

## 34 Nearby Sunrise Communities



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# New Senior Community & Church Planned for Tenleytown

Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church is joining with Sunrise Senior Living to build a new church and senior living facility at its Tenley Circle location. Though separate, Sunrise and the church will be part of the same building and share a common vision for meeting the needs of the community. **For additional clarity, Sunrise and the church remain two separate entities. The project is not a joint venture, nor is there any transfer or use of the church's tax exemption by Sunrise, or any formal partnership.**

During the course of several meetings and discussions with community members and neighbors, they have posed several questions about the project. In order to provide a centralized location for answers to the most common issues raised, as well as basic information about the new development, we have created this website. Please take a moment to read and learn more about the benefits this proposed project would offer the community and neighboring families.

**Update (6/14/18):** In response to additional ANC commissioner and neighbor input, the following changes have been made.

- WABC and Sunrise filed the BZA application June 14th. The application materials can be found [here](#).
- Decrease lot occupancy from 63% to 57%

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.19823  
EXHIBIT NO.73

- Decrease number of Sunrise units from 90 to 86
- Increase eastern sideyard setback from 20 feet to 36 feet from property line.
- Reduced building height to be 100% at 40 feet and within by right height of R-1B zone
- Increased parking from 54 spaces to 66 spaces and eliminated need for a parking special exception
- Added additional building setbacks along the rear property line along Yuma Street
- Moved building 8 feet west along the National Park Service (NPS) land requiring the addition of a side-yard setback Variance

**Update (12/7/17):** In response to recent neighbor input and meetings with the ANC, Sunrise has decided to make the following adjustments to its building and plans:

- Decrease the building size from 98 units to 90 units – 33 assisted living units and 57 units for memory care. Traffic or trip counts are expected to reduce slightly, including ambulance visits, due to the building's smaller scale.
- Reduction in lot coverage, from 69% to now 63%.
- No longer seeks a variance for side-yard setback.



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## **Project Overview**

The proposed project fronts on Tenley Circle and Nebraska Avenue between Alton Place and Yuma Street, and will allow a church which has been part of the Tenleytown community for over a century to replace an aging building with a new house of worship designed to fulfill the religious

and spiritual mission of the congregation and community, now and in the future. Second, the new Sunrise community will be a place that local seniors can call home, while also engaging in neighborhood outreach, such as intergenerational activities and caregiving support groups available to nearby families. As the aging senior population continues to rise, so will the need for homes and specialized care for older adults. Sunrise will be a resource for the entire community, as we carry out our organization's mission: to champion quality of life for all seniors.

For more than 35 years, Sunrise has provided a resident-centered approach to care in a nurturing home – located where families have the convenience and opportunity to be near their aging loved ones. Likewise, Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church has served the needs of a changing community for several generations, and has now become a demographically diverse congregation that reflects our city. The proposed project will allow the church to embrace a vibrant future, enhance its worship and ministry, and expand the services it provides to the greater community.

## **Questions and Support**

Because the assisted living community (technically known as a continuing care retirement community under the District's zoning regulations) requires special exception relief from the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment, Sunrise has established this website as a means to foster its dialogue with the entire community and to continue its work with local neighbors to listen, answer questions and seek feedback.

We are committed to keeping the Tenleytown community informed about this project and welcome questions and feedback. Additionally, if you have any questions or want to indicate your support of this project please email Philip Kroskin at [Philip.Kroskin@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Philip.Kroskin@sunriseseniorliving.com)

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Who will own the proposed building?**

A: Upon completion of the building, Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church and Sunrise will each own, in a condominium interest, their respective spaces within the building. Each property will be operated separately and independently.



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**Q: What is the size of the new building?**

A: The proposed new building will occupy the current land owned by Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church at Lot 14 in Square 1779.

- The Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church will be replaced, and the new building will include a 250 seat sanctuary with a balcony, fellowship hall, reception area, offices, classrooms, library, kitchenette and approximately 7,500 square feet of multi-purpose space.
- The Sunrise portion of the building will be a **86 unit** assisted living and memory care community. The community will also include a grand foyer, living room, library, dining room, bistro, kitchen, wellness suite, salon (including, massage room, pedicure/manicure area, and hair care area), and outdoor courtyard. **This is a change from the previously planned 98 and 90 unit building.**
- The church and Sunrise will share **66 below ground parking spaces**, an increase of 12 parking spaces in comparison to what was previously planned, an interior multi-purpose room and a large rooftop terrace.

The two uses will be located in a single building that covers **57 percent** of the total lot and will have a height of 40 feet (as calculated to **the top of the roof slab**) for **100 percent** of the building. The building **no longer** increases to 60 feet for the portion where the church is located.

