

# Government of the District of Columbia


## Department of Transportation



### d. Planning and Sustainability Division

#### MEMORANDUM

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

**FROM:** Anna Chamberlin, AICP   
Associate Director

**DATE:** June 7, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Supplemental DDOT Report for ZC Case No. 20-12 – 400 I Street SW (Westminster Presbyterian Church)

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This memorandum is intended to serve as a supplement to the District Department of Transportation's (DDOT) April 2, 2021 report to the Zoning Commission regarding the proposed mixed-use redevelopment of the Westminster Presbyterian Church site. Since filing our initial report, the Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Applicant met to further discuss the preservation of the existing Heritage Tree, Special Trees, and street trees on and adjacent to the property.

The project site is adjacent to a Department of General Services (DGS) park which includes several large trees including a Heritage Oak tree. Of particular concern, is the non-hazardous Heritage Tree straddling both the Applicant's property and the neighboring DGS park to the east. Heritage Trees have a circumference of 100 inches or more and are protected by the Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act of 2016. The current building design will impact the Heritage Oak Tree which is in good health and must be preserved. The Applicant has not hired an arborist in advance of the Zoning Commission hearing, so no tree preservation plan has been prepared or agreed to, but the Applicant has agreed to hire an arborist during the pre-development process as indicated in Exhibit 41. At this time, DDOT has not determined that changes to the proposed building design will not be necessary, but will work with DGS and the hired arborist to analyze and create a preservation plan for this Heritage Tree.

In addition, DDOT requests that the Applicant's hired arborist preserve all identified non-hazardous Special Trees and street trees. Special trees can be removed with a permit and mitigation for the removal depends upon whether the trees are hazardous or non-hazardous. The proposed design includes two (2) new curb cuts on Makemie Place as well as vaults in the sidewalk on I Street, both of which will impact existing street trees. The Applicant is proposing to extend the curb lane on Makemie Place which will allow more space for tree boxes and tree growth, but the vaults on I Street will impact the existing mature trees. The Applicant applied for conceptual approval through the DDOT permit system for the proposed curb cuts and vaults in January 2021, but it does not appear that the Applicant

has made any revisions in the permitting system since February 2021. Any non-standard items will require Public Space Committee (PSC) approval. If they are ultimately not approved by the PSC and must be changed or moved, the Applicant may need to modify the approved PUD.

Based on the site design and tree challenges noted above, the Applicant has agreed to work with DDOT to hire an arborist to create a DDOT approved preservation plan. As such, DDOT continues to have no objection to the approval of the PUD with the following additional condition:

- Prior to issuance of a building permit for the project, the Applicant will submit, receive approval from UFD, and implement a tree preservation plan for the Heritage Tree on the adjacent DGS site and other on-site or adjacent non-hazardous Special Trees and street trees, as determined appropriate by Urban Forestry Division.

AC:kb