

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: February 21, 2020

SUBJECT: Supplemental Report BZA Case No. 20065 – 1818 Rhode Island Avenue NE

APPLICATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) filed a report on September 13, 2019 (Exhibit 35) stating no objection to the proposed relief. The Applicant then modified the relief requested for the vehicle parking and long-term bicycle parking requirement. The Applicant sent revised plans which have been added to the record (Exhibit 50A). The below comments respond to the revised redevelopment proposal.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

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 has revised the original application and has reduced the number of units from 10 to eight (8);
- The Applicant is no longer requesting vehicle parking relief from two (2) spaces but rather one (1) as indicated in the prehearing submission (Exhibit 44);
- Despite the relief request, the Applicant is still proposing one (1) vehicle parking space on-site accessed via a non-zoning compliant drive aisle;
- There is an existing easement with the adjacent property owner that states the existing drive aisle access must be maintained;

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20065

- 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 and DDOT have agreed to a TDM plan to meet the requirement of § 703.4 (see Recommendation Section below);
- Subtitle C § 802.1 requires two (2) long-term bicycle parking spaces and the Applicant is requesting relief from the long-term bicycle parking requirement because they are unable to meet the criteria of Section C-805:
 - Bicycle parking must to be located in a garage or private room
 - A minimum of 50 percent of the long-term spaces must be horizontal
- Since the Applicant cannot meet the requirements of Subtitle C § 802.1, the Applicant will provide three (3) long-term bicycle parking spaces in the lower level with three (3) horizontal lockers in the rear yard as part of the TDM requirement for a total of six (6) long-term bicycle parking spaces;
- The Applicant has been working with DDOT and the Office of Planning (OP) on ADA access to the property given the existing large grade change. The final design will need to be approved by the Public Space Committee because the Applicant is proposing to change the existing grade in the public parking area (DCMR 24-104);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 exceptions, with the following condition:

- The Applicant will implement the following TDM Plan:
 - 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 preloaded \$30 SmarTrip card 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 0.5 miles of the site.

- The Applicant will identify Transportation Coordinators for the planning, construction, and operations phases of development. The Transportation Coordinators will act as points of contact with DDOT, goDCgo, and Zoning Enforcement.
- The Applicant will provide Transportation Coordinators' contact information to goDCgo, conduct an annual commuter survey of employees on-site, and report TDM activities and data collection efforts to goDCgo once per year.
- The Applicant will provide a total of six (6) bicycle parking spaces on-site, pending special exception approval.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicular Parking

Subtitle C § 701.5 of the Zoning Regulations requires a total of one (1) vehicular parking space for 10 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. Shared curb cuts should be at least 14-ft wide, 7-ft on each property (DEM 31.5). Additionally, the widening of the existing 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 DDOT. To meet this requirement, DDOT and the Applicant have agreed to a TDM plan (see Recommendations section above).

Bicycle Parking

Subtitle C § 802.1 of the Zoning Regulations require two (2) long-term and zero (0) short-term bicycle parking spaces for an 8 unit building. The Applicant is requesting relief from the long-term bicycle parking requirement because they are unable to meet the criteria of Section C-805 which requires bicycle parking to be located in a garage or private room and a minimum of 50 percent of the long-term spaces to be horizontal. In order to accommodate the ADA access through public space with the most minimal impact to public space, a lower level entrance was added which illuminated the bicycle parking room in the lower level. Given the limitations, the Applicant will provide three (3) long-term bicycle parking spaces in the lower level with three (3) horizontal lockers in the rear yard as part of the TDM requirement for a total of six (6) long-term bicycle parking spaces. The three (3) long-term spaces internal to the site will all be vertical and not located in a storage room. The long-term bicycle enclosures outside must protect the bicycle from weather.

Loading

Subtitle C § 901.1 of the Zoning Regulations does not require loading for an eight (8) unit building. The Applicant is proposing to store trash on-site at the rear of the property. The Applicant will wheel the bins out on trash days and roll the bins back when they are empty. No trash storage should occur in public space.

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 Applicant will need to apply for the elements identified below and any other features proposed in public space:

- There is existing grade in the "public parking" area that should be minimally altered with the proposed design. The Applicant has been working with DDOT and the Office of Planning (OP) on ADA access to the property given the existing large grade change. The final design will need to be approved by the Public Space Committee because the Applicant is proposing to change the existing grade in the public parking area (DCMR 24-104).
- The site currently shares a curb cut with an adjacent property and the curb cut is significantly smaller than the 14-ft shared driveway prescribed in the DDOT Design and Engineering Manual (DEM). The Applicant would not be able to provide a compliant shared curb cut even if they were not requesting vehicle parking relief.
- Retaining walls are permitted, but must not be taller than what is necessary to retain grade.
- 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