

# Government of the District of Columbia


## Department of Transportation



### d. Planning and Sustainability Division

#### MEMORANDUM

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

**FROM:** Anna Chamberlin  
Neighborhood Planning Manager 

**DATE:** March 2, 2020

**SUBJECT:** ZC Case No. 19-17 – 3703 – 3715 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE

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#### PROJECT SUMMARY

Atlas MLK, LLC & 3715 MLK, LLC (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone a 34,330 SF property from MU-3A to MU-4. The subject property is located at 3703 - 3715 Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE (Square 6070, Lots 48, 50, 51, and 52) and is bounded by Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE to the east, R-2 residential developments to the north, and unzoned land to the south and west that are part of the Fort Circle Parks Historic District.

The site is composed of four lots in the MU-3A zone. The properties are improved with one and two-story buildings used as a religious intuition, retail, and two office buildings with accessory surface parking lots.

#### 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-4 permits a maximum building height of 50 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 60% or 70% with Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.0 with IZ (of which up to 1.5 FAR is permitted to be non-residential), which are all increased from the existing MU-3A Zone;

- The existing MU-3A (low-density mixed-use development) zone would allow for a maximum retail use of 34,000 SF on the property or an 8,000 SF retail and 37-unit residential apartment on the property;
- The proposed MU-4 (moderate-density mixed-use development) zone would allow for either approximately 54 more residential units and 12,580 SF of retail on the property or an alternative scenario with 20 more residential units and approximately 12,580 SF of retail and 30,580 SF of office on the property than the maximum allowed in the existing MU-3A zone;
- From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, maximum build-out in the proposed MU-4 zone could generate a maximum addition of 33 AM peak hour trips and 43 PM peak hour trips, as compared to a matter-of-right development in the existing MU-3A;
- With the proposed maximum development scenario, the projected increase in vehicle trips may trigger DDOT's requirement for a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study with a traffic impact analysis (TIA);
- However, given the scale of development on a small property and neighborhood context, DDOT will assess the need for a CTR and TIA during public space permitting and EISF review, once a specific development program has been proposed;
- DDOT concurs with the proposed up-zoning in order to further support nearby transit and generate additional foot traffic to support nearby businesses. This is consistent with DDOT's approach to infill sites which should be dense, compact, transit oriented, and improve the public realm;
- Since the site is within ¼ mile of a Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Route (Metrobus Route A4 currently runs along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE and has a stop in front of the property), ZR16 allows a 50% vehicle parking reduction. DDOT strongly encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of vehicle parking provided if and when the site develops;
- The DDOT CTR Guidelines call for a maximum parking ratio of 0.40 spaces per residential unit, 0.50 per 1,000 GSF office, and 1.25 per 1,000 GSF retail. If the Applicant provides more parking DDOT will require additional TDM and mitigation to offset the induced demand for travel; 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;
- 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;
- Coordinate with DDOT’s Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 8 arborist regarding the possibility of any existing Heritage Trees or Special Trees on the property; 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;
  - The three existing curb cuts on the property along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE should be closed. All new curb cuts for parking and loading will require public space permits should meet DDOT’s Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) standards;
  - Sidewalks along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE are required to be a minimum of 15-foot wide, including tree boxes;
  - Additional street trees should be installed along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE, along the building frontage and existing trees should be maintained;
  - DDOT’s Right-of-Way (ROW) card indicates that the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE has 15-feet of public parking on the west side of the street. The Applicant should landscape the public parking area (between the sidewalk and property line) to remain park-like in nature;
  - All vaults should be located on private property and not within public space; 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 MU-3A to MU-4. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed zoning. Two development scenarios were created to achieve highest achievable densities under the MU-4 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

proposed MU-4 permits a maximum building height of 50 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 60% or 70% with Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.0 with IZ (of which up to 1.5 FAR is permitted to be non-residential, which are all increased from the MU-3A.