**Originally, the plan was for the building to cover 69 percent of the total lot.** As part of the reduction in lot area to 63 percent, the massing of the building facing the residents along 39<sup>th</sup> street was changed significantly. **With the change in the lot occupancy to 57 percent and moving the building to the West, the residents along 39<sup>th</sup> street will now have a 36 foot setback from their property line, in addition to the significant reduction in the massing along that side.**



39TH STREET

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Wisconsin Avenue  
Baptist Church

WISCONSIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH  
SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING



6/13/18  
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LANDSCAPE PLAN

LSG LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Wisconsin Avenue  
Baptist Church

WISCONSIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH  
SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING



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**Q: What special exceptions and variances is the project seeking?**

**A:** Sunrise and the church are seeking **two** special exceptions and **three** variances, as described

below. Even with the areas of relief requested, the unique setting of the property, which is surrounded on three sides by streets and park land, will allow the new building to fit comfortably into the overall look and feel of the area.

### **Special Exceptions**

1. Use – While religious institutions are considered a by-right use in the R-1-B zone, assisted living falls into the continuing care retirement community category, which requires a special exception.
2. Retaining Wall – We are seeking a special exception to allow for the ramp down into the below grade parking decks. The retaining wall on the east side of the property down to the garage is expected to be **13 feet** at its depth from the finished floor elevation. The zoning regulations limit the wall to no more than 4 feet in height.

### **Variations**

1. Lot Occupancy – The building, as designed, has a lot occupancy of **57 percent, a reduction from the original 69 percent lot use planned.** The zoning regulations limit lot occupancy for the by-right religious institution to 60 percent. For the assisted living use, no more than 40 percent of the lot may be covered. The larger lot coverage requested is to allow for proper space planning for both the church and the assisted living facility.
2. Number of Stories – The entire building, including both Sunrise and the church, is designed to have no more than four stories of occupied space, whereas the zoning regulations stipulate that only three stories are allowed. While the building exceeds the number of stories permitted it still falls within the maximum height limit of 40 feet. In other words, a three story 40 foot building is allowed by the code. Without the extra floor there will not be enough units for Sunrise to support constructing this project.
3. Side-yard Setback – **The current proposal requires a variance for the side-yard setback along the Western property line adjacent to the NPS land.**

**Q: What benefits does this project offer to the residents of Tenleytown?**

#### **Religious and community services:**

- Worship and spiritual guidance
- Religious instruction, educational and issue-oriented forums, music and arts events open to the community
- Community services and outreach, including City Gate volunteer or service projects in other city neighborhoods of high need
- Public spaces available for community use

#### **Senior Living Care, Support and services:**

- Provides personalized care and support for seniors in a compassionate, nurturing environment
- Addresses current and future strong demand against a backdrop of ongoing limited supply of assisted living and memory care in the District of Columbia
- Allows longtime residents of Tenleytown to stay in their neighborhood as they age

**Financial benefits:**

- Creates new healthcare jobs – approximately 65-70 full time equivalent employees split between three shifts
- Generates new real estate tax benefit to the city that doesn't burden public resources such as schools and recreation centers

**Local business relationships:**

- Collaborates with existing senior care providers
- Supports adjacent businesses through family, employee and resident patronage

**Educational and intergenerational programming:**

- Fosters [intergenerational relationships](#) with local schools and involves families
- Provides an ongoing educational forum for eldercare, Alzheimer's, and long-term care planning for the greater community, including support groups for area families

**Improving neighborhood aesthetics:**

- Replaces an aged and functionally obsolete, unfinished church building and limited landscaping
- Creates a well-designed, attractive building that contributes to the overall visual enhancement of Tenleytown community
- Balances and blends the scale and design of the new church and senior living community with St. Ann's Catholic Church and the American University Law School on the west side of Tenley circle, and compliments other aesthetic improvements along the Wisconsin Avenue spine, such as the new Tenleytown library, the Bon Secour addition, and Cityline.
- Adds extensive new landscaping on the site and in the public right-of-way surrounding the property
- Enhances the park to the immediate west of the site with new landscaping and community park features, as well as new landscaping around Tenley Circle. **The creation of this park is subject to approval from the National Park Service. To date, NPS has reviewed and commented on the concept as show in the landscape plan at the bottom of this website**
- Provides the potential of traffic calming measures (in coordination with DDOT and ANC)
- Reduces the potential adverse effects of a by-right high demand new religious institution, which could overwhelm the community with a larger building and more daily events without any discretionary governmental reviews or community input

**Q: Is it true that a new religious institution could build in this location without the need for ANC or BZA approval?**

A: Yes. The current R-1-B zoning allows a religious institution to build as high as 60 feet and with 60 percent lot occupancy without the need for ANC input or BZA approval for that building. **One hundred percent** of the proposed Sunrise/Church is only at 40 feet in height. The proposed building actually would be smaller than a potential religious structure designed to meet the permitted zoning parameters of 60 feet in height and 60 percent lot occupancy. Additionally, the



Sunrise/Church programs would be a quieter use as compared to the significant daily and weekend activities that an active religious institution offers.

