




MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM:  Karen Thomas, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: November 25, 2014

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18866, 1108 16th Street, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following:

Variance relief:

- § 536 - Court (34 feet required, 14 feet proposed); and

Special exception relief:

- §§ 2101, 2120.6: Parking (13 parking spaces required, 3 spaces proposed);
- § 508 Addition to office building (14,375 sf office space existing: 18,618 sf proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1108 16 th St NW
Legal Description	Square 0183, Lot 0111
Ward/ANC	2/ANC 2B
Lot Characteristics	Flat, rectangular lot measuring 50 ft. wide x 114.5 ft. long. The lot abuts a 20-ft wide alley at the rear.
Zoning	SP-2 – Medium to high density, including residential and office uses, approved through special exception relief.
Existing Development	The property is currently developed with a 4-story office building (with cellar) and 5 parking spaces at the rear.
Historic District	The site is located within the Sixteenth Street Historic District. A portion of the existing front façade of the structure is considered contributing to the character of the historic district.
Adjacent Properties	The site abuts a commercial office building to the north and an embassy (Oman) building at the south. To the west the rear, it abuts a 20-foot wide alley, which exits on L Street.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The immediate surrounding neighborhood is comprised of commercial office and institutional uses, as well as hotels.



III. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Proposal	The site would be redeveloped as an 8-story (above grade) mixed-use office and residential building. The existing 4-story, 14,000 sf office building would be demolished and replaced with 18,620 sf of office use and 17 residential units. The first and second story 16 th Street façade would be retained, as its features contribute to the Sixteenth Street Historic District. Three parking spaces would be provided at the rear.
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IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

SP-2 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 530	90 ft. max.	44 ft.	90 ft.	None required
Lot Width	None prescribed	50 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Area	None prescribed	5725 sf	No change	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 531	7.2 max/ 3.5 (com.) (w/ IZ)	2.5	6.46/3.25	None required
Lot Occupancy § 532	90% max. (w/IZ)	82 %	83 %	None required
Rear Yard § 534 2.5"/ft. of height	19 ft. min.	29 ft.	24 ft.	None required
Side Yard § 535	0 ft. min.	0 ft.	0 ft.	None required
Court, closed § 536 Commercial: 3"/ft.<12ft Residential : 4"/ft.< 15ft	25.75 ft. min 34 ft. min.	0 ft.	14 ft.	Relief required
Parking § 2101, 1/4du (residential) 1/1,800 sf in xs. of 2,000 sf § 2120	4 spaces 9 spaces	0	3 spaces	Relief required

OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Variance Relief from § 536, Courts

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The 50-foot wide lot represents a consolidation of three former row house lots from 1880. The narrow and deep lot is an exceptional situation of the property, which creates a practical difficulty in establishing a mixed-use building. The required court width for the residential use would be 34 feet (or 68% of the building's width) and 26 feet (or 52%) of the width for the commercial office space. Similarly, the required court area would be varied requiring up to 2,357 sf (residential), which represents 41.2% of the lot

area. Therefore, satisfying the court area requirements consume a significant proportion of the lot's width and area, resulting in inefficient floor plates on a narrow lot.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

Locating the court as proposed, (south facing) would allow for natural light and air to the building. The smaller court area proposed would not be detrimental to the public good, as no other property would be affected by the proposed court.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

No harm to the Regulations is anticipated, as the intent of the court regulations would be satisfied through the provision of light and air to both intended uses on the property. No other regulation would be negatively impacted by the proposed court, as the site's redevelopment would satisfy all other bulk requirements for the zone. The zone district permits a mix-use development and the proposal remains consistent to the zone's intent.

b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 508, Office Use in SP

508.3 The use, height, bulk, and design shall be in harmony with existing uses and structures on neighboring property.

The proposed redevelopment is compliant with all other bulk requirements, including height, and FAR and the proposed uses are permitted in the zone.

508.4 The use shall not create dangerous or other objectionable traffic conditions.

The former use of the property was a combined clinic and office use. The additional area that would be devoted to commercial office and residential uses should not create objectionable traffic conditions, as the location is transit accessible, including within 1,200 feet of a metro stop (Farragut North), and quarter mile to two other metro stops (Farragut West and McPherson Square). Several Capital Bike share locations are within a two block radius of the property and multiple bus routes traverse the 16th Street and K Street corridors. The applicant has included a transportation analysis, and a TDM plan for the development including transportation incentives, the availability of transportation information, and on-site bicycle amenities (See review of special exception criteria under § 2120.6, pg. 5). The office and residential uses would be typical of this zone district and should not create dangerous or objectionable traffic conditions.

508.5 The Board may require special treatment in the way of design, screening of buildings, accessory uses, signs, and other facilities as it deems necessary to protect the value of neighboring property.

OP does not propose any additional treatment to protect the value of the neighboring commercial properties.