To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized the trip generation rates for multifamily residential (mid-rise), general office, and shopping center (retail) uses published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers’ *Trip Generation Manual, 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

Zoning Requirements

Development Scenario	Development Program	AM Peak Person Trips	PM Peak Person Trips	AM Peak Vehicle Trips	PM Peak Vehicle Trips
Existing Matter of Right Maximum Scenario 1	34,000 SF Retail	38	153	8	32
Existing Matter of Right Maximum Scenario 2	8,000 SF Retail	25	55	11	19
	37 Apartment (Units)				
Proposed Zoning Maximum Scenario 1	20,580 Retail	62	140	28	48
	91 Apartment (Units)				
Proposed Zoning Maximum Scenario 2	20,580 SF Retail	89	164	44	62
	30,580 SF Office				
	57 Apartment (Units)				
Net Change MU-3A Maximum vs. MU-4 Maximum		65	109	33	43
<b>Notes:</b> Categories in ITE <i>Trip Generation Manual, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition</i> . Multi-Family Housing (Mid-Rise) #221, General Office #710, Shopping Center (retail) #820. Auto mode-share assumed to be 15% for retail and 70% for office, and residential.					

**Table 1– Vehicle Trip Generation Comparison**

From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, development of the site with the maximum intensity (scenario 2) in the proposed MU-4 zone could generate a maximum addition of 33 AM peak hour trips and 43 PM peak hour trips, as compared to a matter-of-right development in the MU-3A. If this site program were to be proposed, the projected vehicle trips may trigger DDOT’s requirement for a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study with a traffic impact analysis (TIA). However, given the scale of development on a small property and neighborhood context, DDOT will assess the need for a CTR and TIA during public space permitting and EISF review, once a specific development program has been proposed.

Table 2 below details DDOT’s estimates of the theoretical zoning requirements for each of the evaluated development scenarios. Note that the exact requirements would be determined by the Zoning Administrator and would be based on the specific development ultimately proposed.

Since the site is within ¼ mile of a Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Route (Metrobus Route A4 currently runs along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE and has a stop in front of the property), ZR16 allows a 50% vehicle parking reduction in the parking minimum, per ZR16 Subtitle C, Section 702.1(a), if and when the site develops. Additionally, DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle

parking and showers/lockers requirements of ZR16. The DDOT CTR Guidelines call for a maximum parking ratio of 0.40 spaces per residential unit, 0.50 per 1,000 GSF office, and 1.25 per 1,000 GSF retail. If the Applicant provides more parking DDOT will require additional TDM and mitigation to offset the induced demand for travel.

Development Scenario	Development Program	ZR16 Minimum Vehicle Parking Spaces*	DDOT Preferred Maximum Vehicle Parking Spaces **	ZR16 Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	ZR16 Short-Term Bicycle Spaces
Existing Matter of Right Maximum Scenario 1	34, 000 SF Retail	23	43	3	10
Existing Matter of Right Maximum Scenario 2	8,000 SF Retail	11	25	13	4
	37 Apartment (Units)				
Proposed Zoning Maximum Scenario 1	20,580 Retail	29	62	33	10
	91 Apartment (Units)				
Proposed Zoning Maximum Scenario 2	20,580 SF Retail	31	64	33	9
	30,580 SF Office				
	57 Apartment (Units)				

Note: \* Includes 50% reduction for being located within ¼ mile of a Metrorail station. The site is approximately 0.35 mile from the Anacostia Metrorail Station.  
 \*\* See Table 2 of the CTR Guidelines for DDOT parking benchmark rates

**Table 2 – Zoning Requirements for Vehicle Parking and Bicycle Parking Facilities**

**PUBLIC SPACE**

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:

- The three existing curb cuts on the property along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE should be closed. All new curb cuts for parking and loading will require public space permits should meet DDOT’s Design and Engineering Manual (DEM) standards;
- Sidewalks along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE are required to be a minimum of 15-feet wide, including tree boxes;
- Additional street trees should be installed along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE, along the building frontage and existing trees should be maintained;
- DDOT’s Right-of-Way (ROW) card indicates that the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE has 15-feet of public parking on the west side of the street. The Applicant should landscape the public parking area (between the sidewalk and property line) to remain park-like in nature; and
- All vaults should be located on private property and not within public space.

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.

In conjunction with 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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