

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: June 21, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 20056– 5216 Astor Place SE

APPLICATION

Children in Safe Hands, LLC (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, seeks approval for a special exception under the use provisions of Subtitle U § 203.1(g), to permit a child development center for 40 children. The Applicant is required to provide two (2) vehicle parking spaces and will be meeting this requirement with three (3) vehicle parking spaces accessed from an existing curb cut along Astor Place SE. The site is located in the R-2 Zone at premises 5216 Astor Place S.E. (Square 5308, Lots 27 and 28).

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 multi-modal transportation network.

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 has not proposed a formal pick-up and drop-off plan or curbside management plan for the development;
- The Applicant has communicated to the Office of Planning that they anticipate a majority of children to be served would come from the nearby neighborhood and would walk to the site;

- The Applicant has communicated to the Office of Planning that pick-up and drop-off could be accommodated within the property's boundaries with head-in and back out movement using the existing curb cut on Astor Place SE;
- The Applicant is required to provide two (2) parking spaces per zoning regulations, however they are providing three (3) spaces, in the event that on-site pick-up and drop-off is not needed;
- DDOT does not support head- in and back out movements in public space;
- The Applicant has indicated that there is adequate street parking to accommodate potential drop-off and pick-up for the day care facility, and existing parking along Astor Place SE is unregulated and not signed; and
- The existing curb cut and driveway along Astor Place SE does not appear to comply with existing DDOT commercial curb cut standards, which requires a minimum width of 10 feet for the curb cut and the design of the driveway must be flush with the grade of the sidewalk.

RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action may lead to a minor increase in vehicle, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle trips on the localized transportation network. In addition, the project may slightly reduce the amount of available on-street parking within the immediate area. Despite these minor impacts, DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application.

However, although the Applicant has informally proposed on-site pick-up and drop-off, DDOT does not support head-in and back out movements for pick-up and drop off in public space. DDOT recommends that the Applicant provide a formal curbside management plan to facilitate pick-up and drop-off during day care hours. The Applicant should coordinate with DDOT's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to formalize a curbside management and signage plan.

PUBLIC SPACE

DDOT's lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of public space design. All elements of the project proposed in public space, such as the existing curb cut along Astor Place SE, require the Applicant to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process. In addition, the Applicant will need to comply with existing parking screening requirements per DCMR Title 11, Chapter 714 Screen Requirements for Surface Parking. A permit application can be filed through the DDOT [Transportation Online Permitting System \(TOPS\)](#) website.

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](#) and the most recent versions of DDOT's [Design and Engineering Manual](#) and [Public Realm Design Manual](#) for public space design guidance.

AC:cl