

# Government of the District of Columbia

## Department of Transportation



**d. Planning and Sustainability Division**

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Sara Bardin  
Director, Office of Zoning

**FROM:** Jim Sebastian  
Associate Director

**DATE:** February 25, 2019  
**Revised February 27, 2019**

**SUBJECT:** ZC Case No. 18-14 – 3836-3848 South Capitol Street SE

---

### PROJECT SUMMARY

3840 S. Capitol LLC and 3848 S. Capitol LLC (jointly the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Consolidated Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Related Map Amendment in order to redevelop the site of two (2) existing apartment buildings (30 units) with a new larger apartment building. The site is located at 3836-3848 S. Capitol Street SE (Square 6129, Lots 77 and 819) and bounded by a rear 15-foot unbuilt ‘paper alley’ to the east, S. Capitol Street SE to the west, an adjacent property’s driveway to the north, and an office building to the south. The PUD application proposes the following development program:

- 106 affordable dwelling units;
- 17 parking spaces;
- One (1) 30-foot loading berth; and
- 36-long- and five (5) short-term bicycle parking spaces.

### 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 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:

- Vehicle access is proposed via South Capitol Street SE opposite Xenia Street SW, rather than constructing the rear 15-foot 'paper alley' due to grade challenges;
- The Applicant is currently pursuing a public space permit for the new curb cut on South Capitol Street SE (TOPS tracking #324942);
- DDOT supports the proposed unsignalized site access to South Capitol Street SE so long as signage is installed south of the site on the northbound approach indicating an intersection is ahead;
- The Applicant is meeting ZR16 requirements for one (1) 30-foot loading berth with a platform and one (1) 20-foot delivery space;
- The proposed 30-foot loading berth is designed to allow all truck turning movements on private property, per DDOT standards;
- 17 vehicle parking spaces for 106 residential units is an excellent parking ratio (0.16 spaces/unit);
- The Applicant proposes to meet ZR16-required short- and long-term bicycle parking spaces;
- DDOT supports the Applicant's proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan with a couple minor revisions (see later in this report);
- DDOT recommends the Applicant consider installing at least one (1) electric vehicle charging station in the garage;
- The project is expected to only generate 17 weekday morning vehicle trips and 19 evening peak hour vehicle trips; and
- Due to the low parking ratio and low vehicle trip generation, the impacts of this development on the transportation network are expected to be minimal.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

DDOT has no objection to the approval of the Consolidated PUD and Related Map Amendment with the following conditions:

- Install signage on the northbound South Capitol Street SE approach to the site driveway indicating that there is an intersection ahead. Signage is subject to DDOT approval;
- Implement the Loading Management Plan (LMP), as proposed by the Applicant in the January 29, 2019 CTR; and
- Implement the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan proposed in the Applicant's January 29, 2019 CTR, with the following minor additions:
  - Work with DDOT and goDCgo (DDOT's TDM program) to implement TDM measures at the site;
  - Share the full contact information of the TDM Leaders for the site with DDOT and goDCgo ([info@godcgo.com](mailto:info@godcgo.com));
  - Post all TDM commitments online for easy reference; and
  - Provide annual Capital Bikeshare memberships to each resident for the first year after the building opens.

## **CONTINUED COORDINATION**

Given the complexity and size of the action, the Applicant is expected to continue to work with DDOT on the following matters outside of the zoning process:

- Provide a detailed curbside management and signage plan, assumed to include multi-space meter installation at the Applicant's expense, consistent with current DDOT policies. This plan should also include the requested signage on the northbound South Capitol Street SE approach south of the site driveway;
- Public space, including curb and gutter, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, curb ramps, and other features within the public right-of-way are expected to be designed and built to DDOT standards;
- Aside from determining the final location for the new curb cut, the following issues with the current public space design should be coordinated with DDOT as the Applicant pursues public space permits:
  - All building entrances must be at-grade with no ramps or stairs in public space. If ramps or stairs are necessary, they must be constructed on private property;
  - Close all existing curb cuts to the property;
  - The leadwalk should be reduced to 6-feet wide to minimize paving in public space;
  - Determine final location for the short-term bicycle racks; and
  - Existing bus stop should be designed into the final public space design in its current location. Bus stop will need to be accommodated during construction.
- It is recommended that the Applicant participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with the Office of Planning and DDOT to resolve the public space issues noted above.

