Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Transportation

d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Meredith Soniat
Acting Associate Director MS

DATE: July 18, 2025

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 25-05 – 3100 Whitehaven Street NW (Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies Campus Plan)

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Trustees for Harvard University (the "Applicant") seeks approval for renewal of a Campus Plan for the Harvard University Center for Hellenic Studies (CHS). The site is located at 3100 Whitehaven Street NW (Square 2155, Lot 802) and has served as the campus since 1963. The most recent Campus Pan was approved by the Zoning Commission (ZC) in 2015 in ZC Case No. 15-06.

The roughly six-acre campus is accessed via a driveway near the western dead-end of Whitehaven Street NW and abuts the Embassy and Chancery of the Kingdom of Denmark to its west, the Chancery of the Republic of Italy to its east, and Dumbarton Oaks Park to the south. The Campus currently comprises 11 structures for administration, residences for the director and fellows, and small conference center. The Applicant proposes to construct a new dining, gym, and facilities building and residential additions along with previously-approved building additions and renovations, with minor related changes to the internal circulation network.

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 zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District's multi-modal 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 proposal results in a moderate change in building program but maintains the same use as the current program; and

- The Applicant proposes a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan that will support usage of non-auto modes.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of this Campus Plan application with the condition that the Applicant shall implement a TDM Plan for the life of the project to include:

- Identify a staff member to serve as the Transportation Coordinator during the time period of the campus plan. The Transportation Coordinator will act as point of contact with DDOT, goDCgo, and Zoning Enforcement.
- Provide the Transportation Coordinator's contact information to goDCgo.
- The Transportation Coordinator will:
    - develop, distribute, and market various transportation alternatives and options to CHS employees and resident fellows, including promoting transportation events (i.e., Bike to Work Day, National Walking Day, Car Free Day) in any internal newsletters or communications.
    - distribute information to CHS employees on the Commuter Connections Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) program, which provides commuters who regularly carpool, vanpool, bike, walk, or take transit to work with a free and reliable ride home in an emergency.
    - provide CHS employees with links to CommuterConnections.com and goDCgo.com.
    - provide a SmarTrip card and one (1) complimentary Capital Bikeshare coupon good for a free ride to each new CHS employee.
    - provide welcome packets to all new CHS resident fellows that should, at a minimum, include the Metrorail pocket guide, brochures of local bus lines, SmarTrip card and one (1) complimentary Capital Bikeshare coupon good for a free ride, Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) brochure, and the most recent DC Bike Map. Brochures can be ordered from DDOT's goDCgo program by emailing info@godcgo.com.
- Provide transit benefits to all employees.
- Install four (4) short-term bicycle parking spaces (2 inverted-U racks) near the entrance of the new dining, gym, and facilities building.
- Install two (2) electric vehicle charging stations in off-street parking spaces.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

Given the complexity and size of the Campus Plan, the Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT on the following matters outside of the zoning process:

- The Applicant will be required to obtain public space permits for any elements of the project proposed in public space;
- Coordinate with DDOT's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) team and goDCgo regarding the implementation of the TDM Plan; and
- Coordinate with DDOT's Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 2 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Heritage and Special trees on the campus.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

The following is DDOT's review of the submitted plans, application materials, and additional email correspondence to assess the project's consistency with the District's vision for an equitable and sustainable transportation system that delivers safe and convenient ways to move people, goods, and services.

Site Access

The site will continue to be accessed by vehicles from the entry gate via a curb cut on Whitehaven Street. No vehicle access changes are proposed as part of the Campus Plan. Bicycle and pedestrian access will also be provided via the entry gate while an additional pedestrian gate provides access further east along Whitehaven Street. Figure 1, below, shows the site's proposed facilities plan.

Figure 1 | Proposed Facilities Plan

Source: Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies, 2025 Campus Plan, Figure 2

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. All loading and trash pick-up will occur on the campus, accessed via the existing entry gate on Whitehaven Street.

Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, price, and 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, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, demographic composition, and other characteristics.

