

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: February 4, 2020

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 19-25 – 1101-1125 H Street NE

PROJECT SUMMARY

Airdome, LLC (the “Applicant”) seeks to rezone a 22,416 SF property from NC-16/MU-4 to NC-17. The subject property is located at 1101-1125 H Street NE (Square 982, Lots 57, 65, 68, 70, and 823) and bounded by H Street NE to the north, 12th Street NE to the east, 11th Street NE to the west, and residential properties to the south.

The site is currently occupied by a number of commercial buildings. Lot 65 to the west is developed with a single-story brick commercial building occupied by a convenience store use and a rear parking area accessed off 11th Street NE. Lot 70 is developed with a two-story building which occupies 100% of the lot with access to the rear alley. Lots 57 and 68 were each recently redeveloped with a five-story mixed-use apartment building with ground floor retail uses. Lot 823 to the east is developed with a two-story commercial building. The Applicant states in their January 21, 2020 Transportation Assessment, that they intend to redevelop the property (all of the lots combined) with a mixed-use residential development with ground floor retail uses.

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 NC-17 (Neighborhood Mixed Use) zone would allow for same amount of retail square footage (approximately 22,220 SF) and approximately 43 more residential units on the property (162 units total) than the maximum allowed in the existing NC-16/MU-4 zone (119 units and 22,220 SF retail);
- From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, the maximum build-out in the proposed NC-17 zone could generate an additional 14 AM peak hour trips and 18 PM peak hour trips, as compared to the existing condition. When compared to the current matter-of-right maximum build out, the proposed NC-17 zone will generate an additional four (4) AM peak hour trips and six (6) PM peak hour trips;
- The amount of vehicle trips generated by the proposed maximum build-out in the proposed NC-17 zone would be slightly more than the number of trips generated by the site under the matter-of-right maximum build out and thus a Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study was not required;
- The additional trips generated by the site are expected to have a minimal impact on the transportation network;
- 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 less than ¼ mile from the H Street Streetcar (the site is located along the H Street route and nearest stop is less than 600 feet to the east), 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;
- At the time of public space permitting, DDOT will evaluate the parking supply and require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. The redevelopment proposal must provide a parking supply and TDM plan in accordance with the CTR Guidelines in effect at the time;
- 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; and
- The site currently has access to an existing 10-foot rear public alley. If and when the site re-develops, it is expected that all loading, trash pick-up, and vehicle parking will take place from the public alley, which could require a widening of the alley onto private property. DDOT will not support any new curb cuts to the property from H Street NE.

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. DDOT will work with the Applicant on an appropriate parking supply and TDM plan at the time of public space permitting. 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 redevelopment 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 January 6, 2020 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 redevelops, the site should be designed so that loading occurs without trucks performing backing maneuvers across public space and coordinate with DDOT on an appropriate Loading Management Plan (LMP), if necessary;
- Coordinate with DDOT’s Urban Forestry Division (UFD) and the Ward 6 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:
 - Submit a public space permit application for any proposed changes within the public right-of-way (ROW);
 - 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;
 - All building entrances should be at grade with the sidewalk to avoid a need for steps and stairs in public space;
 - The pedestrian clear path on H Street NE should be a minimum of 10 feet wide, in addition to the tree boxes;
 - All vehicular site access to the site, as well as loading facilities and trash pick-up, must be via the existing rear public alley network. The closest alley entrance is from 12th Street NE;
 - No new curb cuts to the property from H Street NE Place should be proposed. The existing curb cut on 11th Street NE should be removed;
 - Existing vaults located in public space along 11th Street should be removed. If vaults are necessary, they should be placed on private property;
 - Be aware of the overhead streetcar power lines that could impact the design of the building façade and placement of street trees; 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

The Applicant conducted a trip generation analysis for the site to compare the transportation impacts of several mixed-use development scenarios under the existing NC-16/ MU-4 and proposed NU-17 zones. To complete the analysis, the Applicant first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed 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 existing MU-4 permits a maximum building height of 50 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 75%, and maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.0 (of which up to 1.5 FAR is permitted to be non-residential). The existing NC-16/MU-4 zoning allows a maximum FAR (Floor Area Ratio) of 3.0 for Lot 65 and 3.5 for Lots 70 and 823.

The Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NC) zones allow for moderate-density mixed-use development, with an emphasis on the provision of retail uses. The proposed NC-13 permits a maximum building height of 70 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 100%, and maximum FAR of 6.0 (of which up to 0.5 FAR is permitted to be non-residential). The maximum buildout under the proposed NC-17 Zoning allows for a matter-of-right FAR of 4.2 for Lot 65 and 4.7 for Lots 70 and 823.

The Applicant has estimated the amount of vehicle-trips that would be generated by theoretical maximum matter-of-right developments under the existing NC-16/ MU-4 and proposed NC-17 zones. To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, the Applicant utilized trip generation rates for multifamily residential (mid-rise) and shopping center (retail) published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition*. Mode split assumptions used in the subject analysis were informed by the Census and WMATA's 2005 Development-Related Ridership Survey. Figure 1 below shows the mode splits that were assumed for this proposal. Figure 3 presents a summary of the estimated of vehicle trips for each development scenario.

