

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: July 15, 2022

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 22-03 – 1207 H Street NE

PROJECT SUMMARY

WCP 1207 H Street, LLC (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone a 33,435 SF property from NC-14 to NC-15. The subject property is located at 1207 H Street NE (Square 1004, Lot 342) and bounded by H Street NE to the north, 12th Street NE to the west, RF-1 rowhouses to the south, and commercial establishments to the east. The site is currently occupied by an 8,000 SF automotive retail business and a surface parking lot with 42 vehicle parking spaces.

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-15 zone would allow for approximately 67 more residential units on the property than the maximum allowed in the existing NC-14 zone (145 units versus 78 units), assuming there is first-floor retail;
- From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, maximum build-out in the proposed NC-15 zone could generate an additional 16 AM peak hour trips and 13 PM peak hour trips, as compared to a matter-of-right development in the NC-14 zone;

- 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 Streetcar 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 Streetcar and WMATA Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Routes, DDOT encourages the Applicant to minimize the amount of off-street parking provided with any future redevelopment proposals. Per DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, ideally no more than 0.35 vehicle spaces per residential unit (1 per 3 units);
- 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 DCMR 11 and DCMR 18;
- The site currently has access to an existing 10-foot rear public alley. When the site redevelops, it is expected that all loading, trash pick-up, and vehicle parking will take place from the public alleys, which will likely necessitate widening the alley. DDOT will not support any new curb cuts to the property and expects the existing three (3) curb cuts on H Street NE to be closed; and
- Depending on the final development program, DDOT may require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan be implemented.

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.

Given the subject properties are a short walking distance to several Priority Bus Routes, including the H Street Streetcar Line, and the proposed change in zoning is consistent with DDOT's approach to new development that supports higher densities, adjacent transit, and walkable design, 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 coordinate with DDOT through the permitting process for a future development proposal 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 transportation analysis;
- Develop and implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures commensurate with the land use and scale of future development, as appropriate;

- When the property ultimately redevelops, 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;
- Submit a detailed curbside management and signage plan to DDOT, consistent with current DDOT policies. If meter installation is required, they will be at the Applicant's expense;
- 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's Neighborhood Planning Branch on the public space design elements noted in the Streetscape and Public Realm section of this report.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Mode Split and Trip Generation Comparison

DDOT conducted a trip generation analysis for the site to compare the transportation impacts of development scenarios under the existing NC-14 and proposed NC-15 zones. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed zoning.

The existing NC-14 zone allows for the site to be developed with moderate-density development, including low-rise apartments. If rezoned to NC-15, the site could potentially achieve a 4.8 FAR for a mixed-use development assuming an inclusive zoning (IZ) bonus. It is estimated that a maximum of 145 residential units and 30,000 SF retail could be constructed on-site if the rezoning to NC-15 is granted, as compared to approximately 78 dwellings with 30,000 SF retail under NC-14.

DDOT estimated the amount of person- and vehicle-trips that would be generated by theoretical maximum matter-of-right developments under the existing NC-14 and proposed NC-15 zones. To determine the number of trips generated by each scenario, DDOT utilized the rates published in the ITE *Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*, webtool. A 60% non-auto mode share for residential and a 75% non-auto mode share for retail was assumed based on the site's proximity to Streetcar and WMATA Priority Bus Routes. Table 1 below presents a summary of DDOT's estimate of vehicle- and person-trips for each development scenario.

Table 1 | 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	8,000 SF Retail	27	0	11	15
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in NC-14 Zone	78 Residential Units	71	224	14	34
100,305 SF	30,000 SF Retail				
	0 SF Office				
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in NC-15 Zone	145 Residential Units	87	237	19	38
160,488 SF	30,000 SF Retail				
	0 SF Office				

As shown above, development of the site with the maximum number of allowable units (estimated 145 units) will generate approximately 19 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 38 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, as compared to the approximately 14 trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and 34 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour that could be generated under max build-out under existing zoning. The additional trips generated are expected to have a minimal impact on the transportation network.

Zoning Requirements

Table 2 below details DDOT's estimates of the theoretical vehicle parking and bike parking zoning requirements for each of the evaluated development scenarios. Note that the exact requirements will be determined by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) and will be based on the specific development ultimately proposed. This also includes any required loading facilities.

Since the site is located within ¼ mile of the H Street Streetcar and other Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Routes, DDOT encourages the Applicant to take advantage of the allowable 50% reduction in the parking minimum, per zoning Subtitle C, Section 702.1(a), when the site redevelops. According to DDOT's January 2022 *Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review*, a site proximate to priority transit should provide no more than 0.35 spaces per unit (1 space per 3 units) and no more than 1.25 spaces per 1,000 SF of retail. The presence of surplus parking has the potential to induce demand for additional driving on the roadway network. During public space permitting, the Applicant may be required to commit to a TDM plan, the contents of which will be determined at that time and will be influenced by the amount of off-street parking provided.

While not a zoning requirement, DDOT encourages the Applicant to provide a minimum of 1 electric vehicle (EV) charging station for every 50 spaces. It is noted that a new District law, the Electric Vehicle Readiness Amendment Act of 2020, calls for 20% of all new off-street parking spaces to be EV-ready starting January 1, 2022. At this time, the law has not gone into effect because it has not been funded. The Applicant should be aware that this requirement may go into effect prior to pulling their building permit.

The project must meet all bicycle parking and loading requirements. DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking and showers/lockers requirements of DCMR 11 and DCMR 18. Long- and short-term bicycle parking should be designed in accordance with the 2018 DDOT *Bike Parking Design Guidelines*. As required by zoning, at least 50% of long-term bicycle parking spaces must be located horizontally on the floor or easily accessible on the bottom level of a two-tier rack system. Additionally, at least 5% of spaces should be designed for larger cargo/tandem bikes (10 feet by 3 feet rather than 6 feet by 2 feet) and 10% of spaces be served by electrical outlets for e-bikes and scooters.

Table 2 | Zoning Requirements for Vehicle Parking and Bicycle Parking

Development Scenario	Development Program	ZR16 Minimum Vehicle Parking Spaces	DDOT Maximum Vehicle Parking Spaces	ZR16 Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	ZR16 Short-Term Bicycle Spaces
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in NC-14 Zone	78 Residential Units	30	65	29	12
	30,000 SF Retail				
	0 SF Office				
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in NC-15 Zone	145 Residential Units	41	88	51	16
	30,000 SF Retail				
	0 SF Office				

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, 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, 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. Since the existing alley is only 10-feet wide, it is likely that the alley must be widened to 16 or 20 feet;
- No new curb cuts to the property from H Street NE should be proposed. The three (3) existing curb cuts to H Street NE must be closed and green space restored;
- There is a significant amount of paving surrounding the site on H Street and 12th Street. Any future redevelopment should increase the amount of green space and landscaping;
- There are existing painted/flexpost curb extensions on the corner of H Street and 12th Street. When the site redevelops, permanent concrete curb extensions should be installed;
- Ensure any pedestrian entrances are at-grade with the public sidewalk so that no stairs or ramps are required in public space;
- There are several missing street trees and treeboxes along the H Street frontage;
- Determine final locations of short-term bicycle parking spaces, which should be provided as inverted U-racks; and
- Ensure the existing bus shelter is protected and remains in operation after redevelopment.

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 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.