

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: September 3, 2019

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 19-08 – 1051-1055 29th Street NW (West Heating Plant)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Georgetown 29K Acquisition, LLC (the “Applicant”) seeks approval for a Zoning Map amendment for Squares 1193, Lots 45, 46, and 800-804. The property is approximately 87,120 SF and currently unzoned. The Applicant proposes to establish the MU-13 zone for the property. The Property is generally bounded by the west by 29th Street NW, on the east by Rock Creek, on the north by Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal, and on the south by K Street NW.

The site was the former West Heating Plant (WHP), which operated as a coal power steam heat plant for federal buildings. The WHP was decommissioned in 2000 and the Applicant acquired the property from the federal government in 2013. The existing building on-site is currently vacant. The Applicant states in their march 3, 2019 Map Amendment Statement, that they intend to redevelop the property with a multifamily residential project that will adaptively reuse the WHP.

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 impacts of the proposed map amendment on the District’s transportation network. After review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The proposed MU-13 permits a maximum building height of 80 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 75%, and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.8 (of which up to 2.0 FAR is permitted to be non-residential);
- From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, the maximum build-out in the proposed MU-13 zone could result in 153 AM peak hour trips and 177 PM peak hour trips (build out scenario with 271 apartment units, 28,000 SF retail, and 146,000 SF office). DDOT will reassess the need for a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) during the EISF review and public space permitting for the curb cut once a specific program is proposed;
- Since the site is within ½ mile of a Metrorail station (approximately 0.45 miles from Foggy Bottom Station as the crow flies and less than ¼ mile from the M Street Metrobus Priority Bus Route 31) ZR16 allows a 50% vehicle parking reduction. As such, DDOT strongly encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of vehicle parking provided on-site to reduce demand for driving and increase demand for nearby transit services;
- DDOT recommends the Applicant to provide at least 1 electric vehicle (EV) charging station for every 50 parking spaces in each garage; and
- Any development proposals for the site will need to account for a long-term bicycle parking storage room, either below- or at-grade in an easily accessible location from the lobby, as well as short-term bicycle parking, as required by ZR16.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has reviewed the Applicant's request and determined that based on the information provided, the proposed rezoning would likely not lead to a significant increase in the number of peak hour vehicle trips on the District's transportation network if developed with the most intense matter-of-right uses. Therefore, DDOT has no objection to the approval of the requested Map Amendment.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

Given the achievable matter-of-right density possible on the subject property, it is expected that the Applicant will work with DDOT through the permitting process (e.g., public space permitting and EISF) if and when a development proposal is put forth, on the following actions to minimize impacts to the transportation network:

- Depending on the ultimately proposed development program and if any future relief is requested from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) or Public Space Committee (PSC), the Applicant may be required to scope and provide a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study or some other analysis (separate from the September 10, 2018 Transportation Assessment submitted with this Map Amendment application);
- Develop and implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures commensurate with the land use and scale of future development, as appropriate;
- If the property ultimately develops, the site should be designed so that loading occurs without trucks performing backing maneuvers across public space. Also, coordinate with DDOT on an appropriate Loading Management Plan (LMP), if necessary;
- Continue to coordinate with DDOT's Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 2 arborist regarding the presence of existing Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the property as they cannot be removed and will impact the design of the blocks; and
- Continue coordination with DDOT on the following public space design elements:

- DDOT expects development projects 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 ROW adjacent to the site;
- Sidewalks along 29th Street NW should be a minimum of six (6) feet wide;
- All vaults should be located on private property and not within public space;
- Street trees should be installed along 29th Street NW, along the building frontage;
- The proposed curb cut for parking and loading should meet DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) standards;
- Curbside meters should be upgraded to multispacer meters along the building frontage on 29th Street NW; and
- DDOT encourages the Applicant to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with the Office of Planning and DDOT to discuss the public space design if and when a future development is proposed.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Vehicle Trip Comparison

DDOT conducted a trip generation analysis for the site to compare the transportation impacts of rezoning the subject properties from currently unzoned to MU-13. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed zoning. Three development scenarios were created to achieve highest achievable densities under the MU-13 zoning.

The Mixed-Use (MU) zones provide for mixed-use developments that permit a broad range of commercial, institutional, and multiple dwelling unit residential development at varying densities. The MU-13 zone is applied generally in the vicinity of the waterfront. The proposed MU-13 permits a maximum building height of 80 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 75%, and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 4.8 (of which up to 2.0 FAR is permitted to be non-residential).

