


GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



d. Policy Planning and Sustainability Administration

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sara Bardin
Director, Office of Zoning

FROM: Sam Zimbabwe 
Associate Director

DATE: November 21, 2013

SUBJECT: ZC Case No.07-13D – Randall School PUD Modification, 65 I Street, S.W.

APPLICATION AND SUMMARY

The Applicant, TR SW 2, LLC, is requesting a modification to an approved Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) for the property located on Square 643-S, Lot 801 at 65 I Street, SW (“Subject Property”). The Subject Project is approximately 2.65 acres and includes the former Randall Junior High School, a historic landmark. The Randall School property is located on the north side of I (Eye) Street, SW between South Capitol Street and First Street, SW. The Subject Property has an approved PUD and in the approval process was rezoned from the R-4 to C-3-C pursuant to ZC Order No. 07-13. The approved PUD associated defines a development program of approximately 100,000 sf. of art exhibition, art studio, and classroom space, 440-490 residential dwelling units, and up to 460 parking spaces. The proposed PUD modification would provide approximately 16,000 sf. of retail space and restaurant use, 40,000 sf. of cultural museum space, up to 550 residential dwelling units, and a maximum of 370 parking spaces. The proposal also includes an extension of Half Street as new drop-off area and underground loading docks.

The Applicant submitted a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) to DDOT on October 18, 2013. DDOT reviewed the Applicant’s CTR based on the proposed changes from the approved PUD and the potential impacts these changes may have on the transportation network. The information on the following page includes a summary of DDOT’s findings and recommendations based on all submitted materials.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the impact of the proposed action on the District’s transportation network and, as necessary, propose appropriate mitigations.

After an extensive multi-administration review, DDOT finds:

- The proposal is generally consistent with DDOT's approach to vehicle access. Vehicle access is proposed from appropriate locations on I (Eye) Street, SW and private sections of H Street, SW and First Street, SW
- The changes in the proposed development program are not likely to significantly increase initially projected vehicle trips or increase potential on-street parking impacts in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Level of Service (LOS) at study area intersections remains unchanged under build-out conditions.
- The modified PUD provides for 550 long-term bicycle parking spaces.
- The vast majority of loading along with their associated truck movements is accommodated on site. However, the secondary loading area, exclusively for museum use, would require back-in truck movements that encroach onto Public Space.
- The updated TDM Plan is consistent with similar developments within the District.
- The proposed Half-Street turn-around will accommodate the majority of passenger drop-off and pick-up needs of the project.
- The Applicant's request for dedicated curb space will not be addressed in this process. These requests will be further evaluated in the public space permitting process.

Based on these findings, DDOT concludes that the overall impact of the site on the transportation network will be no greater than the Approved PUD. DDOT has no objection to the proposed action provided:

- Vehicular idling or queuing in the proposed turnaround does not impact public space.
- Back-in truck maneuvers that encroach onto public space are eliminated.
- The Applicant commit to work with DDOT during the public space permitting process to resolve public space issues including but not limited to the proposed reserved curb-side spaces, valet operations, curb-extensions, and short-term bicycle parking.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

DDOT is committed to achieving an exceptional quality of life in the nation's capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, constructing safer streets, and providing outstanding access to goods and services. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure alternative modes of transportation are adequate to accommodate new travel demand while discouraging single occupancy vehicle trips. The following analysis evaluates the CTR associated with the proposed PUD modification to determine its accuracy and consistency with the District's vision and goals for its transportation network.

Changes in Land Use Context

DDOT has undertaken two distinct efforts to evaluate and modify the transportation infrastructure along South Capitol Street and M Street SE/SW. The analysis produced for these studies evaluated the potential impacts of future land uses along with proposed changes to the transportation infrastructure. The studies concluded that the transportation network can accommodate anticipated growth, but will be at capacity.

The transportation improvement projects recommended from these studies provide a framework to help mitigate some levels of congestion and enhance mobility along these two major corridors. Below are brief descriptions of these corridor-wide studies and recommended projects.

