

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Associate Director

DATE: October 27, 2023

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 20-29A – 1703 32nd Street NW (Dumbarton Oaks Campus Plan Amendment)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Trustee for Harvard University (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) (Zoning Regulations), requests an amendment to the 2020-2024 Campus Plan for Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection to construct the Farrand House in lieu of the previously approved greenhouse and to relocate the cooling towers, mechanical equipment, and service court (Buildings 12 and 13). The site is in the R-1-B Zone at 1730 32nd Street NW (Square 2155, Lot 0812) and is served by several curb cuts, but the primary vehicle entrance is on S Street NW, which provides access to the on-site parking spaces.

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to an exceptional quality of life 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 zoning action on the District’s transportation network. After review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The previous zoning approval (ZC 20-29) was for a maximum of 30 fellow, 139 staff/faculty, and 63 vehicle parking spaces. These amounts are not changing with this Amendment;
- While the overall number of parking spaces is not changing, they will be spatially allocated to different areas of the campus;

- The Applicant is proposing to construct the Farrand House (approximately 10,000 square feet) in lieu of the previously approved greenhouse (approximately 7,130 square-feet);
- The swap of the Farrand House and greenhouse is not expected to have an impact on the transportation network;
- The relocation of the cooling towers, mechanical equipment, and service court are accessible via the main S Street NW curb cut;
- DDOT notes there are several Special and Heritage trees on the site, which require coordination with DDOT’s Urban Forestry Division (UFD) to ensure their preservation;
- Per ZC 20-29, the Applicant is required to implement the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan from the February 8, 2021 Transportation Statement. DDOT expects the Applicant will continue to abide by the TDM for the life of the campus plan.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application.

STREETScape AND PUBLIC REALM

DDOT’s lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of the public realm design. If any portion of this or future projects at the property propose elements within District-owned right-of-way or the building restriction area, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space construction permit. It is noted that the site has a 50-foot Building Restriction Line (BRL) along the R Street NW frontage. The area between the property line and BRL is the building restriction area, which is regulated like DDOT public space and should remain “park-like” with landscaping. Any work within this space requires a public space application.

DDOT expects the adjacent public realm to meet all District standards. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the [DCMR](#), the most recent version of DDOT’s [Design and Engineering Manual \(DEM\)](#), and the [Public Realm Design Manual](#) for public space regulations and design guidance. A permit application can be filed through the DDOT [Transportation Online Permitting System \(TOPS\)](#) website.

Heritage Trees have 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 to preserve the Non-Hazardous Heritage Trees. Special Trees are between 44 inches and 99.99 inches in circumference. Special trees may be removed with a permit. However, if a Special Tree is designated to remain by UFD, a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) will be required.

According to the District’s [Tree Size Estimator map](#), the property has several trees the size of Special Trees. It is recommended that the Applicant continue to coordinate with the Ward 2 Arborist regarding the preservation and protection of existing Special, Heritage, and small street trees on-site. UFD confirms the Applicant’s Arborist has been in communication with the District’s Ward Arborist regarding preservation of these trees.