Land Use	Mode			
	Drive	Transit	Bike	Walk
Residential Mode Split	30%	40%	15%	15%
Retail Mode Split	35%	35%	15%	15%

Figure 1 Mode Split Assumptions (Source: Transportation Report, Table 2, Gorove/ Slade, 1/6/2020)

Lot	Existing Condition		Existing Zoning Max Build-out		Proposed Zoning Max Build-out	
	Residential S.F. (DU)	Retail S.F.	Residential S.F. (DU)	Retail S.F.	Residential S.F. (DU)	Retail S.F.
Lot 65	0 (0)	2,255	13,340 (19)*	4,060	20,300 (29)*	4,060
Lot 70	0 (0)	5,376	15,867 (23)*	3,967	22,668 (33)*	3,967
Lot 57	4,485 (6)	1,615	4,485 (6)	1,615	4,485 (6)	1,615
Lot 68	16,320 (16)	2,970	16,320 (16)	2,970	16,320 (16)	2,970
Lot 823	0/0	10,200	38,430 (55)*	9,608	54,900 (78)*	9,608
Total	22 du	22,416 sf	119 du	22,220 sf	162 du	22,220 sf

*Based on 700 sf per unit

Figure 2 Development Assumptions for Existing Condition, Max Build-out for Existing Zoning, and Max Build-out for Proposed Zoning (Source: Transportation Report, Table 1, Gorove/Slade, 1/6/2020)

Scenario	AM Peak Hour (veh/hr)			PM Peak Hour (veh/hr)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Condition	5	5	10	16	17	33
Existing Zoning Max build-out	7	13	20	23	22	45
Difference	2	8	10	7	5	12

Figure 3 Trip Generation Comparison (Existing vs Max Build-out for Existing Zoning (NC-16/MU-4) (Source: Transportation Report, Table 4a, Gorove/ Slade, 1/6/2020)

Scenario	AM Peak Hour (veh/hr)			PM Peak Hour (veh/hr)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Condition	5	5	10	16	17	33
Proposed Zoning Max build-out	8	16	24	27	24	51
Difference	3	11	14	11	7	18

Figure 4 Trip Generation Comparison (Existing vs Max Build-out for Proposed Zoning (NC-17) (Source: Transportation Report, Table 4b, Gorove/ Slade, 1/6/2020)

Scenario	AM Peak Hour (veh/hr)			PM Peak Hour (veh/hr)		
	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Zoning Max build-out	7	13	20	23	22	45
Proposed Zoning Max build-out	8	16	24	27	24	51
Difference	1	3	4	4	2	6

Figure 5 Trip Generation Comparison (Max Build-out for Existing Zoning (NC-16/MU-4) versus Max Build-out for Proposed Zoning (NC-17) (Source: Transportation Report, Table 4c, Gorove/ Slade, 1/6/2020)

As shown above, the maximum number of allowable residential units and retail square footage under the matter-of-right in NC-16/ MU-4 zones (approximately 119 units and 22,220 SF of retail) will add approximately 10 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 12 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour compared to the existing condition. The proposed NC-17 zoning maximum build-out (approximately 162 units and 22,220 SF of retail) will add approximately 14 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 18 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour compared to the existing condition. As shown in Figure 5, the development scenario under proposed zoning NC-17 will generate four (4) more AM peak hour vehicle trips and six (6) more PM peak hour vehicle trips compared to the current maximum matter-of-right zoning (NC-16/MU-4).

Zoning Requirements

Figure 6 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 located within ¼ mile of the H Street Streetcar (the site is located along the H Street route and nearest stop is less than 600 feet to the east), DDOT encourages the Applicant to take advantage of the 50% reduction in the parking minimum, per ZR16 Subtitle C, Section 702.1(a), if and when the site develops. At the time of EISF and the public space permit review, DDOT will evaluate the parking supply and require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. Both must comply with the CTR Guidelines in effect at the time. Additionally, DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking and showers/lockers requirements of ZR16.

Development Scenario	Estimated Development Program	Minimum Vehicle Parking Spaces*	CTR Maximum Parking Spaces**	Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	Short-Term Bicycle Spaces	Loading Berths	Delivery Spaces
Existing Conditions	22 Multi-Family Dwellings 22,416 SF Retail	19	-	10	8	2	1
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in MU-4 and NC-16 Zones	119 Multi-Family Dwellings 22,220 SF Retail	35	75	42	12	2	1
Maximum Future Proposed NC-17 Zone	162 Multi-Family Dwellings 22,220 SF Retail	42	93	56	14	2	1

Note: * Includes 50% reduction for being located within ½ mile from H Street Streetcar.
 **DDOT’s maximum parking benchmarks 0.40 spaces per residential unit and 1.25 spaces per 1,000 SF retail within ¼ mile of the H Street Streetcar (subject to change in future editions).

Figure 6 Zoning Requirements for Vehicle Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Loading 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, streetlights, 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:

- All vehicular site access to the site, as well as loading facilities and trash pick-up, must be via the existing rear public alley network. The closest alley entrance is from 12th Street NE;
- No new curb cuts to the property from H Street NE Place should be proposed. The existing curb cut on 11th Street NE should be removed;
- Existing vaults located in public space along 11th Street should be removed. If vaults are necessary, they should be placed on private property; and
- At the time of EISF and the public space permit review, DDOT will evaluate the parking supply and require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan. Both must comply with the CTR Guidelines in effect at the time.

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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