

Government of the District of Columbia


Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Anna Chamberlin, AICP
Associate Director 

DATE: November 26, 2024

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 24-07 – Skyland Place (Lots 4-8, 10-20, 811, 813, and 815 in Square 5734 and Lots 1-4 in Square 5735)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Skyland Place, LLC (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone a 380,280 square-foot (8.70-acre) property from RA-1 and R-3 to RA-2. The subject property is located in Lots 4-8, 10-20, 811, 813, and 815 in Square 5734 and Lots 1-4 in Square 5735 on the southwest corner of 25th Street and Marion Barry Avenue (formerly Good Hope Road) SE. The site is currently developed with the Skyland Townhouse and Apartments residences.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieving an exceptional quality of life by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. To achieve this vision, DDOT works through the Map Amendment process to evaluate the requested zoning change and to inform the Zoning Commission on the order of magnitude impacts to the transportation network. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The site is less than ¼ mile from the 92 Metrobus Priority Corridor Network route along Marion Barry Avenue SE;
- The Applicant intends to construct 416 multi-family dwellings and 28 single-family dwellings. Under the existing mixed RA-1 and R-3 zoning, the Applicant would be able to construct a maximum of 304 multi-family dwellings and 31 single-family dwellings (with up to one accessory apartment each).
- The increased density is expected to generate a minor increase in the amount of transit, biking, walking, and vehicle trips;

- The additional vehicle trips generated by the additional density are expected to have a minimal impact on the roadway network;
- The site is adjacent to priority transit, and DDOT encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of off-street parking provided with any future redevelopment proposals. Per DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, ideally the development would provide no more than 0.35 vehicle spaces per unit (1 per 3 multi-family residential units);
- Any multi-family residential development proposals for the site will need to account for long-term bicycle parking storage rooms, either below- or at-grade in easily accessible locations from building lobbies, as well as short-term bicycle parking, as required by Title 11 of the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)* Subtitle C, § 801 and Title 18 of the *DCMR* § 1214;
- The site currently has access to an existing 20-foot rear public alley along Lots 5 through 8, 813, and 815 in Square 5734. When the site redevelops, it is expected that all loading, trash pick-up, and vehicle parking will take place from the rear alley or curb cuts from 24th Street or Skyland Place;
- DDOT will not support any new curb cuts to the property from Marion Barry Avenue or 25th Street;
- Along the site's Marion Barry Avenue frontage, the Applicant should keep a minimum of 17 feet from the back-of-curb clear of any obstructions including but not limited to structures, fencing, stairs, ramps, and new trees outside the tree box to provide sufficient space for a potential future shared-use path; and
- The proposed rezoning would support nearby transit and generate additional foot traffic to support nearby businesses. This is consistent with DDOT's approach to infill sites which should be dense, compact, transit-oriented, and improve the public realm.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested Map Amendment.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

It is expected that the Applicant will coordinate with DDOT through the permitting process on the following actions to minimize impacts of a future development proposal on the transportation network:

- Depending on the final development program and if any future relief is requested from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) or Public Space Committee (PSC), a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study or some other transportation analysis may be required;
- A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan may be required if a curb cut is requested, the contents of which will be commensurate with the land use, parking supply, and scale of future development, in accordance with DDOT's most recent *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*;
- When the property ultimately develops, the site should be designed so that loading occurs without trucks performing backing maneuvers through sidewalk space, and coordinate with DDOT on an appropriate Loading Management Plan (LMP), if necessary;
- Submit a detailed curbside management and signage plan to DDOT, consistent with current DDOT policies. If meter installation is required, they will be at the Applicant's expense;

- Coordinate with DDOT’s Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 8 Arborist regarding the preservation of any existing Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the property. According to the Applicant, the property has more than 30 Heritage and Special trees; and
- Continue coordination with DDOT on the public space design elements noted in the Streetscape and Public Realm section of this report.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Mode Split and Trip Generation Comparison

DDOT conducted a trip generation analysis for the site to compare the transportation impacts of residential development scenarios under the existing RA-1 and R-3 zones with the proposed RA-2 zone. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current zoning.

The existing RA-1 zone allows for approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the site to be developed with low- to moderate-density development, including detached dwellings, rowhouses, and low-rise apartments. The existing R-3 zone allows for approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the site to be developed with row dwellings, including areas with row dwellings mingled with detached dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, and groups of three or more row dwellings. The Applicant proposes constructing 416 multi-family dwellings and 28 townhomes, in comparison to the 224 multi-family dwellings under existing conditions and the 304 multi-family dwellings and 31 single-family dwellings (with up to one accessory dwelling unit each) that would be allowed under the existing zoning.

