12	5	17
EXISTING USES						
Vehicle Trips - Alley ³	4	12	16	11	6	17
Vehicle Trips - E Street Curb Cut	0	0	0	0	1	1
NET ADDITIONAL SITE TRIPS						
Vehicle Trips	(1)	0	(1)	1	(2)	(1)
¹ Trips generated using Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) <i>Trip Generation</i> , 9 th Edition. ² Non-Auto Mode Splits for residential use is based on Census Data and proposed parking supply. ³ Vehicle trips to the existing uses were counted by W+A.						

Figure 2 - Site Trip Generation Summary (Source: Wells & Associates)

DDOT guidance suggests that a more comprehensive vehicular traffic analysis be completed if various thresholds for added traffic are met, which could signify the potential for impacts to the surrounding street network. Trip generation based on the methodology above would generate 12 new trips in the AM peak direction and 12 new trips in the PM peak direction, which does not meet DDOT's threshold of 25 vehicles in the peak direction. As such, a more comprehensive vehicle traffic analysis was not required, as impacts to the surrounding vehicle network are expected to be minimal.

Analysis

To determine the action's impacts on the transportation network, a CTR includes an extensive multi-modal analysis of the existing baseline conditions, future conditions without the proposed action, and future conditions with the proposed development. The Applicant completed their analysis based on the assumptions described above.

Off-Street Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, and price/supply of parking spaces. However, in urban areas, other factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high quality transit, frequency of transit service, and proximity to transit.

The Applicant proposes 48 parking spaces, which exceeds zoning requirement by 25 spaces.

Transit Service

The District and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) have partnered to provide extensive public transit service in the District of Columbia. DDOT's vision is to leverage this investment to increase the share of non-automotive travel modes so that economic development opportunities increase with minimal infrastructure investment.

The site is located approximately 0.2 miles, roughly a three minute walk from the Potomac Metro Station, which serves the Orange, Blue, and Silver lines.

The site is also well-served by high-frequency bus routes. The closest bus stop is located approximately 0.1 mile from the site, roughly a three minute walk, at 13th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Bus routes that serve the site include:

- 30N, 30S – Friendship Height/ Southeast Line
- 32, 34, 36 – Pennsylvania Avenue Line
- DC Circulator – Potomac Avenue – Skyland Line

The 30 series bus provides high frequency service that connects to Fairfax Village, Eastern Market, L'Enfant Plaza, and Georgetown. The DC Circulator operates at 10 minute headways and connects to Eastern Market and Anacostia.

Pedestrian Facilities

The District is committed to enhance the pedestrian accessibility by ensuring consistent investment in pedestrian infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including pedestrian trips. Walking is expected to be an important mode of transportation for this development.

The Applicant performed an inventory of the pedestrian infrastructure at intersections in the vicinity of the site and noted any substandard conditions (see Figure 3).

INTERSECTION	CROSSWALK PAVEMENT MARKINGS	CROSSWALK VISIBILITY MARKINGS	HANDICAP RAMPS	DETECTABLE WARNING SURFACE
E Street/13 th Street	10' YES	YES	YES	YES
E Street/14 th Street	10' YES	YES	YES	NO
Pennsylvania Avenue/13 th Street	10' crossing 13 th Street	YES	YES, One Missing Ramp ¹	YES
	<20' crossing Pennsylvania Ave			
Pennsylvania Avenue/G Street	Crossing G Street 10' YES	NO	YES	YES
14 th Street/G Street	10' - One missing crosswalk ²	NO ³	YES	NO
14 th Street/Potomac Avenue North	10' YES	YES	YES	YES
14 th Street/Potomac Avenue South	Crossing 14 th Street, 10' YES	YES	YES	YES
	Crossing Potomac Avenue <15' NO			
Pennsylvania Avenue/Potomac Avenue West	Crossing Potomac Avenue <15' NO	YES	YES, One Missing Ramp ⁴	YES
	Crossing Penna Ave <20' NO			
Pennsylvania Avenue/Potomac Avenue East	Crossing Potomac Avenue <15' NO	YES	YES	YES
	Crossing Penna Ave <20' NO			
Noes: Field data conducted on November 30, 2015. ¹ No ramp provided on the west side of 13 th Street, crossing north on Pennsylvania Avenue EB lanes ² No crosswalk provided on the south side of G Street crossing the Kiss-n'-Ride driveway ³ The intersection is immediately adjacent to the Potomac Avenue Metro Station and does not provide high visibility crosswalks on any of the four crossings ⁴ No ramp provided on the east side of 14 th Street, crossing north on G Street				

Figure 3 - Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure Analysis (Source: Wells & Associates)

Crosswalks at Pennsylvania Avenue/ 13th Street, Pennsylvania Avenue/ Potomac Avenue West, and Pennsylvania/ G Street will be addressed as part DDOT's Pennsylvania and Potomac Avenues SE Intersection Improvement Project ("Penn-Potomac"). All other deficiencies will be addressed as the surrounding area develops.

Bicycle Facilities

The District of Columbia is committed to enhance bicycle access by ensuring consistent investment in bicycle infrastructure by both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including bicycling trips.

The Applicant proposes to provide 48 long-term bicycle parking spaces located inside the garage. Short-term bicycle parking spaces will be located along E Street. The exact location and quantity of short-term bicycle facilities will be determined during the public space permitting process.

The closest Capital Bikeshare Station with 14 docks is located 0.2 miles from the site at 13th Street and Potomac Avenue.

Curbside Parking

As mentioned the Applicant proposes to close a portion of existing curb cut that is shared with the adjacent property along E Street, which will create new curbside parking spaces. The Applicant will be expected to submit a curbside management plan for the parking space created by closing existing curb cuts.

Mitigations

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires the Applicant to mitigate the impacts of the development in order to positively contribute to the District's transportation network. The mitigations must sufficiently diminish the action's vehicle impact and promote non-auto travel modes. This can be done through Transportation Demand Management (TDM), physical improvements, operations, and performance monitoring.

DDOT preference is to mitigate vehicle traffic impacts first through establishing an optimal site design and operations to support efficient site circulation. When these efforts alone cannot properly mitigate an action's impact, TDM measures may be necessary to manage travel behavior to minimize impact. Only when these other options are exhausted will DDOT consider capacity-increasing changes to the transportation network because such changes often have detrimental impacts on non-auto travel and are often contrary to the District's multi-modal transportation goals.

The following analysis is a review of the Applicant's proposed mitigations.

Transportation Demand Management

DDOT requires the Applicant to produce a comprehensive TDM plan to help mitigate an action's transportation impacts. TDM is a set of strategies, programs, services, and physical elements that influence travel behavior by mode, frequency, time, route, or trip length in order to help achieve highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation facilities. In the District, this typically means implementing infrastructure or programs to maximize the use of mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods. The Applicant's proposed TDM measures play a role in achieving the desired and expected mode split.

The specific elements within the TDM plan vary depending on the land uses, site context, proximity to transit, scale of the development, and other factors. The TDM plan must help achieve the assumed trip generation rates to ensure that an action's impacts will be properly mitigated. Failure to provide a

robust TDM plan could lead to unanticipated additional vehicle trips that could negatively impact the District's transportation network.

The Applicant proposed the following TDM strategies:

- Designate a Transportation Management Coordinator;
- Provide information on and/or links to current transportation programs and services on the property management website;
- Provide convenient covered and secure long-term bicycle parking facilities; and
- Provide a one time, one year Capital Bikeshare membership or a one year, one time car share membership for all new residents for the first three years the project is open.

DDOT finds that the Applicant's proposed TDM measures are appropriate and will serve to encourage non-auto use.

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