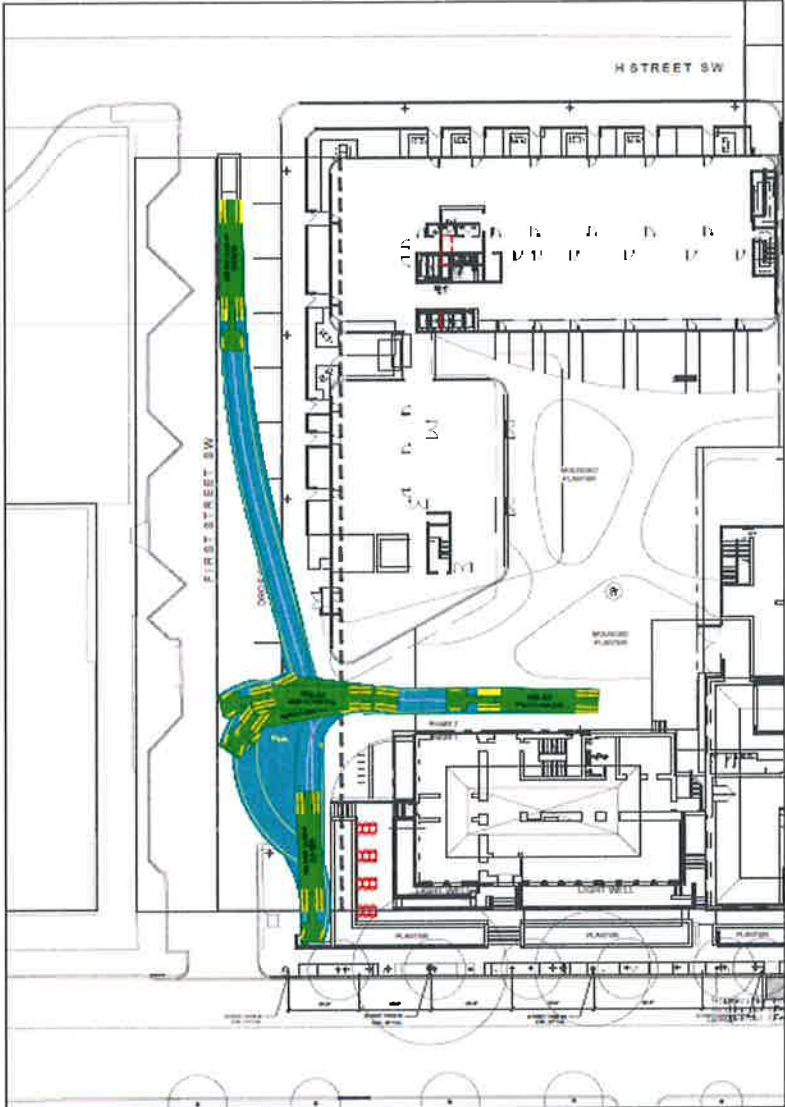
- 1) *South Capitol Street Corridor Improvements* - The purpose of the South Capitol Street Corridor project is to improve safety, multimodal mobility, accessibility, and support economic development. This project will transform the existing corridor by rationalizing capacity, upgrading bridge structures, and modifying traffic patterns to operate more efficiently. When complete, the South Capitol Street Corridor will serve as a major urban gateway to the US Capitol and District of Columbia's Monumental Core.
- 2) *M Street, SE/SW Transportation Study* - The study identified current and future transportation challenges and needed mitigation measures within an approximately 1.7-square-mile area along M Street SE/SW, and the Southwest Waterfront from 12th Street, SE to 14th Street, SW and from the Southeast/Southwest Freeway south to the Anacostia River/Washington Channel. The study analyzed the integration of transit, bicycling and walking with motor vehicle traffic in order to best serve the neighborhoods in this burgeoning section of the City. Safety and access needs were balanced to address the travel needs of residents with those of visitors and workers who will be drawn to new retail and mixed use development planned for the area.

Site Access and Loading

All site access and loading would occur from privately maintained sections of H Street and First Street, SW with the exception of a proposed curb-cut on I (Eye) Street. The site access and loading plan are modified from the previously approved PUD. The Approved PUD includes two separate loading dock entrances and a single curb-cut driveway for the access to the parking garage along H Street. The proposed PUD provides access to the primary loading dock area and the parking garage along H Street, a secondary loading area is proposed along First Street. The loading access from First Street would accommodate 55' tractor trailers for occasional drop-offs and pick-ups of large art installations at the museum. The Applicant is proposing two (2) 40' loading berths, one (1) 30' and no separate service areas. The majority of the project's loading would occur on the lower P1 level of the garage from H Street and would permit trucks entering and exiting the ability to turn around underground resulting in head-in and head-out truck maneuvers. This is an improved condition from the Approved PUD which maintained at-grade loading docks requiring back-in movements along H Street. However, DDOT is concerned with the proposed truck maneuvers along First Street which would require trucks to encroach onto Public Space. The Applicant must continue to work with DDOT to assure that Public Space is not negatively impacted by truck maneuvers on the Subject Property. Figure 1 illustrates how truck loading maneuvers from First Street could potentially impact public space.