**Q. Did the church consider options for the property other than Sunrise?**

A: It must be clear that any sale option yielding less than full market value would not be considered by the church.

The Sunrise option has been thoroughly considered and is superior for the community and the church than any alternative. The partnership with Sunrise would provide the facility and resources for the church to not only expand and sustain its own life and mission, but to develop new and exciting community-oriented services and other creative programming, including educational and arts-related activities. It has the added benefit of meeting the community's need for additional senior assisted living facilities, and allows the church to work with a partner whose mission to care for older adults and individuals with memory loss aligns with our commitment to care for those in need and honor those who at one time cared for us.

If the church had to go to a back-up option, it would be a partnership with a compatible church or other religious institution where the project would be by-right. Criteria would be a qualified partner who shared an inclusive, justice-oriented, community perspective grounded in the historical biblical and theological foundations of the Christian faith, and one which would have the resources to fully develop the site to the maximum permitted zoning parameters in order to optimize resources and the combined mission.

Without a religious partner as described above, the church would consider another option of selling to a religious organization within or outside of the Christian faith or possibly one of the other two western monotheistic traditions if they believed their presence would be a positive contribution to the community. A final option could be a sale to a secular buyer with the capacity to develop the site and pay full market value. This option is also based on providing maximum resources for the church's mission.

**Q: Will the new building be designed as sensitively as other Sunrises in the area?**

A: Yes. In fact, Sunrise is using the same architect that designed the Connecticut Avenue project. It is critical for Sunrise to build communities that look and feel homelike and comfortable to the pedestrian on the street. Our residents and their families expect that a Sunrise will be their home in a caring environment versus a typical non-descript apartment building. As such, the exterior appearance, from the architectural details, to the building colors, rooflines, landscaping and even the rocking chairs on the porch, are Sunrise signature elements and create a warm, welcoming aesthetic. This new development will be special, as it integrates a distinctive yet aesthetically complementary religious edifice within the overall building.



PERSPECTIVE - TENLEY CIRCLE

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*Wisconsin Avenue  
Baptist Church*

**WISCONSIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING



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PERSPECTIVE - ALTON PLACE

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*Wisconsin Avenue  
Baptist Church*

**WISCONSIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING



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**Q: Who will live in the Sunrise building?**

A: Seventy percent of current Sunrise residents live within 10-15 minutes of their home, family and friends. For example, at the Sunrise on Connecticut Avenue, most of the residents have lived in the area for years. The average age of a Sunrise resident is 86 years old.

**Q: What services does Sunrise provide?**

A: Sunrise is an assisted living and memory care provider. Assisted living allows residents to be cared for in a professionally managed and senior friendly community. Residents are provided all their basic living needs including three daily meals, utilities, housekeeping, laundry, activities, and

transportation. Residents also have the ability to be provided care for their activities of daily living (ADLs). These include eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring (walking) and continence. All services are personalized for the resident. Residents with dementia and memory loss can get specialized care in different areas within the building. These neighborhoods provide a separate type of enriching programming and specialized security for these residents.

**Q: Will this be a nursing home?**

A: No. Skilled nursing or rehabilitation services are covered by Medicare or Medicaid for either long term or a short fixed period of time after a hospitalization. Medicare does not cover custodial care (such as assistance with feeding, bathing, and dressing), if that is the only care needed. These communities provide clinical care for seniors. These facilities are more closely aligned with a hospital environment.

**Q: Is it appropriate for a not-for-profit church to partner with a for-profit company?**

A: Yes. **In fact, there are many examples of projects in DC where a Church has partnered with for profit developers to renovate or reconstruct the church alongside the development of new multifamily and office uses.** Sunrise is a for-profit assisted living company; however, our mission to champion quality of life of all seniors is not limited by our taxable status. In fact, we find this relationship a wonderful extension of our operating practices where all Sunrise communities currently partner with faith based organizations to better serve our resident's needs. As you can see from our [website](#), Living with Reflection is one of our 8 Signature Programs. We offer best-in-class service and care that we are very proud of and have been industry leading for 35 years. We invest in our team and in our processes to help us fulfill the promises we make each day to our residents and families. Taxable status does not dictate daily service to mission and community.

