

# 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:** May 24, 2019

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case No. 20024 – 3950 37<sup>th</sup> Street NW (Hearst Park and Pool)

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#### APPLICATION

District of Columbia Department of General Services (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, is requesting a special exception under Subtitle C § 703 from the minimum parking requirements of Subtitle C § 701.5, to make several improvements to the Hearst Recreation Center. The site is located in the R-1-B Zone at 3950 37th Street NW (Square 1905, Lot 802).

#### 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. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District’s multimodal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential transportation 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 requesting vehicle parking relief from three (3) vehicle parking spaces;
- Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations states that any request for a reduction in the minimum required parking include a transportation demand management (TDM) plan approved by DDOT;

- DDOT finds the proposed TDM plan, which includes eight (8) additional short-term bicycle parking spaces beyond the six (6) required by zoning, is sufficient for the requested vehicle parking relief;
- DDOT also supports the parking relief request because it would prevent the need for a curb cut, which creates a conflict point for vehicles and pedestrians and requires the removal of on-street parking spaces, and in this case, potentially a street tree;
- While loading is not required by zoning, the Applicant has proposed a loading management plan (LMP), which DDOT finds acceptable;
- The Applicant is also proposing an on-street ADA vehicle parking space at the corner of Quebec Street NW and 37th Street NW which will need to be reviewed and approved by DDOT during public space permitting; and
- It appears there may be Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the site. The Applicant has been working with the Ward 3 Arborist to evaluate the size and health of the trees and should obtain Special Tree or Heritage tree permits as necessary.

## RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has reviewed the Applicant's special exception request. On non-event days, 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 immediate area. Despite these potential impacts, DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested special exception with the following conditions:

- Implement the following TDM Plan as proposed in the May 14, 2019 Gorove/Slade Memorandum (Exhibit 27E):
  - Provide signs to direct patrons of the Hearst Park to the nearest two Metrorail Stations subject to DDOT approval (Tenleytown-AU and Cleveland Park);
  - Install eight (8) additional short-term bicycle parking spaces beyond the six (6) required by Zoning, for a total for 14 spaces; and
- Implement the following Loading Management Plan, as proposed by the Applicant in Exhibit 27 E:
  - No deliveries or trash pick-up will occur during school drop-off or pick-up hours to limit the number of vehicles near the school during peak pick-up and drop-off hours.
  - Trash collection will employ curbside pickup along the southern frontage of the pool house along Quebec Street NW utilizing the materials lift. All mail and parcel deliveries not requiring the materials lift can be accommodated using on-street parking 37th Street NW or Quebec Street.
  - Trucks utilizing the on-street parking for loading activities will not be allowed to idle and must follow all District guidelines for heavy vehicle operation including but not limited to DCMR 20 – Chapter 9, Section 900 (Engine Idling), the regulations set forth in DDOT's Freight Management and Commercial Vehicle Operations document, and the primary access routes listed in the DDOT Truck and Bus Route System.

## TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

### Vehicular Parking

Per the Applicant's Self-Certification form, the project is required to provide three (3) vehicle parking spaces. The Applicant is requesting relief from all required parking. Subtitle C § 703.4 of the Zoning Regulations states that any request for a reduction in the minimum required parking must include a transportation demand management (TDM) plan approved by DDOT. To meet this requirement, the Applicant has proposed the following TDM plan in the May 14, 2019 Gorove/Slade Memorandum (Exhibit 27E):

- Signs to the nearest Metrorail station will be posted to direct patrons to the Hearst Park to the nearest two Metrorail Stations (Tenleytown-AU and Cleveland Park); and
- Provide eight (8) additional short-term bicycle parking spaces in addition to what is required by zoning.

DDOT finds the proposed TDM plan is sufficient to meet the Zoning requirement and to encourage non-auto travel to the site. The Applicant should continue to work with DDOT on signage design and location during the public space permitting process. The Applicant is also proposing an on-street ADA vehicle parking space at the corner of Quebec Street NW and 37<sup>th</sup> Street NW which will need to be required and reviewed by DDOT during public space permitting.

### Loading

The proposed project is not required to provide loading facilities, however, the Applicant is proposing a loading management plan (LMP) that will use curbside parking space to collect trash and accommodate pool maintenance.

The following loading management plan, as proposed by the Applicant in Exhibit 27 E, will be implemented:

- No deliveries or trash pick-up will occur during school drop-off or pick-up hours to limit the number of vehicles near the school during peak pick-up and drop-off hours.
- Trash collection will employ curbside pickup along the southern frontage of the pool house along Quebec Street NW utilizing the materials lift. All mail and parcel deliveries not requiring the materials lift can be accommodated using on-street parking 37th Street NW or Quebec Street.
- Trucks utilizing the on-street parking for loading activities will not be allowed to idle and must follow all District guidelines for heavy vehicle operation including but not limited to DCMR 20 – Chapter 9, Section 900 (Engine Idling), the regulations set forth in DDOT's Freight Management and Commercial Vehicle Operations document, and the primary access routes listed in the DDOT Truck and Bus Route System.

### Bicycle Parking

Subtitle C § 802.1 of the Zoning Regulations require zero (0) long-term and six (6) short-term bicycle parking spaces for the public recreation and community center. Per Exhibit 27 E, the six (6) required

short-term spaces are proposed in addition to eight (8) more as identified in the TDM plan for a total of 14 spaces. These spaces should be located near the main entrance.

#### Heritage Trees and Special Trees

It appears that there may be Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the site, and the Applicant has been coordinating with the DDOT Ward 3 Arborist to confirm the tree size and assess the health of the tree. Heritage Trees are defined as a tree with a circumference of 100 inches or more and are protected by the Tree Canopy Protection Amendment Act of 2016. Private property trees between 44 and 99.9-in circumference are considered Special Trees. With approval by the Mayor and Urban Forestry Division (UFD), Heritage Trees might be permitted to be relocated. As such, the Applicant may be required to redesign the site plan in order to preserve the Non-Hazardous Heritage Trees. If the trees are identified as Special Trees, the Applicant will need to apply for a Special Tree Removal Permit and pay the required fee. The Applicant should continue working with the Urban Forestry Division (UFD).

#### 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 the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, such as bicycle racks, canopies, ADA signage, Special trees or Heritage trees, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process.

The Applicant went through the BLRA process in 20018, BLRA 18-00462, attended two (2) Preliminary Design Review Meetings (PDRM) in March of 2018 and January of 2019, and has applied for public space permits (Tracking Numbers 326486 and 313682). These permits do not appear to propose any curbside changes, such as an ADA space which will need permitted. At the January, 2019 meeting the Applicant was asked to extend the sidewalk so that all pinch points around the site are not narrower than 4-ft to accommodate ADA requirements. It is unclear from the site plans if this change has been made. Additionally, there is a separate stormwater project adjacent to this development that is currently being permitted and may impact site design.

DDOT expects the proposed public space design to meet all District standards. 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.

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