The modified PUD also includes a proposed extension of Half Street and turnaround area at the eastern edge of the property. This turnaround would serve as a drop-off and pick-up area for the development and the adjacent public recreation center. The Applicant proposes that the turnaround area would also serve as the valet staging area for the development's restaurant. However, information pertaining to the location of a valet stand and vehicular circulation plan for the valet operation were not included with the CTR. The Applicant will be required to submit this information during the public space permitting process. DDOT is generally supportive of the Half Street Turnaround concept, but has concerns with potential queuing problems based on the proposed dual operation of the turnaround with both valet staging and drop-off/pick-up functions.

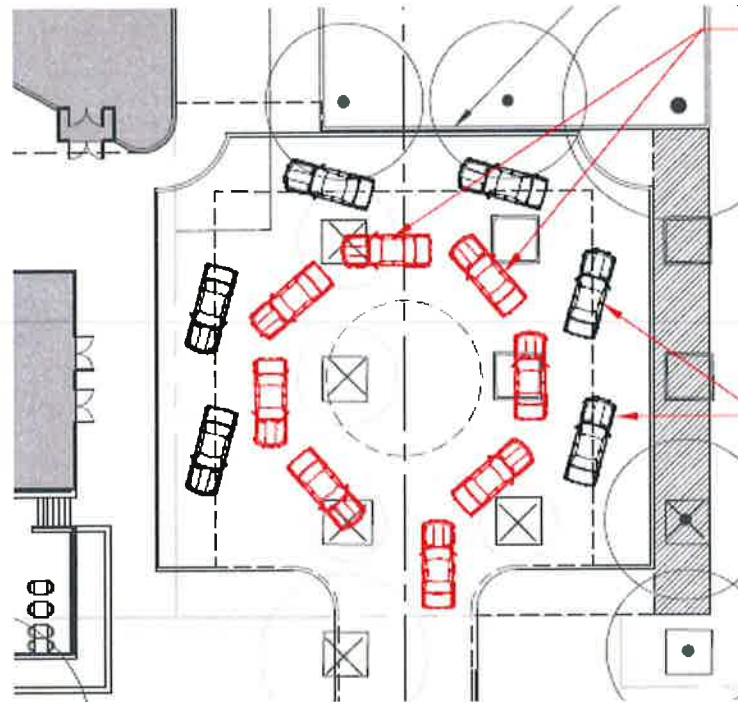
Figure 1 – Public Space Encroachment Truck Maneuvers



Source: Gorove/Slade

The Applicant provided a queuing analysis report indicating that traffic is not expected to spill over onto I Street based on assumptions of brief dwell times for valet users and passenger drop-offs and pick-ups. However, the findings are based on scenarios where vehicles do not double park or block queuing lanes. The proposed dual purposed turnaround also has the potential to result in driver confusion where motorists are uncertain of which is lane is for valet service and passenger drop-off/pick-up. All vehicular queuing must be maintained within turnaround area and not spill over onto I Street, SW. To assure that no vehicular idling or queuing impacts public space or traffic operations on I (Eye) Street DDOT recommends that an on-site staff member is designated to direct vehicles utilizing the Half Street turn around. Figure 2 illustrates that a maximum of 14 vehicles can utilize the turnaround before queuing impacts Public Space.

Figure 2: Half Street Turn-around Queuing Diagram



Source: Gorove/Slade

Parking

The Approved PUD provided for up to 460 parking spaces in an underground garage. The proposed PUD would provide up to 370 spaces, whereby approximately 300 would be designated for residential use and roughly 70 spaces would be provided for the non-residential uses on the site. The residential parking ratio of .55 is consistent with similar developments in the District. The below-grade parking garage will be accessed from private sections of H Street, SW via Delaware Avenue, SW and is not anticipated to result in excessive delays for vehicles entering and exiting the site. DDOT finds that the proposed parking should adequately accommodate the parking demand generated by the site without having impacts on the existing parking supply in the adjacent neighborhood.