To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized the rates published in the *ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*, webtool. A 60% non-auto mode share was assumed based on the site’s proximity to Priority Transit (Metrobus Route 92). Table 1 below presents a summary of DDOT’s estimate of vehicle and person trips for each development scenario.

As shown below, development of the site with the Applicant’s proposal (estimated 416 multi-family dwellings and 28 single-family dwellings) will generate approximately 67 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour, 71 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, and 71 vehicle trips during the Saturday peak hour. In comparison, the maximum build-out within existing zoning could generate approximately 61 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour, 76 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, and 64 vehicle trips during the Saturday peak hour. This represents a minor decrease in vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, but a minor increase during the weekday morning and Saturday peak hours.

Table 1 | Trip Generation Comparison

Development Scenario	Estimated Development Program	AM Peak Person Trips	PM Peak Person Trips	SAT Peak Person Trips	AM Peak Vehicle Trips	PM Peak Vehicle Trips	SAT Peak Vehicle Trips
Existing Conditions	224 Multi-Family Dwellings	106	135	108	36	46	37
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in RA-1, R-3 Zones	304 Multi-Family Dwellings 31 Single-Family Dwellings 31 Accessory Apartments	179	225	189	61	76	64
Applicant Proposal	416 Multi-Family Dwellings 28 Single-Family Dwellings	197	210	210	67	71	71
Net Change Max RA-1, R-3 to Applicant Proposal	+78 Dwellings	+19	-15	+21	+6	-5	+7
Notes: The estimated development program for the Applicant Proposal in this table also includes Lot 815 in Square 5734 with the proposed Multi-Family Building B. This lot is a part of the Applicant's overall development program but is not part of this proposed Map Amendment. That lot will remain zoned as MU-7B.							

Vehicle Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Loading Requirements

While the site is located within ¼ mile of the 92 Metrobus Priority Corridor Network route, the Applicant cannot take advantage of the allowable 50% reduction in the parking minimum, per Title 11 of *DCMR*, Subtitle C, § 702.1(c), because the site is along a set of streets currently in the DDOT and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Residential Permit Parking (RPP) [database](#).

According to DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, however, a site this proximate to priority transit should provide no more than 0.35 spaces per multi-family residential unit (1 space per 3 units). The presence of surplus parking has the potential to induce demand for additional driving on the roadway network. During public space permitting, the Applicant will be required to commit to a TDM plan for the buildings that have 20 or more residential units and a curb cut, the contents of which will be determined at that time and will be influenced by the amount of off-street parking provided. The Applicant will need to meet the requirements for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in accordance with the Comprehensive Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Access, Readiness, and Sustainability Amendment Act of 2024, which goes into effect in 2027.

The project must meet all bicycle parking requirements. DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking, showers, and lockers requirements of Title 11 of the *DCMR* Subtitle C, § 800 and Title 18 of *DCMR* § 1214. Long- and short-term bicycle parking should be designed in accordance with the 2018 DDOT *Bike Parking Design Guide*. As required by zoning, at least 50% of long-term bicycle parking spaces must be located horizontally on the floor or easily accessible on the bottom level of a two-tier rack system. Additionally, DDOT requires at least 5% of spaces be designed for cargo and larger bikes (10 feet by 3 feet rather than 6 feet by 2 feet) and 10% of spaces be served by electrical outlets for e-bikes and scooters.

For the proposed buildings that trigger loading requirements, the Applicant must ensure that there is no backing of trucks across the sidewalk and that all movements through sidewalk space are head-in and

head-out with turns occurring on private property or an alley. If an alley is available, access must be provided via the alley. For proposed buildings with more than three (3) residential units, the Applicant must contract a private trash collection service. Trash must be stored on private property out of the view of the sidewalk and collected from an alley or parking lot. Move-ins and move-outs should occur from a loading berth, off-street parking space, alley, or parking lot, if provided. Future residents may also obtain “emergency no parking” signs through DDOT’s Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) to reserve an on-street parking space for move-ins and move-outs.

Note that the exact zoning requirements for vehicle parking, bicycle parking, and loading will be determined by the Department of Buildings (DOB) and will be based on the final development program ultimately proposed.

