

Government of the District of Columbia

Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Anna Chamberlin 
Associate Director

DATE: January 20, 2023

SUBJECT: ZC Case No. 22-12 – 4411-4415 14th Street NW and 4424 Arkansas Avenue NW

PROJECT SUMMARY

Mid-Atlantic Neighborhood Development Corporation (the “Applicant”) seeks approval of a Map Amendment to rezone a 19,623 SF site from MU-3A to MU-7A. The subject properties are located at 4411-4415 14th Street NW and 4424 Arkansas Avenue NW (Square 2819, Lot 810, 811, 812, 813) and bounded by Webster Street to the south, Allison Street to the north, 14th Street to the west, and Arkansas Avenue to the east. The site is currently developed with four (4) 1-story brick mixed-use buildings and a surface parking lot.

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-7A (Medium-Density Mixed-Use) zone would allow for approximately 79 more residential units on the property than the maximum allowed in the existing MU-3A zone (96 versus 17 units with first floor retail);
- From a vehicle trip generation standpoint, maximum build-out in the proposed MU-7A zone would only generate an additional 12 AM peak hour trips and 12 PM peak hour trips, as compared to a matter-of-right development under MU-3A;

- The additional trips generated by the site are expected to have a minimal impact on the transportation network;
- Since the site is within ¼ mile of several WMATA Priority Corridor Network Metrobus Routes on 14th and 16th Streets, 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 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 11 DCMR C-800 and 18 DCMR 1214; and
- Depending on the ultimate development proposal, DDOT will require the existing curb cuts be closed and no more than (1) one new curb cut constructed. It should be placed on the lowest volume street and meet current DDOT standards. The site should be designed so that no trucks back through public space.

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 in the MU-7A zone.

Given the subject properties are a short walk to Priority Bus Routes on 14th and 16th Streets and the proposed up-zoning is consistent with DDOT’s approach to new development that supports higher densities, adjacent to 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 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;
- DDOT will require a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan be developed and implemented at the time of curb cut approval, commensurate with the land use, parking supply, and scale of future development, in accordance with the January 2022 *CTR Guidelines*;
- 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;
- 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 4 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 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 several residential development scenarios under the existing MU-3A and proposed MU-7A zones. To complete the analysis, DDOT first assessed the theoretical maximum development potential of the site based on current and proposed zoning.

The existing MU-3A zone allows for the site to be developed with low density mixed-use development. If rezoned to MU-7A, the site could potentially achieve a 4.80 FAR for a multi-family residential development assuming an inclusive zoning (IZ) bonus. It is estimated that a maximum of 96 residential units with 8,000 SF of first floor retail could be constructed on-site if the rezoning to MU-7A is granted.

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% and 75% non-auto mode share was assumed for the residential and retail, respectively, given the site’s proximity to Priority Bus Routes along 14th and 16th Streets. Table 1 below presents a summary of DDOT’s estimate of vehicle 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	0 Residential Units 14,500 SF Retail	22	90	3	12
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in MU-3A Zone	17 Residential Units 8,000 SF Retail	20	57	4	9
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in MU-7A Zone	96 Residential Units 8,000 SF Retail	54	94	16	22
Net Change Max MU-3A vs Max MU-7A	+79 Residential Units -6,500 SF Retail	+34	+36	+12	+13
Net Change Existing Site vs Max MU-7A	+96 Residential Units -6,500 SF Retail	+32	+4	+13	+10

As shown above, redevelopment of the site with the maximum number of allowable units (estimated 96 units with a reduction in commercial space) will add approximately 13 vehicle trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 10 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour, as compared to the three (3) trips in the weekday morning commuter peak hour and approximately 12 vehicle trips during the weekday evening commuter peak hour generated by the existing uses on the site.

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 would

be determined by the Department of Buildings (DOB) and would be based on the specific development ultimately proposed. This also includes any required loading facilities.

Since the site is located less than ¼ mile from Priority Corridor Metro Bus Route on 14th and 16th Streets, DDOT encourages any future developments to take advantage of the 50% reduction in the parking minimum, per Subtitle C, Section 702.1(a). According to DDOT’s January 2022 Guidance for Comprehensive Transportation Review, a site this proximate to priority transit should provide no more than 0.35 spaces per unit (1 space per 3 units) for multi-unit residential buildings. The presence of surplus parking has the potential to induce demand for additional driving on the roadway network. During public space permitting, the Applicant will 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 requirements. DDOT encourages the Applicant to meet or exceed the bicycle parking and showers/lockers requirements of 11 DCMR C-800 and 18 DCMR 1214. Long- and short-term bicycle parking should be designed in accordance with the 2018 DDOT *Bike Parking Design Guide*. 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, DDOT requires 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	Zoning Min Vehicle Parking Spaces	DDOT Preferred Max Vehicle Parking Spaces	18 DCMR 1214 Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	Zoning Short-Term Bicycle Spaces
Maximum Current Matter-of-Right in MU-3A Zone	17 Residential Units 8,000 SF Retail	2	16	7	3
Maximum Future Matter-of-Right in MU-7A Zone	96 Residential Units 8,000 SF Retail	15	44	33	7

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:

- The existing curb cuts on 14th Street and Arkansas Avenue should be closed. Any redevelopment should provide only one (1) curb cut maximum from the lowest volume street;
- Ensure the sidewalks surrounding the site have a minimum clear path of 6 feet;
- Install concrete curb extensions on the corners surrounding the site where an on-street parking lane exist and ensure all curb ramps and crosswalks are up to modern standards;
- Ensure any pedestrian entrances to a future multi-family building are at-grade with the public sidewalk to that no stairs or ramps are required in public space;
- Remove excessive paving in public space and Maintain as much of the existing natural topography of the “public parking” green space as possible. There are currently vehicles stored in the sidewalk space which is not permitted;
- Remove overheight fences and dumpsters currently in public space, which are not permitted;
- During permitting, submit a Curbside Management Plan for all public streets surrounding the site showing existing and proposed signage and curbside designation;
- If the redevelopment proposal triggers loading requirements, ensure that there is no backing of trucks across the sidewalk and that all movements through sidewalk space is head-in/head-out;
- Provide a plan showing the detailed design of the long-term bike storage room so PSD can confirm it meets the DCMR 11 (Chapter 800) and DCMR 18 (Chapter 1214) requirements and DDOT *Bike Parking Guide* best practices;
- Determine final location for short term bicycle rack in public space near building entrances; and
- Any existing Cobra Head-style streetlights along the site perimeter should be replaced with either Washington Globe or Decorative Tear Drop-style streetlights. Exact style to be installed will be determined at the time of permitting.

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.

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