In addition to the parking garage spaces, the Applicant is also proposing reservation of curbside spaces along I Street directly in front of the museum. This proposal will be closely examined by DDOT before it is considered for approval. During the public space permitting process the Applicant will be required to conduct an on-street parking inventory study in the community, provide information on the exact number space requested, and provide proposed mitigation for loss on-street parking. DDOT is not likely to approve the reservation of excessive on-street parking for drop-off and pick-up functions and prefers that this be adequately accommodated within the proposed turnaround area.

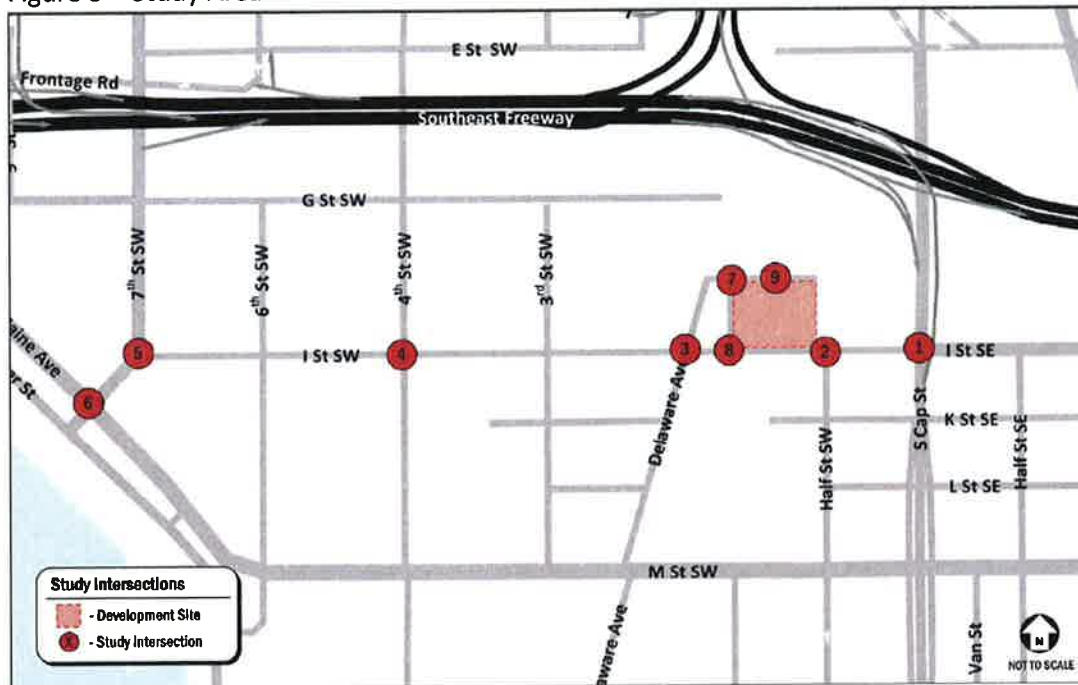
Trip Generation

The Applicant’s updated trip generation estimates are based on the proposed modifications to the Approved PUD. The CTR for the modified PUD documents an additional 40 vehicle trips during AM Peak period and 20 additional vehicle trips during PM Peak period. However, the approximately 60 net new vehicle trips during the peak hour are not expected to have a significant impact on the District’s transportation network beyond the impacts previously identified with the Approved PUD project.

Roadway Capacity and Operations

DDOT and the Applicant agreed that 9 intersections and all site driveways would be included in the updated study area as identified in Figure 3. The Applicant used the Highway Capacity Manual methods to evaluate the intersection capacities under the existing conditions (2013), background conditions with and without the proposed PUD (2016). Under all scenarios the LOS remained either consistent or better than reported in the original CTR associated with the Approved PUD. Overall all intersections maintain a LOS D or better under existing conditions, background conditions, and total future conditions. The eastbound approach at I Street and S. Capitol Street maintains LOS F in both existing conditions and total future conditions however this intersection will be redesigned to address traffic and safety issues as part of the South Capitol Street Corridor Project.

