

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

**FROM:** Karen Thomas, Case Manager

*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

**DATE:** May 23, 2019

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 20018 – Special Exception pursuant to Subtitle U § 320.1(b) to permit a community service center to operate within the existing building at 1646 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, N.W.

**I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception relief:

- Community Service Center Use, Subtitle U § 320.1(b), pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.2

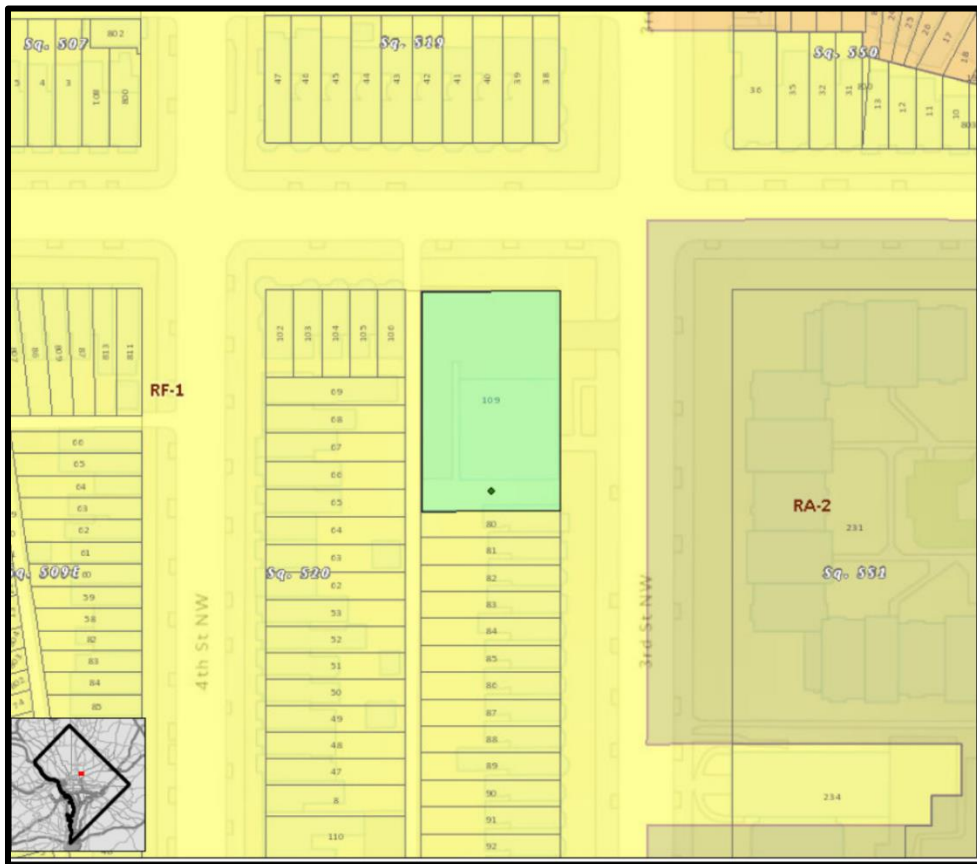
**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1646 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street, N.W.
Applicant	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church
Legal Description	Square 0520, Lot 0109
Ward, ANC	5/ANC5E
Zone	RF-1
Historic District	None
Lot Characteristics	The site is a rectangular corner lot, with even topography, at 3 <sup>rd</sup> and R Street NW.
Existing Development	The property is developed with a three-story brick building with basement, and a 21-space surface parking lot with access via a curb cut on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street. It serves as a Sunday school and office for the Mt. Sinai Baptist Church.
Adjacent Properties	The property abuts a one-family row dwelling to the south and a 10-foot wide improved alley to the west, accessed via R Street. To the north and east are R Street and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street respectively.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The neighborhood is a mix of residential single-family homes, churches and small institutions. The Mt. Sinai Baptist Church (property owner) is located across 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street, at the corner of 3 <sup>rd</sup> and Q St N.W., south of the subject site.

Proposed Development	The Mt. Sinai Baptist church proposes to lease two floors and a portion of the basement of its educational building to the Washington Literacy Center (WLC) for use as a community service center. The center would primarily serve neighborhood residents, including literacy training, job training, family counseling and similar services.
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**III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED**

Zone- RF-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Parking C § 703 Institutional, general	1.67 per 1,000 sq. ft. in excess of 5,000 sq. ft. (2 spaces)	21	21	None Required
Use – Community Service Center	S.E Use	Institutional use owned by Mt. Sinai Baptist Church	Community service center (WLC) on 2 floors and partial basement	Special Exception



**LOCATION and ZONING MAP**

#### IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

##### Special Exception Relief from Subtitle U § 320.1(b)

*(1) A community service center shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring properties because of noise or other objectionable conditions;*

Operations: It is envisioned that training would be provided for 8-10 students at a time, for 3-4 classes per day between the hours of 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. During the summer months the number of students may be increased to 20-25 students. The number of staff would be no more than 18 employees, with 5 employees designated as part-time teachers. The hours of operation are within the timeframe when most residents may be at work. OP does not anticipate an undue impact to the neighborhood's residents based on its hours of operation.

Traffic: There are 21-surface parking spaces where only 2 are required by the Regulations. There are 4 employees of Mt. Sinai Church who occupy the first floor and work at the building from 9 am to -5 pm. All staff drive to the site. The church is designating 10 parking spaces for the WLC use. The 21 on-site parking spaces would be sufficient to accommodate employees of Mt. Sinai and WLC, who may drive to the site.

Attendees would be encouraged to take Metro and utilize Metrobus, as the site is within walking distance of well-served bus routes along Rhode Island Avenue and Florida Avenue. WLC's services would be targeted primarily to neighborhood residents, within walking distance of the site.

OP does not anticipate that WLC's operations would adversely impact the neighborhood due to traffic to the site and to the neighborhood's on-street parking supply during working hours.

Noise: WLC's programming would be targeted primarily to adults. OP does not anticipate that significant noise would result from attendees, as all training activities would take place within the building's interior.

Trash: The property has existing trash pick-up service, which would be used by WLC. As an office use, it should not generate trash that would be a nuisance to the neighborhood.

*(2) The use shall be reasonably necessary or convenient to the neighborhood in which it is proposed to be located; and*

The WLC proposes to target its training programs to the neighborhood and Ward 5 overall, where center would be located.

*(3) A community service center shall not be organized for profit, and no part of its net income shall inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual;*

The WLC has been organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit in the District since 1963 and has community recognition as an adult literacy center. The applicant states that no part of its net income inures to benefit any individual or private shareholder.

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION – Subtitle X § 901.2**

**i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?**

The Regulations anticipate a community service center to primarily serve the neighborhood within which it would be located. The adult training programs of WLC would be targeted to Ward 5 and the Bates Neighborhood as intended by the Regulations.

**ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?**

The proposed use of two floors within the existing building for the intended adult training programs by the WLC should not adversely affect the use of neighboring property, due to traffic, parking, noise or trash as discussed within this report.

**V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

At the writing of this report, comments from other District agencies were not included in the record.

**VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE**

The Bates Area Civic Association recommended approval of the proposed use at its meeting held on May 6, 2019. The ANC 5E recommended approval at its regularly scheduled meeting on May 21, 2019.

Neither of the recommendations had been included in the record at the writing of this report.