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposal is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Regulations. Minimal relief of the area requirements and no relief from the bulk standards are required to support the lot's redevelopment.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

There are at risk windows to the property to the north. However, that building has a court area at its south elevation where there is sufficient separation between the properties. The subject property already abuts the property to the south, and there are no at risk windows on that building's north elevation, loss of light or air to that building would not be anticipated. The proposal would not adversely affect the use of neighboring property.

c. Special Exception Relief pursuant to §§ 2101 and 2120.6, Parking

Parking is required for the proposed addition, since the gross floor area of the historic resource would be increased by more than 50% and the parking requirement for that increase would be more than 4 spaces (§ 2120.3)

The Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from all or part of the parking requirements of this section if the owner of the property demonstrates that... providing the required parking will result in significant architectural or structural difficulty in maintaining the historic integrity and appearance of the historic resource... The applicant shall ... address each of the following criteria as part of its presentation to the Board (§ 2120.6):

There would be a difficulty in maintaining the integrity of the historic resource and providing onsite parking, due to the lot's narrow width. Significant excavation would be required to provide the necessary ramps and drive aisles for below grade parking, to the detriment of the historic facade that extends the width of the lot. No meaningful onsite parking could be included, since the risk of damage to the historic resource would outweigh the value of required onsite parking for the development, particularly in a transit accessible location.

§ 2120.6

- (a) *Maximum number of students, employees, guests, customers, or clients who can reasonably be expected to use the proposed building or structure at one time;*

There would be 17 apartment units, and 18,000 sf of office space on four levels. There is no indication at this time what type of offices would occupy the space or the number of employees. The applicant would provide additional details about this aspect at the hearing.

- (b) *Amount of traffic congestion existing and/or that the redevelopment of the historic resource can reasonably be expected to add to the neighborhood;*

The applicant's traffic study determined that:

- A total of 349 curb parking spaces were inventoried within a 2-3 block perimeter of the site. Of those, 260 are metered spaces, 23 are unrestricted spaces, and 66 are other spaces (diplomatic, taxi, hotel, etc.).
- No Residential Parking Permit (RPP) spaces were noted in the parking area.
- Of the 349 spaces, parking restrictions reduce the parking supply to 140 parking spaces during the morning peak period and 152 parking spaces during the evening peak period.

The mode split noted in the transportation analysis was requested by DDOT. WMATA's data provided to the applicant indicated that offices around this location have an 89% to 98% non - auto mode split. Many of the auto-related trips would disperse to the 37 available parking facilities¹ within 2-3 blocks of the site, since only 3 on-site parking spaces are proposed.

Trip generation projections were also provided by the applicant. Based on the findings, the resulting trip generation for the proposed uses would be minimal and mainly consistent with small office and residential units in a downtown location, with easy access to multi-modal transportation alternatives.

- (c) *Quantity of existing public, commercial, or private parking, other than curb parking, on the property or in the neighborhood that can reasonably be expected to be available when the redevelopment is complete; and*

As previously noted, there are approximately 37 existing commercial and private parking garages within the immediate vicinity of the subject location, for use by customers, clients or guests, as well as to future residents/owners of the residential and commercial units.

- (d) *Proximity to public transportation, particularly Metrorail stations, and availability of either public transportation service in the area, or a ride sharing program approved by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation.*

The subject location is close to the downtown core of the District. It is within walking distance of a major metro line, several cross-town bus routes (22), bike share facilities², several car share locations³ (30 vehicles) and taxis. The pedestrian environment is also well noted in this area, with adequate sidewalk widths and tree plantings, with a walk score of 99 for the neighborhood. The applicant's transportation analysis (submitted with the final prehearing statement) provides details of the transportation alternatives available to this location.

2120.7 Prior to taking final action on an application, the Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Department of Transportation for review and report.

¹ 12 of these are available 24 hours, 25 are available during daytime/evening hours.

² 4 bike share locations with a total of 67 docking stations are within a 2 block radius.

³ 30 car-share vehicle locations are within 2 blocks of the address. Point-to-point car sharing is also available for one-way rentals (e.g. Car2Go). Other mobile ride share applications would also be available to residents and visitors.

The application was referred to DDOT for review and analysis, noted as Exhibit 20 of the record.

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposal is in harmony with the general purpose of the Zoning Regulations. Since all the required parking could not be reasonably accommodated on the site, the applicant has made proposed TDM measures to encourage alternative modes of transportation, including,

- Provision of a one-year car-sharing membership or Capitol Bikeshare membership to the first occupant of each residential unit.
- A move-in transportation package that would include transit brochures.
- Six (6) onsite bike spaces would be provided in a secure location.
- Detailed transportation information to promote walking, cycling, and transit will be made available to new residents at purchase and tenants of the office space at lease.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

The use of neighboring property would not be adversely affected based on the immediate transportation alternatives within a two-block radius of the site. Since minimal onsite parking would be provided, traffic to the office building would most likely be dispersed to existing parking facilities within walking distance of the building.

V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation is expected to submit its review under separate cover.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The ANC2B unanimously approved the proposal at its regularly held meeting on October 8, 2014. The report is submitted as Exhibit 27 of the record.