There are currently 38 vehicle parking spaces located on the campus in various small surface lots accessed from the internal driveway. The Campus Plan proposes no changes to the number of parking spaces and will provide electric vehicle charging stations at two parking spaces. The campus also uses areas of their driveway shoulder for occasional parking when hosting larger events.

Bicycle Parking

The Applicant will be preserving the existing six (6) long- and four (4) short-term bicycle parking spaces. While this falls short of the zoning-required nine (9) long- and 17 short-term bicycle parking spaces, there are other informal bicycle parking spaces on the secured campus, and the campus does not generate incoming student traffic, as would typical educational uses of comparable square footage. DDOT recommends that four (4) additional short-term bicycle parking spaces (2 inverted-U racks) be installed near the entrance of the proposed dining, gym, and facilities building.

The Applicant is encouraged to work with DDOT to ensure both long- and short-term bicycle parking spaces abide by the design and spacing guidelines outlined in the 2018 DDOT *Bike Parking Guide*.

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, streetlights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

The Applicant must work closely with DDOT and OP 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 Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the DCMR, DDOT's most recent version of the *Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)* and the *Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant.

The Applicant is not proposing any public space changes at this time. If any portion of this or future projects at the property propose elements within District-owned right-of-way the Applicant is required to pursue a public space construction permit. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the *DCMR*, the most recent version of DDOT's *DEM*, and the *Public Realm Design Manual* for public space regulations and design guidance. A permit application can be filed through the DDOT Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) website.

Heritage and Special Trees

According to the District's Tree Size Estimator map, the heavily wooded property contains several Heritage and Special Trees. DDOT expects the Applicant to coordinate with the Ward 2 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of 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.

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 DDOT's Urban Forestry Division (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.

Mode Split and Trip Generation

Each trip a person makes is made by a certain means of travel, such as vehicle, bicycle, walking, and transit. 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, completeness of pedestrian network, proximity to transit options, availability and cost of vehicle parking, among many others.

Since the CHS campus employs no faculty and enrolls no students, a standard trip generation estimate using land use category #550 (University/College) from the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition based on number of students would not be applicable. The Applicant provided DDOT with a description of the travel behavior and mode splits of the 12 fellows who live and work on campus (some with their families), 15 full-time staff, six part-time staff, and infrequent visitors. The Applicant anticipates the number of fellows may increase from 12 to 15 over the next twenty years. The majority of daily trips are generated by incoming staff, whose mode split is estimated at 65% auto and 35% transit. Since the uses do not exceed 100 person trips or 25 vehicle trips during the peark hour in the peak direction, the Campus Plan does not trigger a Transportation Impact Study.

Pedestrian Network

The District of Columbia is committed to enhance 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's frontage along Whitehaven Street does not have a sidewalk, but there is a sidewalk on the opposite side of Whitehaven Street, connecting to Massachusetts Avenue and the broader pedestrian network.

Bicycle Network

The District is committed to enhancing bicycle accessibility by ensuring consistent investment in bicycle 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 bicycling trips. While bicycling is expected to be an

important mode of transportation for the Campus, the site is not well served by bicycle lanes nor Capital Bikeshare stations.

Transit Service

The District and 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 within ¼ mile to one Metrobus route that provides service to between the Tenleytown Metrorail Station and multiple destinations Downtown.

Curbside Management

When a property redevelops, it is DDOT's policy to reevaluate the existing curbside restrictions around the site frontages to ensure they align with the new land use(s) to occupy the property, as well as, the surrounding neighborhood context.

The site's Whitehaven Street frontage currently has unrestricted curbside parking. The Applicant is not proposing any changes to the curbside designations along the site's frontage. If changes are proposed, a detailed curbside and signage plan must be submitted during public space permitting for review and approval by DDOT's Curbside Management Division (CMD). At that time, the plan may be refined by CMD and the exact signage placards will be determined. If multi-space meters are required by CMD then they will be at the Applicant's expense.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

As part of all land development cases, 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. DDOT finds the proposed TDM Plan outlined in the Recommendation section, above, as sufficiently robust to encourage use of non-auto travel modes.

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