## **TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS**

DDOT requires applicants requesting an action from the Zoning Commission complete a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study to determine the action's impact on the overall transportation network. As such, the Applicant and DDOT coordinated on an agreed-upon scope for a CTR that is consistent with the scale of the action.

The review of the analysis is divided into four categories: site design, travel assumptions, analysis, and mitigations. The following review provided by DDOT evaluates the Applicant's January 29, 2019 CTR, prepared by Gorove/Slade, to determine its accuracy and assess the action's consistency with the District's vision for a cohesive, sustainable transportation system that delivers safe and convenient ways to move people and goods, while protecting and enhancing the natural, environmental, and cultural resources of the District.

### **Site Design**

Site design, which includes site access, loading, and public realm design, plays a critical role in determining a proposed action's impact on the District's infrastructure. While transportation impacts can change over time, the site design will remain constant throughout the lifespan of the proposed development, making site design a critical aspect of DDOT's development review process. Accordingly,

new developments must provide a safe and welcoming pedestrian experience, enhance the public realm, and serve as positive additions to the community.

#### Site Access

Site access is proposed via an unsignalized driveway to South Capitol Street SE opposite Xenia Street SW. As part of scoping the CTR, DDOT requested the Applicant evaluate this access scheme, as well as other schemes such as re-use of the existing curb cut further to the north and constructing a portion of the public alley to provide access via the rear of the site. Gorove/Slade provided an Access Evaluation Memorandum, dated February 20, 2019, which supports the proposal for an unsignalized intersection in this location.

DDOT's first preference for access was via the rear public alley. Given the significant grade challenges at the rear of the property, it was not feasible to construct a portion of the unbuilt 'paper alley.' In order to consolidate and minimize the turn conflicts along South Capitol Street SE, it was determined that providing the access opposite Xenia Street SW where the site's driveway can form the fourth leg of a complete intersection would be the next best access scenario. Given the low volumes expected to utilize this leg of the intersection (14 in the AM peak hour, 17 in the PM peak hour) a traffic signal is not warranted. Since the driveway is located on a curve, DDOT also required the Applicant to provide a sight distance evaluation. The analysis indicated that the site driveway meets the AASHTO "Green Book" standards for sight distances for vehicles turning left and right out of the site.

The Applicant is currently pursuing a public space application for 'conceptual approval' from the Public Space Committee (PSC) for the curb cut on South Capitol Street SE. The TOPS tracking number is #324942. While the site access point has not yet been approved by the PSC, DDOT will support the Applicant's proposed access scheme as part of the public space permit application, so long as signage is installed south of the site on the northbound approach of South Capitol Street SE indicating to motorists that an intersection is ahead.