HERITAGE AND SPECIAL TREES

According to the Applicant, the property has more than 30 Heritage and Special trees. DDOT expects that the Applicant coordinate with the Ward 8 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of all existing Heritage, Special, and small street trees, as well as the planting of new street trees, in bioretention facilities or a typical expanded tree planting space, if proposed.

Heritage Trees have a circumference of 100 inches or more and are protected by the Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act of 2016. With approval by the Mayor and UFD, Heritage Trees might be permitted to be relocated. As such, the Applicant may be required to redesign the site plan to preserve the Non-Hazardous Heritage Trees. Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special Trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by UFD, a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) will be required.

STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM

When the site develops or there are any substantial renovations to future buildings, the property owner will be expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines, in line with District policy and practice. This includes curb and gutters, street trees and landscaping, streetlights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

Specifically, there are potential access and public space issues that the Applicant should be aware of and continue to coordinate with DDOT on, when the site develops:

- All vehicular site access to the site, as well as loading facilities and trash pick-up, must be via 24th Street, Skyland Place, or the existing rear public alley along Lots 5 through 8, 813, and 815 in Square 5734. The only alley entrance is from Skyland Place SE;
- No new curb cuts to the property from Marion Barry Avenue or 25th Street should be proposed;
- For all required loading facilities, ensure there is no backing of trucks across the sidewalk and all movements through sidewalk space are head-in and head-out;
- The site has a 15-foot Building Restriction Line (BRL) along 24th Street as well as Wagner Street west of 24th Street and east of Skyland Place. A 10-foot BRL is present along Skyland Place as well as Wagner Street between 24th Street and Skyland Place. The area between the property line and BRL is the building restriction area, which is regulated like DDOT public space and should remain “park-like” with landscaping;
- Along the site’s Marion Barry Avenue frontage, a minimum of 17 feet from the back-of-curb should be kept clear of any obstructions including but not limited to structures, fencing, stairs,

ramps, and new trees outside the tree box to provide sufficient space for a potential future shared-use path. While no shared-use path is planned for Marion Barry Avenue at this time, safe multimodal facilities along the corridor have been frequently requested as part of community engagement for the [Marion Barry Avenue SE Corridor Safety Project](#) and the [Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue & Marion Barry Avenue SE Area Safety and Connectivity Study](#). Additionally, Marion Barry Avenue is identified as part of the [Bicycle Priority Network](#) in *moveDC* – the District’s multimodal long-range transportation plan;

- As part of each phase, any existing gaps in the sidewalk network should be constructed with a clear path of at least 6-feet and a tree box of at least 4-feet. These gaps include:
 - Along the north and west side of Skyland Place from approximately 2309 to 2335 Skyland Place SE;
 - Under existing conditions, the staircase adjacent to 2309 Skyland Place SE requires a westbound wheelchair user who reaches this point in the sidewalk network to travel back down to 25th Street, cross Skyland Place, and return up the opposite side of Skyland Place to continue – an additional distance of more than 550 feet with considerable topography.
 - Along the north side of Wagner Street and Skyland Place from approximately 2410 to 2420 Wagner Street SE;
 - Under existing conditions, the staircases adjacent to 2410 Wagner Street SE and 2309 Skyland Place SE make the entire north and west side of Skyland Place virtually inaccessible for a wheelchair user along the sidewalk between these staircases.
- Install concrete curb extensions on the intersection corners surrounding the site where an on-street parking lane exists and ensure all curb ramps and crosswalks are up to modern standards;
- Ensure any pedestrian entrances to a future multi-family building are at-grade with the public sidewalk so that no stairs or ramps are required in public space;
- Provide a plan showing the detailed design of the long-term bike storage rooms so PSD can confirm it meets requirements of Title 11 of the *DCMR* Subtitle C, § 800) and Title 18 of the *DCMR* § 1214 and *DDOT Bike Parking Guide* best practices;
- During permitting, submit a Curbside Management Plan for all public streets surrounding the site showing existing and proposed signage and curbside designations;
- All overhead power lines should be moved to underground at the time of redevelopment so that poles and wires do not clutter DDOT public space; and
- Any existing Cobra Head-style streetlights along the site perimeter should be replaced with either Washington Globe or Decorative Tear Drop-style streetlights. Exact style to be installed will be determined at the time of permitting.

DDOT encourages the Applicant to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with the Office of Planning and DDOT to discuss the public space design when a future development is proposed.

In conjunction with the *DCMR*, DDOT’s *Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)* and the *Public Realm Design 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.