

Government of the District of Columbia


Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Neighborhood Planning Manager 

DATE: December 31, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 18744A – 15 Dupont Circle NW

APPLICATION

Patterson SPE LLC (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle Y § 704, requests a modification of significance to the relief approved by BZA Order No. 18744 to include a special exception under the use permissions of Subtitle U § 504.1(f), to permit the conversion of 31 units to a lodging use. The site is located in the MU-15 Zone at 15 Dupont Circle, NW (Square 136, Lot 34) and currently 92 residential units. After the conversion, there will be a total of 54 market rate dwelling units, seven (7) inclusive zoning units, and 31 hotel rooms.

RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the Applicant’s request and determined that based on the information provided, this proposed action will have no adverse impacts on the travel conditions of the District’s transportation network. The proposed action may lead to a minor increase in vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle trips. In addition, the project has the potential to generate minor impacts to on-street parking conditions in the area. Vehicle parking demand may increase slightly as a result of the project, inducing a higher level of parking utilization in the immediate area. Despite these minor potential impacts, DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested modification of significance on the condition:

- The Applicant will amend the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan proposed and approved in BZA 18744 to include the following TDM strategies for the lodging use:

- Will provide Transportation Coordinators' contact information to goDCgo, conduct an annual commuter survey of employees on-site, and report TDM activities and data collection efforts to goDCgo once per year;
- Transportation Coordinators will develop, distribute, and market various transportation alternatives and options to employees and [customers, patrons, attendees], including promoting transportation events (i.e., Bike to Work Day, National Walking Day, Car Free Day) on property website and in any internal building newsletters or communications.
- Transportation Coordinators will receive TDM training from goDCgo to learn about the TDM conditions for this project and available options for implementing the TDM Plan.
- Front office and customer-facing staff will be provided training by goDCgo (either in-person or webinar) to learn of the non-automotive options for traveling to the property.
- Provide guests with goDCgo's Get around Guide by making it available on the property website and in printed format for front office or customer-facing staff.
- Transportation Coordinator will subscribe to goDCgo's hospitality newsletter.
- The Hotel will participate in the Capital Bikeshare Corporate Membership program and offer discounted annual memberships to employees.
- Will post "getting here" information in a visible and prominent location on the website with a focus on non-automotive travel modes. Also, links will be provided to goDCgo.com, CommuterConnections.com, transit agencies around the metropolitan area, and instructions for patrons.
- Provide brochures with information on non-automotive options for traveling to the property available at all times in a visible location in the lobby.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicle Parking

The Applicant received approval for a parking variance from 23 vehicle parking spaces as part of BZA 18744 in 2014. No changes to the parking supply are proposed with this action. The subject site offers excellent non-auto travel options, given the close proximity to the Dupont Circle Metro-station, that facilitate non-auto travel and the addition of a hotel fits well with the existing sites lack of on-site parking.

DDOT notes that given the bus stop on P Street NW and the adjacency to Dupont Circle it is unlikely that a valet or pick-up and drop-off zone would be approved for the site frontage.

Trip Generation

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 requested modification proposes a hotel use, which results in a minimal increase in vehicular trips to the site (net of 4 additional vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and a net of 5 in the evening peak hour). Given the trip increase, DDOT did not require a transportation study for this action, but is requiring the TDM plan be upheld with the lodging modifications requested by DDOT.

Transportation Demand Management

As part of the Zoning Order for BZA 18744, the Applicant is required to implement several Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures for the residential portion of the site which DDOT expects will continue:

- Designate a member of the property management team as a Transportation Management Coordinator (TMC). The TMC shall provide information to residents identifying the available alternative modes of transportation and other supportive programs;
- Direct new residents to the property's website, which will include information on transportation options;
- Provide a transportation information screen in a common, shared space in the building that will show real time availability information for nearby trains, buses, and other transportation alternatives;
- Restrict tenants from eligibility for Residential Parking Permit (RPP) for the blocks surrounding the property. The Applicant shall record this restriction in a covenant that runs with the land with the Recorder of Deeds;
- Provide at least 31 secured, covered bicycle parking spaces within the building and at least four bicycle parking spaces in public space near the building's entrance, the latter subject to approval by public space officials;
- Provide a bicycle repair facility within the building;
- Provide a minimum of 10 bicycle helmets for use by the residents of the building;
- Offer Capital Bikeshare to all new tenants who do not otherwise own a bicycle for the initial term of each lease in perpetuity;
- Offer membership in a car-share program to all new tenants for the initial term of their lease in perpetuity; and
- Designate a loading management coordinator to coordinate all loading activities of the building and require all tenants to notify the loading management coordinator before moving in or out. Tenants requiring a moving truck shall provide the loading management coordinator the following information: time and date that the truck is anticipated to arrive, size of truck being used, and name of moving service, if applicable; and in the event that a moving truck is required, the loading management coordinator or tenant shall apply for DDOT Emergency No Parking signs to establish a temporary loading area. "Emergency No Parking" permits for loading are only eligible to be located in legal parking spaces, which are currently not located immediately adjacent to the subject site.

Given the change in use for approximately one-third of the site and addition of new vehicle trips, DDOT finds additional TDM elements encourage non-automotive use for the lodging portion of the site (see recommendation section above).

Bicycle Parking

The Applicant currently has 31 long-term bicycle parking spaces located on the lower level and eight (8) short-term bicycle parking spaces for the existing 92 residential units. The existing bicycle facilities will remain in the proposed condition and exceed what would be required with the new use.

Public Space

This review only pertains to zoning issues and does not consider potential impacts to District owned public space. DDOT's lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of public space design. If any portion of this or future projects at the property propose elements within District owned public space, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process.

DDOT notes that most of the public space work appears to have already been completed, but any changes will require a new public space permit. If the Applicant does wish to pursue a valet or pick-up and drop-off zone it would need to apply for a Public Space permit.

DDOT expects the adjacent public space to meet all District standards. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the DCMR, and the most recent version of DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual, and DDOT's 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.

AC:kb