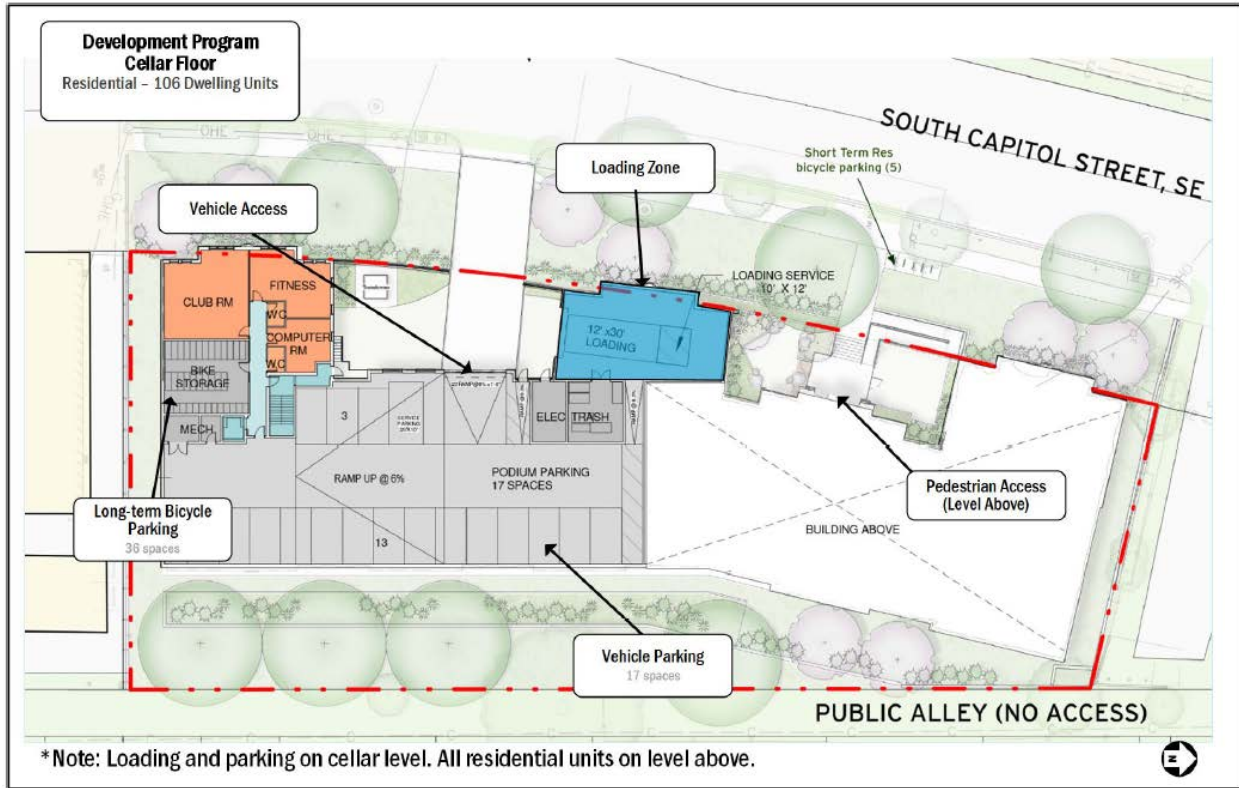


Figure 1 – Site Plan (Source: Gorove/Slade, 1/29/19 CTR, Figure 9)

### Loading

DDOT’s practice is to accommodate vehicle loading in a safe and efficient manner, while at the same time preserving safety across non-vehicle modes and limiting any hindrance to traffic operations. For new developments, DDOT requires that loading take place in private space and that no back-up maneuvers occur in the public realm.

ZR16 Subtitle C § 901.1 requires residential buildings over 50 units provide one (1) 30-foot loading berth with platform and one (1) 20-foot delivery space. The Applicant is meeting the zoning requirements for loading facilities.

***DDOT report revised on 2/27/19: The first version of DDOT’s report submitted to the Zoning Commission on 2/25/19 erroneously stated the Applicant was seeking relief from the 20-foot delivery space. The Applicant is providing the zoning-compliant 20-foot delivery space in the parking garage. This report has been updated to reflect this correction.***

DDOT is also supportive of the Applicant’s proposed Loading Management Plan (LMP), as documented in the January 29, 2019 CTR:

- A loading manager will be designated by the building management. The manager will coordinate with residents to schedule deliveries and will be on duty during delivery hours;
- Residents will be required to schedule move-in and move-outs with the loading manager through leasing terms;

- The dock manager will coordinate with trash pick-up to help move loading expeditiously between their storage area inside the building and the curb beside the loading area to minimize the time trash trucks need to use the loading area;
- Trucks using the loading area 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; and
- The loading manager will be responsible for disseminating DDOT's Freight Management and Commercial Vehicle Operations document to drivers as needed to encourage compliance with District laws and DDOT's truck routes. The dock manager will also post these documents in a prominent location within the service area.

The truck turning diagrams provided in Appendix I of the CTR, demonstrate that all truck turning movements occur head-in and head-out without backing through public space, per DDOT standards. The 30-foot loading berth will serve as the location for trash pick-up as well as move-ins/move-outs. No trash will be stored in public space.

#### Streetscape and Public Realm

In line 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 and gutters, street trees, landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public Right-of-Way (ROW) bordering the site.

The Applicant must work closely with DDOT and OP to ensure that the design of the public realm meets current standards and will substantially upgrade the appearance and functionality of the streetscape for public users needing to access the property or circulate around it. In conjunction with Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the *District of Columbia's Municipal Regulations (DCMR)*, DDOT's *Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)* and DDOT's *Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main references for the Applicant. DDOT staff will be available to provide additional guidance during the Public Space permitting process.

Aside from determining the final location of the newly proposed curb cut on S. Capitol Street SE, as discussed in the Site Access section above, the Applicant must work with DDOT and OP to address the following public space issues:

- All building entrances must be at-grade with no ramps or stairs in public space. If ramps or stairs are necessary, they must be constructed on private property;
- Close all existing curb cuts to the property;
- The leadwalk should be reduced to 6-feet wide to minimize paving in public space;
- Determine final location for the short-term bicycle racks; and
- Existing bus stop should be designed into the final public space design in its current location. Bus stop will need to be accommodated during construction.