Figure 3 – Study Area



Source: Grove/Slade

Safety

DDOT policy requires that Applicants conduct safety analyses to demonstrate that specific land developments will not create or exacerbate new or existing safety issues for all modes of travel. The Applicant used available data for the most recent three years for safety evaluations (i.e., 2010-2012). Based on the crash rate calculations, three of the study intersections are above DDOT’s accepted crash rate criteria of 1.0 per Million Entering Vehicles (MEV); I Street, SW and South Capitol Street, I Street, SW and Half Street, SW, and I Street, SW and Delaware Avenue, SW. These intersections experienced 2.28, 1.78, and 1.84 crash rates per MEV, respectively. Table 1 illustrates the highest crash rate intersections within the study area.

South Capitol Street Environmental Impact Statement and M Street, SE/SW Transportation Study identified long-term transportation solutions that include operational and safety measures to improve mobility, access, and safety of the overall roadway network included within this study area. Some of the safety issues highlighted by the Applicant’s CTR will be addressed during the redesign of these facilities.

Table 1

Intersection	Total Crashes	Pedestrian Crashes	Bike Crashes	Rate per MEV*
I Street SW and S Capitol Street	99	2	3	2.28
I Street SW and Half Street SW	17	1	0	1.78
I Street SW and Delaware Avenue SW	14	0	0	1.84
I Street SW and 4 th Street SW	11	0	0	0.99
I Street SW and 7 th Street SW	10	1	0	0.93
Maine Avenue SW and 7 th Street SW	17	0	0	0.64

* - Million Entering Vehicles; volumes estimated based on turning movement count data

Source: Gorove/Slade

Bicycle Facilities

The Applicant proposes 550 long-term bicycle parking spaces in the parking garage. This proposal exceeds the requirement under the Bicycle and Commuter and Parking Expansion Act of 2007 which calls for 1 long-term space for every three units and 1 space for every 10,000 sf. of commercial space. The additional racks will help facilitate maximum usage of bicycles as a mode of travel to and from the site. The Applicant also proposes 12 bicycle parking spaces in public space accessible to the general public. Per the Parking Expansion Act there should be 1 short-term space for every 2,500 sf. of commercial space which would equate to roughly 23 spaces. DDOT will work with the Applicant during the public space permitting process to examine opportunities to increase the number of short-term bicycle parking.

Pedestrian Facilities

The Applicant is proposing to include pedestrian infrastructure improvements at the intersection of I Street and Half Street, SW in conjunction with the implementation of turnaround feature. The Applicant proposes to install curb extensions on the northern side of I Street, SW, reconstruct the curb ramps, and install new pedestrian warning signs. The curb extension can help enhance pedestrian visibility for crossing however DDOT will work with Applicant during the public space permitting process to determine the most appropriate design treatment at this location.

Transit Service

The site served by two Metrorail stations within ½ mile, Navy Yard and Waterfront. The site is also directly served by twelve Metrobus routes 74, A9, A42, A46, A48, P6, P17, P19, V7, V8, V9, and W13. Collectively, these bus routes provide connecting service to Metrorail stations on every line. Many of these routes offer cross city service to major employment centers, regional retail centers, entertainment and sporting venues, major universities, and national landmarks. Most of the routes operate with frequencies of 20 minutes or less in the peak periods. The Subject Property is also located within two study areas under the DC Streetcar Program, North-South Planning Study and the M Street Environmental Review. The study areas for these projects include Buzzard Point to Takoma Metrorail Station and Congress Heights to Buzzard Point, both of which are identified in the District’s 22-mile Priority Streetcar System Plan.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

The proposed Transportation Demand Management measures that were included with previously approved PUD still remain in effect and additional measures are proposed. Details of the original TDM program for the Randall School project can be found on page 20 of the Zoning Order for Z.C. Case 07-13. The Applicant has also agreed to provide electronic message display boards in each residential lobby, unbundle parking costs from the cost of residential lease or purchase, and cover the cost to install a

bikeshare station and one-year of operation costs in the immediate vicinity of the Subject Property. DDOT also recommends that the Applicant commit not to pursue access to the RPP program. DDOT will work with Applicant to finalize the TDM Plan for the development.

Streetscape and Public Realm

Consistent with District policy and practice, any substantial new building development or renovation is expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines. This includes curb & gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site. The Applicant must work closely with DDOT to ensure that the design of the public realm meets all current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape. The *DDOT Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant. DDOT strongly recommends that the Applicant participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) to address design related issues prior to the submission of public space permit applications.

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