To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized the trip generation rates for multifamily residential (mid-rise), general office, shopping center (retail), and hotel uses published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation Manual*, 10th Edition. Mode split assumptions were based on projects located comparable distances from high frequency transit. DDOT's estimated person- and vehicle-trips for each scenario are shown in Table 1 below.

Development Scenario	Development Program	AM Peak Person Trips	PM Peak Person Trips	AM Peak Vehicle Trips	PM Peak Vehicle Trips
Scenario 1	433 Apartments (Units)	215	351	91	123
	28,000 SF Retail				
Scenario 2	271 Apartments (Units)	346	465	153	177
	28,000 SF Retail				
	146,000 SF Office				
Scenario 3	271 Apartments (Units)	281	439	123	164
	243 Hotel (Rooms)				
	28,000 SF Retail				
<u>Note:</u> Categories in ITE <i>Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition</i> . Multi-Family Housing (Mid-Rise) #221, Hotel #310, General Office #710, Shopping Center (retail) #820. Auto mode-share assumed to be 15% for retail and 56% for hotel, office, and residential					

Table 1 Trip Generation Comparison

As shown above, development of the site with the maximum number of development (scenario 2), will add approximately 153 to 177 vehicle trips to the roadway network depending on the weekday commuter peak period. If this site program were to be proposed, the projected vehicle trips would trigger DDOT's requirement for a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study with a traffic impact analysis (TIA). DDOT will assess the need for a CTR and TIA at public space permit for the curb cut and during EISF review, once a specific development program has been proposed.

Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Requirements

The site is located approximately ¼ to ½ mile from the Foggy Bottom Metrorail Station. As such, DDOT strongly encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of vehicle parking provided on-site to reduce demand for driving and increase demand for using nearby transit services.

DDOT recommends the Applicant consider installing at least 1 electric vehicle (EV) charging station for every 50 parking spaces in the garages. At a minimum, the parking garage(s) will include electrical conduit so that EV stations can be installed at a later date.

Long-term bicycle parking spaces should be provided in storage rooms in accessible locations near the building lobbies or ground floor of the parking garage. Short-term bicycle parking spaces should be accommodated with inverted U-racks near building entrances in public space.

Table 2 below details DDOT's estimates of the vehicle and bicycle parking zoning requirements for each of the evaluated development scenarios. Note that the exact requirements will be based on the specific development ultimately proposed. Since the site is within ½ mile of the Foggy Bottom Metrorail Station and ¼ mile of Metrobus Route 31 on M Street NW, the Applicant is eligible and encouraged to take a 50% parking reduction per ZR 702.1.

Development Scenario	Development Program	ZR16 Minimum Vehicle Parking Spaces	DDOT Preferred Max Parking*	ZR16 Long- Term Bicycle Spaces	ZR16 Short- Term Bicycle Spaces
Scenario 1	433 Apartments (Units)	91	208	147	30
	28,000 SF Retail				
Scenario 2	271 Apartments (Units)	100	216	152	25
	28,000 SF Retail				
	146,000 SF Office				
Scenario 3	271 Apartments (Units)	100	209	108	25
	243 Hotel (Rooms)				
	28,000 SF Retail				
Notes: * Based on ½ mile column in Table 2 in the <i>Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review</i> .					

Table 2 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Requirements**STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM**

If the site develops or there are any substantial renovations to future buildings, the property owner will be expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines, in line with District policy and practice. This includes curb and gutters, street trees and landscaping, street lights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the public rights of way bordering the site.

Specifically, there are potential access and public space issues that the Applicant should be aware of and continue to coordinate with DDOT on, if and when the site develops:

- Sidewalks along 29th Street NW should be a minimum of six (6) feet wide;
- All vaults should be located on private property and not within public space;
- Street trees should be installed along the building frontage along 29th Street NW,
- The proposed curb cut for parking and loading on-site should meet DEM standards;
- Curbside meters should be upgraded to multispacer meters along the building frontage on 29th Street NW; and
- The Applicant should coordinate with DDOT's Urban Forestry Department (UFD) and National Park Services (NPS) on work that may potentially impact existing trees on site.

In addition, DDOT encourages the Applicant to participate in a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) with the Office of Planning and DDOT to discuss the public space design when a future development is proposed.

In conjunction with Chapters 11, 12A, and 24 of the *District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR)*, DDOT's *Design and Engineering Manual (DEM)* and the *Public Realm Design Manual* will serve as the main public realm references for the Applicant. DDOT staff will be available to provide additional guidance during the public space permitting process.

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