DDOT encourages the Applicant to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) to address design related issues raised by DDOT and OP.

### Heritage Trees

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. With approval by the Mayor and DDOT's 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. UFD identified two (2) Heritage Trees near the property, one in the 'paper alley' and one on site that is rotten and is allow to be removed. Applicant should continue to coordinate with the Ward 8 arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing small street trees, as well as the planting of new street trees, in bioretention facilities or a typical expanded tree planting space.

### Sustainable Transportation Elements

Sustainable transportation measures target to promote environmentally responsible types of transportation in addition to the transportation mode shift efforts of TDM programs. These measures can range anywhere from practical implementations that would promote use of vehicles powered by alternative fuels to more comprehensive concepts such as improving pedestrian access to transit in order to increase potential use of alternative modes of transportation. Within the context of DDOT's development review process, the objective to encourage incorporation of sustainable transportation elements into the development proposals is to introduce opportunities for improved environmental quality (air, noise, health, etc.) by targeting emission-based impacts.

The Applicant is not currently proposing to install any electric vehicle charging stations with this PUD. In keeping with DDOT's recommendation of one (1) electric vehicle charging station per 50 vehicle parking spaces, the Applicant should consider providing at least one (1) in the parking garage.

### **Travel Assumptions**

The purpose of the Applicant's CTR is to inform DDOT's review of a proposed action's impacts on the District's transportation network. To that end, selecting reasonable and defensible travel assumptions is critical to developing a realistic analysis.

### Vehicle Parking

The overall parking demand created by the development is primarily a function of land use, development square footage, price, and supply of parking spaces. However in urban areas, other factors contribute to the demand for parking, such as the availability of high quality transit, frequency of transit service, proximity to transit, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the vicinity of the development, and the demographic composition and other characteristics of the potential residents.

The Applicant is proposing to provide a total of 17 vehicle parking spaces. This is the minimum amount of parking required by ZR16 after taking a 50% reduction for being located within ¼ mile of a Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Route (Anacostia/Congress Heights). It is noted that the proposed parking ratio (0.16 spaces per unit) is very low and is consistent with DDOT's approach to encouraging transit usage, non-automobile ownership lifestyles, and minimizing traffic congestion in the District.

Trip Generation

Each trip a person makes is made by a certain means of travel, such as vehicle, bicycle, walking, and transit. The means of travel is referred to as a ‘mode’ of transportation. A variety of elements impact the mode of travel, including density of development, diversity of land use, design of the public realm, proximity to transit options, availability and cost of vehicle parking, among many others.

Consistent with the neighborhood context and site’s low parking ratio, the CTR assumed a travel mode split of 40% automobiles, 40% transit, 10% bike, and 10% walk for trips to and from the site. DDOT concurs with this assumption.

Based on the anticipated mode split and the trip generation rates published in the ITE *Trip Generation Manual, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition* for multi-family housing (Land Use Code 221), the CTR projected the following breakdown of trips by mode:

Mode	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Auto	3 veh/hr	11 veh/hr	14 veh/hr	12 veh/hr	7 veh/hr	19 veh/hr
Transit	4 ppl/hr	13 ppl/hr	17 ppl/hr	14 ppl/hr	8 ppl/hr	22 ppl/hr
Bike	1 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	4 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	6 ppl/hr
Walk	1 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	4 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	3 ppl/hr	6 ppl/hr

*Figure 2 – Multi-Modal Trip Generation Summary (Source: Gorove/Slade, 1/29/19 CTR, Table 2)*

As shown above, the proposed development is expected to generate a small number of automobile, transit, bike, and walking trips during the weekday morning and evening commuter peak hours. As such, the impacts to the transportation network are expected to be minimal.

**Analysis**

To determine the PUD’s impacts on the transportation network, the Applicant completed a CTR, prepared by Gorove/Slade, dated January 29, 2019, which includes an evaluation of existing transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.

Transit Service

The District and Washington Metropolitan Transportation Authority (WMATA) have partnered to provide extensive public transit service in the District of Columbia. DDOT’s vision is to leverage this investment to increase the share of non-automotive travel modes so that economic development opportunities increase with minimal infrastructure investment.

The site is located more than 1.5 mile or more from the nearest (Congress Heights and Anacostia) Metrorail Stations. However, there is a bus stop located directly in front of the site on South Capitol Street SE that is served by the A4, A8, and A9 Metrobus routes. Additionally, the A2 and W1 routes serve other bus stops in the neighborhood. Buses along these routes run every 15-40 minutes depending on the route and time of day.