**Q: Some consider Sunrise costs to be too high. Are they comparable to other providers?**

A: Yes. Our costs reflect the quality of care provided and are comparable with other assisted living communities throughout the region. In fact, many of the not-for-profit communities in the region have comparable monthly costs and some require a substantial entry fee.

**Q: Does Sunrise accept Medicare or Medicaid?**

A: Sunrise is a private pay organization and therefore does not accept Medicare or Medicaid. Furthermore, Medicare does not cover custodial care (such as assistance with feeding, bathing, and dressing), if that is the only care needed. We work with families to help them discover possible financial options, such as Veterans Benefits, long-term care insurance, and home equity to determine if placement at Sunrise might be an option.

**Q: Will the local residents of Tenleytown have access to the new building?**

A: Yes. The Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church and Sunrise Senior Living share a mission of serving the community. The church and Sunrise will host joint activities that benefit the entire Tenleytown community, including support groups for those who have a loved one living with Alzheimer's; while also opening our doors to volunteers and creating intergenerational relationships with nearby schools. Furthermore, the church will continue the City Gate community outreach program, providing both neighborhood services as well as multiple free off-site out-of-school time programs serving the city's most vulnerable children (programs that include extensive volunteer opportunities). We would also expect that both the church and Sunrise spaces could be used for community events as requested by various organizations.

**Q: Will Sunrise pay property taxes?**

A: Yes. While the church, as a religious institution does not pay real estate taxes, Sunrise will pay sizable real estate taxes for its portion of the proposed building – which will go towards supporting Washington D.C. schools and municipal services, among other things.

**Q: How will trash storage and pickup be handled?**

A: All trash will be contained inside the proposed building in a conditioned room. Sunrise will employ a private trash pickup company that will only pick up trash during specified hours (typically M-F 9am to 5pm).

**Q: How much will traffic increase on the residential streets?**

A: Very little. Comparable communities generate minimal traffic during peak weekday commute times (8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.). The AM Peak Hour is expected to have 16 total vehicle movements (10 on Alton and 6 on Yuma) and the PM Peak Hour is expected to have 23 total movements (10 on Alton and 13 on Yuma). The highest hour of Sunrise traffic is expected to be 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., with 37 total trips. Sunrise residents generally do not drive and will use the community vehicle for shopping or recreation trips. Sunrise employees will be encouraged to use public transportation and discounts on transportation vouchers will be provided in addition to subsidizing bike share or car share memberships. Sunrise is also working with DDOT to provide traffic calming measures on adjacent streets. **The trip count will reduce slightly for the smaller building now being planned.**

**Q: Are there a lot of ambulance visits to the Sunrise?**

A: No. As Sunrise is not a nursing home, it does not receive many ambulance visits. For example, according to the DC Fire department, from January 2016 to August 2017, the Sunrise of Connecticut mean number of trips was 10.2 per month with 76% (7.75 trips) of those trips occurring between 7am and 7pm. **The number of ambulance visits will reduce slightly for the smaller building.**

**Q: How many large vehicles will be on residential streets due to deliveries?**

A: Based on operations at other Sunrise communities, we anticipate **6 - 7 new deliveries and trash pickup per week (Sysco food 2x, trash 3x and other suppliers 1-2x). Additionally, the FedEx, Amazon, UPS, and USPS trucks will make a new stop at the community while on their existing rout..** To comply with DDOT restrictions and to help keep disruption to a minimum, drivers will be instructed to drive only on Wisconsin and Nebraska Avenues, limiting the time they spend on Alton Place and Yuma Street as much as possible.

**Q: Are trucks allowed on neighborhood streets?**

A: Yes. Trucks making deliveries and trash pickups in the neighborhood are allowed on all neighborhood streets. Trucks transiting through the neighborhood are not allowed.

Section 18-2505.6 of the DCMR states that: “Whenever authorized signs are erected indicating a truck restriction, no person shall operate the type of truck prohibited on the street, except that the prohibited truck may be operated on the street or portions of the street for the sole purpose of making a delivery or pickup and then only by entering the street at the intersection nearest to the destination of the truck and proceeding on the street no further than the next intersection after the delivery or pickup has been completed”

**Q: Will this new facility impact parking in the neighborhood?**

A: No. There are 66 underground spaces in total. Considering the use of the Metro and other forms of public transportation, the number of parking spaces provided will be sufficient to serve the needs of the church and of Sunrise.

