

March 2, 2026

Via IZIS

Anthony Hood, Chairperson
District of Columbia Zoning Commission
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200-S
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Zoning Commission Case No. 20-08__ : Modification Without a Hearing to
Z.C. Order 20-08; Howard University Central Campus Plan**

Dear Chairperson Hood and Members of the Commission:

Howard University (“**University**” or “**Applicant**”) hereby requests a modification to the University’s Central Campus Plan, Z.C. Order No. 20-08 (**Campus Plan “Order”**), to confirm that certain student personal service uses to include a small barber and hair salon in the University’s Drew and Frazier residence halls, respectively, are permitted accessory uses.

I. Background

Howard University wants to locate a small barber shop in its Drew residence hall and a hair salon in Frazier Hall. Both shops would only serve University students, faculty and staff and would be only accessible from the lobby of the residence halls. These personal care services further the University’s objective to provide students with the convenience of being on campus in housing that is intentionally designed to meet their needs. The salons will offer specialized loctician services that are popular in the African American community.

Drew Hall and Frazier Hall are student residence halls and are located within the boundaries of the University’s Central Campus Plan. Drew Hall is located at 511 Gresham Place, N.W. and includes 5 floors and 320 dorm rooms which accommodate 320 freshmen men. Frazier Hall is one of the five residence halls which makeup the Harriett Tubman Quadrangle (aka “the Quad”) which is located at 2455 4th Street, N.W. and houses approximately 600 female students.

Both uses are very small and clearly subordinate to their principal dormitory uses. The Drew barber shop will occupy 354 square feet of space on the first floor and the Frazier salon will occupy 153 square feet on the first floor of Frazier Hall. First floor plans for both dorms showing the uses are attached hereto as Exhibit D.

The proposed uses are similar in nature to other service and amenity uses included in the University's residence halls including laundry, fitness facilities and computer labs. However, the Zoning Administrator has suggested Zoning Commission approval is needed because they were not previously mentioned in the Campus Plan.

II. The Application Satisfies the Evaluation Standards for a Modification

Pursuant to Subtitle Z, Section 703.6, a "modification without hearing" is a modification in which impact may be understood without witness testimony, including, but not limited to a proposed change to a condition in the final order, a change in position on an issue discussed by the Commission that affected its decision, or a redesign or relocation of architectural elements and open spaces from the final design approved by the Commission.

The requested Modification satisfies the applicable standard for review, in that witness testimony is not required to evaluate the proposed salon and barber shop spaces. They are internal to the residence halls and will not pose any significant impacts inside or outside the dorms. The small spaces proposed will limit the number of students who will occupy the space further minimizing any impacts.

Further, the proposed Modification does not materially change the use, height, or density of the residence halls at issue. The University desires to proceed expeditiously with the installation of these services and the modification without hearing process is an efficient and reasonable process as compared to a much more costly further processing process that is unnecessary in view of the very small scale of the modifications proposed here.

III. Plans Consistency

Campus Plan

The salons are consistent with key planning policy objectives cited the University's campus plan (excerpts highlighted in the attached and as follows):

4.1.1 Planning Goals

Promote the continued contributions of Howard toward the economic and cultural vitality of the local community and the city.

The salons will provide economic opportunities for local community members to gain the experience necessary to establish and advance cosmetology careers.

4.1.2 Planning Principles

Improve Quality of Life Provide a quality physical environment with a variety of places and spaces in which the campus community of

students, faculty, and staff can socialize, study, network, learn, and relax.

The salons will offer important, additional spaces on the campus for students, faculty and staff to interact, socialize and relax together. In fact, salons have a tradition of providing venues for socializing in African American culture:

“Since the turn of the 19th century, beauty salons and barber shops have served as special places where customers played games such as chess, cards, and dominoes, while having conversations about local gossip, politics, and community affairs.

Over the years, beauty salons and barber shops have come to provide a unique social function. Many film adaptations of African American themes use these businesses to show black culture in the United States. Coming to America (1988), Malcolm X (1992), and Barbershop (2002) are examples of films used to showcase African Americans’ unique relationships with barber and beauty shops. (Excerpt the website of the National Museum of African American History and Culture).

Comprehensive Plan

The Project will also further a number of Comprehensive Plan Economic Development provisions.

Policy ED-1.1.4: Promote Local Entrepreneurship: Support District residents, including women-owned businesses and equity impacts enterprises (small, resident-owned Black and Brown business) seeking entrepreneurship opportunities through layered programs, including technical assistance, promotion of District products and services, and market development. 703.15 ED-1.1.4.

Policy ED-3.2.4: Partnerships with Major Employers: Promote collaborations and partnerships between small businesses and the District’s major employers to increase contracts for small and disadvantaged businesses (including federal outsourcing contracts), create new training opportunities, leverage corporate social responsibility initiatives, or otherwise collaborate on inclusive economic growth initiatives. 714.9

In furtherance of the referenced policies, the University will contract with local, community based small business to operate the salons.

IV. Filing Requirements

Application. The Application Signature Page is attached as Exhibit A.

Authorization Letter. A letter from the University authorizing Saul Ewing to file this request is attached as Exhibit B.

Prior Order. Copies of Zoning Commission Order No. 20-08 approving the University's Central Campus Plan is attached as Exhibits C.

Plans. Plans showing the proposed Modification are attached as Exhibit D.

Service on Parties. Pursuant to Subtitle Z, Section 703.13, the Applicant has served a copy of this application on ANC 1B, which is automatically a party to the case as a party to the original Campus Plan case. The Property lies within the boundaries of Advisory Neighborhood Commission ("ANC") 1E which is also served by the Applicant.

Conclusion

The University looks forward to the Commission's consideration of the application at an upcoming public meeting.

Very truly yours,



Cynthia A. Giordano

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on March 2, 2026 electronic copies of the foregoing Modification With a Hearing to Z.C. Order No. 20-08 was served on the following persons:

D.C. Office of Planning

Ms. Maxine Brown-Roberts

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Cynthia Gordon