### Pedestrian Facilities

The District is committed to enhancing the pedestrian accessibility by ensuring consistent investment in pedestrian infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including pedestrian trips. Walking is expected to be an important mode of transportation for this development.

According to the inventory of pedestrian facilities provided by the Applicant in the CTR, the network is almost entirely up to DDOT standards in the vicinity of the site and along walking routes to nearby community amenities, except for Halley Terrace SE which is missing sidewalks on both sides.

### Bicycle Facilities

The District is committed to enhancing bicycle access by ensuring consistent investment in bicycle infrastructure on the part of both the public and private sectors. DDOT expects new developments to serve the needs of all trips they generate, including bicycling trips. Cycling is expected to be an important mode of transportation for the site, most notably for connecting the site to nearby Metro stations. While the Metro stations are located outside of the typical walkshed of rail transit stations, the distance is ideal for bicycling.

Per ZR16 Subtitle C § 802.1, the Applicant is required to provide 36 long-term and five (5) short-term bicycle parking spaces. The Applicant proposes to meet these requirements by locating the 36 long-term spaces in a storage room within the parking garage and five (5) inverted U-racks in public space near the sidewalk on South Capitol Street SE.

According to the inventory of bicycle facilities provided by the Applicant in the CTR, there are no bicycle lanes or trails in the vicinity of the site. However, east of the site there is a signed bicycle route on Mississippi Avenue SE and bicycle trail through Oxon Run Park. South of the site is a 19-dock station at the intersection of Atlantic Street SW and S. Capitol Street.

### **Mitigations**

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires the Applicant to mitigate the impacts of the development in order to positively contribute to the District's transportation network. The mitigations must sufficiently diminish the action's vehicle impact and promote non-auto travel modes. This can be done through Transportation Demand Management (TDM), physical improvements, operations, and performance monitoring.

DDOT preference is to mitigate vehicle traffic impacts first through establishing an optimal site design and operations to support efficient site circulation. When these efforts alone cannot properly mitigate an action's impact, TDM measures may be necessary to manage travel behavior to minimize impact. Only when these other options are exhausted will DDOT consider capacity-increasing changes to the transportation network because such changes often have detrimental impacts on non-auto travel and are often contrary to the District's multi-modal transportation goals.

The following analysis is a review of the Applicant's proposed mitigations and a description of DDOT's suggested conditions for inclusion in the PUD:

### Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

As part of all major development review cases, DDOT requires the Applicant to produce a comprehensive TDM plan to help mitigate an action's transportation impacts. TDM is a set of strategies, programs, services, and physical elements that influence travel behavior by mode, frequency, time, route, or trip length in order to help achieve highly efficient and sustainable use of transportation facilities. In the District, this typically means implementing infrastructure or programs to maximize the use of mass transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and reduce single occupancy vehicle trips during peak periods. The Applicant's proposed TDM measures play a role in achieving the desired and expected mode split.

The specific elements within the TDM plan vary depending on the land uses, site context, proximity to transit, scale of the development, and other factors. The TDM plan must help achieve the assumed trip generation rates to ensure that an action's impacts will be properly mitigated. Failure to provide a robust TDM plan could lead to unanticipated additional vehicle trips that could negatively impact the District's transportation network.

The Applicant proposes in the January 29, 2019 CTR to implement the following TDM measures:

- Identify a TDM Leader (for planning, construction, and operations) at the building, who will act as a point of contact with DDOT/Zoning Enforcement with annual updates;
- The TDM Leader will work with residents to distribute and market various transportation alternatives and options;
- Meet ZR16 short- and long-term bicycle parking requirements;
- Provide a bicycle repair station to be located in the secure long-term bicycle storage room; and
- Install a Transportation Information Center Display (electronic screen) within the residential lobby containing information related to local transportation alternatives.

DDOT finds the TDM Plan proposed by the Applicant to be mostly acceptable for the project given the very low parking ratio. However, DDOT requests the following minor additions to the TDM plan:

- Work with DDOT and goDCgo (DDOT's TDM program) to implement TDM measures at the site;
- Share the full contact information of the TDM Leaders for the site with DDOT and goDCgo ([info@godcgo.com](mailto:info@godcgo.com));
- Post all TDM commitments online for easy reference; and
- Provide annual Capital Bikeshare memberships to each resident for the first year after the building opens.

JS:az