**Q: Are employees allowed to park in the underground parking lot?**

A: Yes

**Q: How will the construction impact neighbors?**

A: Sunrise and the church understand how disruptive construction can be to neighbors. During

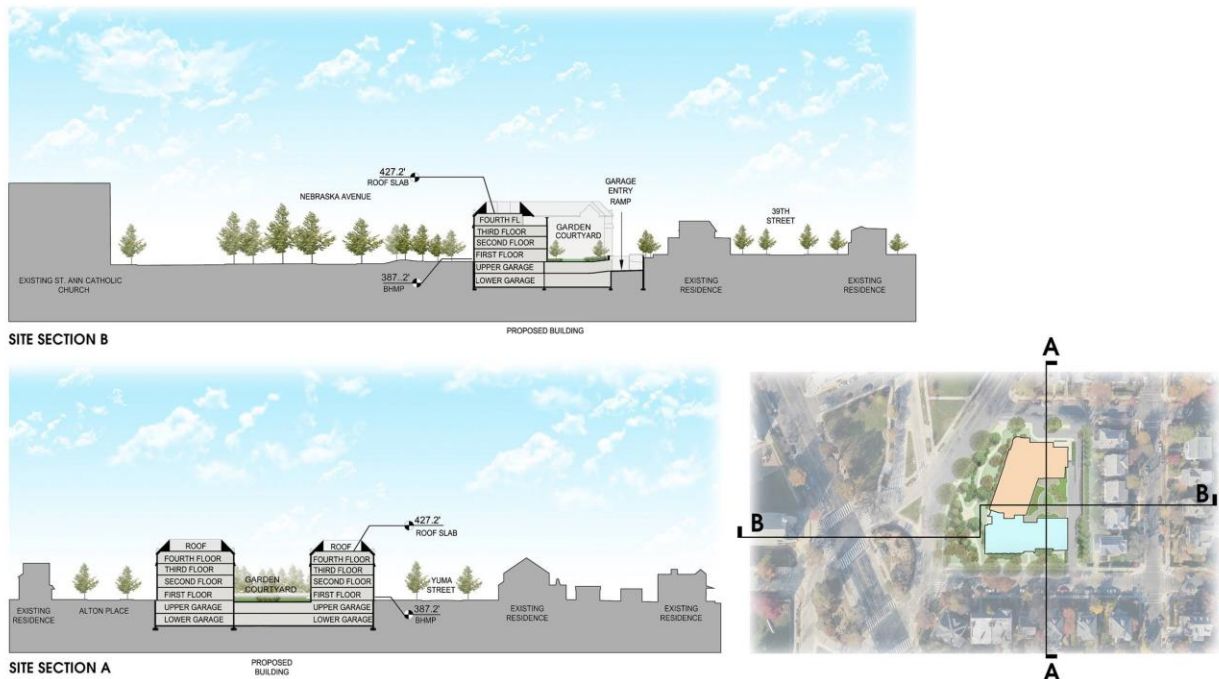
construction, Sunrise will work within all established DC noise standards. Work will only take place 7am - 5pm Monday through Friday and 8am - 5pm on Saturdays. Sunrise will also hire a private company to monitor and control the rodent population during construction. Sunrise plans to hire a qualified structural engineer to evaluate surrounding homes to determine the maximum threshold of vibrations those homes can endure and establish construction standards accordingly. Each home will be pre-evaluated and photographed and in the unlikely event of construction related damage, Sunrise will repair that damage at its cost.

**Q: Will employees be permitted to take smoking breaks near neighboring homes?**

A: Sunrise discourages employees from smoking as we promote a healthy working and living environment; however, for those that do smoke they will be asked to take walking breaks away from the neighborhood or adjacent to the community.

**Q: Will Sunrise commit to environmentally-safe practices in its building and the surrounding land?**

A: Yes. Sunrise will build this building to LEED standards. Sunrise is a leader in the senior living industry regarding a commitment to the environment and green building practices. Our Sunrise communities are committed to energy conscious practices and decisions. The Environmental Protection Agency has certified a large number of Sunrise communities with the ENERGY STAR award and all communities are enrolled in the Energy Star program. In addition, all employees are trained in energy-saving methods such as only washing full loads of dishes and clothing.





AERIAL

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Wisconsin Avenue  
Baptist Church

WISCONSIN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH  
SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING

SUNRISE  
SENIOR LIVING

6/13/18

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**Q: Will Sunrise commit to keeping landscaping around the project in good condition?**

A: Yes. Sunrise is not only committed to providing consistent landscaping services around the project and in the shared rooftop space, but also providing extensive and ongoing new landscaping on the National Parks Service property.