

# 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:** April 5, 2019

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case No. 19982 – 1723 Montello Avenue NE

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#### APPLICATION

Montello 1723 LLC (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, is requesting special exceptions under Subtitle C § 703.2 from the minimum parking requirements of Subtitle C § 701.5, and under Subtitle G § 409, § 1200 and § 1201 from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle G § 404.1 and the rear yard requirements of Subtitle G § 405.2, and pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 10, for a variance from the nonconforming structure requirements of Subtitle C § 202.2, to construct a two-story addition and penthouse to an existing, one-story commercial building and convert it to an eight-unit apartment house. The site is located in the MU-4 Zone at 1723 Montello Avenue, NE (Square 4052, Lot 180).

#### SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation’s capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District’s 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 Applicant is seeking relief from the one (1) required vehicle parking space;
- Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations requires that any request for a reduction in the minimum required parking include a transportation demand management (TDM) plan approved by DDOT;
- The Applicant has worked with DDOT to provide a robust TDM plan;

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- It is unlikely a curb cut would be able to comply with the DDOT Design and Engineering requirement to maintain 60-ft from an intersection (DEM 31.5.5), and the addition of a curb cut would eliminate at least one (1) curb side parking space;
- Three (3) long-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed on private property;
- The proposed steps on Simms Place NE project into the sidewalk. DDOT records show a 10-ft sidewalk with 2-ft of public parking. The steps should not project into the sidewalk area as they are currently illustrated; a 6-ft pedestrian clear path should be maintained;
- There is a significant amount of paving on Montello Avenue NE in the public parking area, which will be required to be vegetated as is appropriate for “public parking” in residential areas; and
- The Applicant should continue coordination with DDOT through the permitting process on all public space items.

## RECOMMENDATION

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 will 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 special exception and variances, on the condition:

- The Applicant implement the agreed to TDM Plan as part of Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations:
  - The Applicant will give every new resident a Residential Welcome Package which will include information about the abundance of nearby alternative transportation options available, including, but not limited to, ride-sharing services, car-sharing services, Metro, bike-sharing services such as Capital Bikeshare.
  - The Applicant will offer a one year bikeshare membership, the equivalent of \$85, (for each unit at the initial sale of units in the building. (This measure is for initial owners only, and not in perpetuity).
  - The Applicant shall install a TransitScreen or similar device displaying real-time transportation scheduled that show the availability and location of Bikeshare stations, local buses, commuter buses, Metrorail, carshare vehicles, and any other public transportation options located within .5 miles of the site.

## CONTINUED COORDINATION

It is expected that the Applicant will work with DDOT through the permitting process on the following actions:

- The Applicant revise the steps on Simms Place NE so that they do not project into the 6-ft pedestrian clear path;

- Repair the “public parking” area to vegetation on the Montello Avenue portion of the property; and
- Update any other streetscape elements such as sidewalks, and tree boxes to DDOT standard during public space permitting.

## **TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS**

### Vehicular Parking

Subtitle C § 701.5 of the Zoning Regulations requires a total of one (1) vehicular parking space for seven (7) units. The Applicant is asking for relief from the required one (1) vehicular parking space. The current site does not have alley access and if the Applicant were to provide parking it is unlikely a curb cut would be able to comply with the DDOT Design and Engineering Guidelines. Curb cuts should be at least 60-ft from an intersection (DEM 31.5.5). Additionally, the addition of a curb cut would eliminate at least one (1) curb side parking space which DDOT does not support.

Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations requires that any request for a reduction in the minimum required parking include a transportation demand management (TDM) plan approved by the District Department of Transportation. To meet this requirement, the Applicant has stated they would agree to provide the following:

- The Applicant will give every new resident a Residential Welcome Package which will include information about the abundance of nearby alternative transportation options available, including, but not limited to, ride-sharing services, car-sharing services, Metro, bike-sharing services such as Capital Bikeshare.
- The Applicant will offer a one year bikeshare membership, the equivalent of \$85, (for each unit at the initial sale of units in the building. (This measure is for initial owners only, and not in perpetuity).
- The Applicant shall install a TransitScreen or similar device displaying real-time transportation scheduled that show the availability and location of Bikeshare stations, local buses, commuter buses, Metrorail, carshare vehicles, and any other public transportation options located within .5 miles of the site.

### Bicycle Parking

Subtitle C § 802.1 of the Zoning Regulations require three (3) long-term and zero (0) short-term bicycle parking spaces for an 8 unit building. The Applicant will provide three (3) spaces in the lower level. The long-term bicycle enclosure must protect the bicycle from weather with protected floor-to-ceiling fencing, a roof, and a locked door.

### Public Space

DDOT's lack of objection to the special exception should not be viewed as an approval of public space elements. If any portion of the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, such as areaways, stoop and steps, or a canopy, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process.

The project currently shows steps on Simms Place NE, which has a 50-ft right-of-way. Steps on a 50-ft right-of-way must maintain 8-ft from the back of the curb, however, DDOT records show there is a 10-ft sidewalk. The proposed steps on Simms Place NE project into the sidewalk and do not maintain a 6-ft pedestrian clear path per DEM 31.2.1.1. The canopy will need to comply with public space regulations.

DDOT notes the site is currently commercial with significant amount of paving on Montello Avenue NE in the "public parking" area. "Public parking" is meant to be predominately vegetated, and the Applicant will be required to repair the public parking area to vegetation.

Any proposed utility vaults should be located in private space.

The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A and 24 of the DCMR, DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual, and DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual for public space regulations and guidance.

AC:kb