

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, AICP 
Associate Director

DATE: October 2, 2020

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 20-16 – 1707 7th Street NW (Parcel 42)

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Office of Planning (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone a 15,317 square-foot property from the ARTS-2 zone to the ARTS-4 zone. The subject property is located at 1707 7th Street NW (Square 442, Lot 106) on the northeast corner of 7th Street NW and Rhode Island Avenue NW. The site is currently vacant and adjacent to the Shaw/Howard University Metrorail Station. There is currently no known development proposal for the subject site.

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 ARTS-4 (Mixed-Use Uptown Arts) zone would allow for approximately 61 more residential units on the property than the maximum allowed in the existing ARTS-2 zone (109 units versus 58 units);
- From a person trip generation standpoint, maximum build-out in the proposed ARTS-4 zone could generate an additional 21 AM peak hour person trips and 27 PM peak hour person trips, as compared to a matter-of-right development under the ARTS-2 zone;

- Due to the site’s proximity to the Shaw/Howard University Metrorail Station entrance (250 feet as the crow flies), a large share of person trips is expected to be by non-auto modes;
- The amount of vehicle trips generated by a 109-unit multi-family development would be slightly more than the number of trips generated by the site with 58 units (increase of 5 AM trips and 5 PM trips);
- The additional person and vehicle 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 within ½-mile of a Metrorail station, 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;
- DDOT would expect a residential parking ratio of 0.30 spaces or lower based on guidance in the *CTR Guidelines*. The parking supply will be reviewed during public space permitting and EISF, and mitigation required if the site is over-parked;
- 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 20-foot rear public alley. If and when the site develops, it is expected that all loading, trash pick-up, and vehicle parking will take place from the public alleys. DDOT will not support any new curb cuts to the property from either 7th Street NW or Rhode Island Avenue NW.

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 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, streetlights, sidewalks, and other appropriate features within the ROW adjacent to the site;
 - 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 several residential development scenarios under the existing ARTS-2 and proposed ARTS-4 zones. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on the current and proposed zoning.

The existing ARTS-2 zone allows for the site to be developed with medium-density, compact mixed-use development with an emphasis on residential development and a maximum FAR of 4.2. If rezoned to ARTS-4, the site could potentially achieve a 7.2 FAR for a multi-family residential development assuming an inclusionary zoning (IZ) bonus. It is estimated that a maximum of 109 residential units could be constructed on-site if the rezoning to ARTS-4 is granted.

To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized a combination of rates from the ITE Trip Generation Manual and mode splits from the TripsDC web tool, which is based on trip generation data collected from approximately 55 residential properties across the District. TripsDC takes into account a property’s distance from high quality transit as well as the site’s parking ratio. Table 1 below presents a summary of DDOT’s estimate of vehicle trips for each development scenario.

Table 1 – Vehicle Trip Generation Comparison

Development Scenario	Development Program	AM Peak Person Trips	PM Peak Person Trips	AM Peak Vehicle Trips	PM Peak Vehicle Trips
Existing Conditions	15,317 SF Vacant Lot	0	0	0	0
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in ARTS-2 Zone 64,311 SF	58 Residential Units 12,254 SF Retail	46	115	8	15
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in ARTS-4 Zone 110,282 SF	109 Residential Units 12,254 SF Retail	67	142	13	20

As shown above, development of the site with the maximum number of allowable units (estimated 109 units) under the ARTS-4 zone will add approximately five (5) vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately five (5) vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, as compared to trips generated by the existing ARTS-2 zone. The additional vehicle trips will have a minimal impact on the District’s street network. Due to the site’s proximity to the Metrorail Station entrance (250 feet as the crow flies), a large share of trips is anticipated to be non-automotive.

Zoning Requirements

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 located within ½-mile of a Metrorail station, 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. For sites within ¼ mile of a Metrorail Station, the DDOT *CTR Guidelines* calls for a residential parking ratio not to exceed 0.30 spaces/unit. The presence of extra parking has the potential to induce additional demand for driving. DDOT will evaluate the parking supply and require mitigation, if necessary, during public space permitting and EISF review. Additionally, DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking and showers/lockers requirements of ZR16.

Table 2 – Zoning Requirements for Vehicle Parking, Bicycle Parking, and Loading Facilities

Development Scenario	Development Program	ZR16 Minimum Vehicle Parking Spaces	DDOT Preferred Max Vehicle Parking Spaces	ZR16 Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	ZR16 Short-Term Bicycle Spaces
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in ARTS-2 Zone	58 Residential Units 12,254 SF Retail 0 SF Office	15	30	21	6
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in ARTS-4 Zone	109 Residential Units 12,254 SF Retail 0 SF Office	24	45	38	9

PUBLIC SPACE

Upon development of the site, the property owner will be expected to rehabilitate streetscape infrastructure between the curb and the property lines consistent 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 adjacent to the eastern edge of the site and accessed by a curb cut at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue NW and R Street;

- No new curb cuts to the property from R Street NW or 7th Street NW should be proposed;
- Ensure building entrances are at-grade with the sidewalk to avoid the need for ramps and stairs in public space;
- Install missing street trees on all sides of the site; and
- Determine final locations of zoning required short-term bicycle spaces (inverted U-racks).

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.

AC:kv