

Memorandum

TO: Roland Driest, DC Surveyor
Matthew LeGrant, Zoning Administrator

FROM: *JL for* Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation

DATE: March 8, 2019

SUBJECT: Office of Planning Report for Large Tract Review Case No. 2018-03
5901 Blair Road, N.W.

I. Summary

Section 2300.1 (a) of Title 10 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) directs the Office of Planning to “Review, prior to the filing of applications for building permits or construction permits, (for) ... any commercial or mixed-use commercial development of fifty-thousand square feet (50,000 ft²) or more gross floor area (above grade) and cellar area (below grade); ...”. This otherwise by-right development proposal is subject to Large Tract Review because the proposed building would consist of more than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area.

The Office of Planning (OP) has completed its review of the LTR application and concludes that, for the reasons outlined in this report, the application addresses the goals of the LTR regulations, as outlined in DCMR Title 10, Chapter 23, § 2300.2 to:

- Minimize adverse environmental, traffic, and neighborhood impacts;
- Avoid unnecessary public costs in terms of new services or facilities required of city agencies; and
- Carry out the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

II. Location and Site Description

Address	5901 Blair Road, N.W.
Applicant	5901 Blair Rd, LLC
Legal Description	Square 3379, Lot 817
Ward, ANC	Ward 4; ANC 4B
Zone	PDR-1
Lot Characteristics	Pentagon-shaped corner lot with no sidewalk or curb and gutter along the Oglethorpe Street frontage, no public space between the north of the Oglethorpe Street pavement adjacent to the subject property and the subject property, and no alley access. A 37.9-inch willow oak is located within the Blair Road public space adjacent to the subject property.

Existing Development	One-story industrial warehouse building fronting on Blair Road with a rear surface parking lot accessible from Oglethorpe Street
Adjacent Properties	North: Self-storage facility South: Across Oglethorpe Street, a portion of the Fort Circle Park system East: Humane Rescue Alliance and Medical Center West: Across Blair Road, a portion of the Fort Circle Park system and a PEPCO facility
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Industrial uses to the north and west. To the east and south are federal parks, low density housing and institutional uses

III. Project Description

The application is consistent with the type and scale of development permitted in the PDR-1 Zone Regulations, as follows:

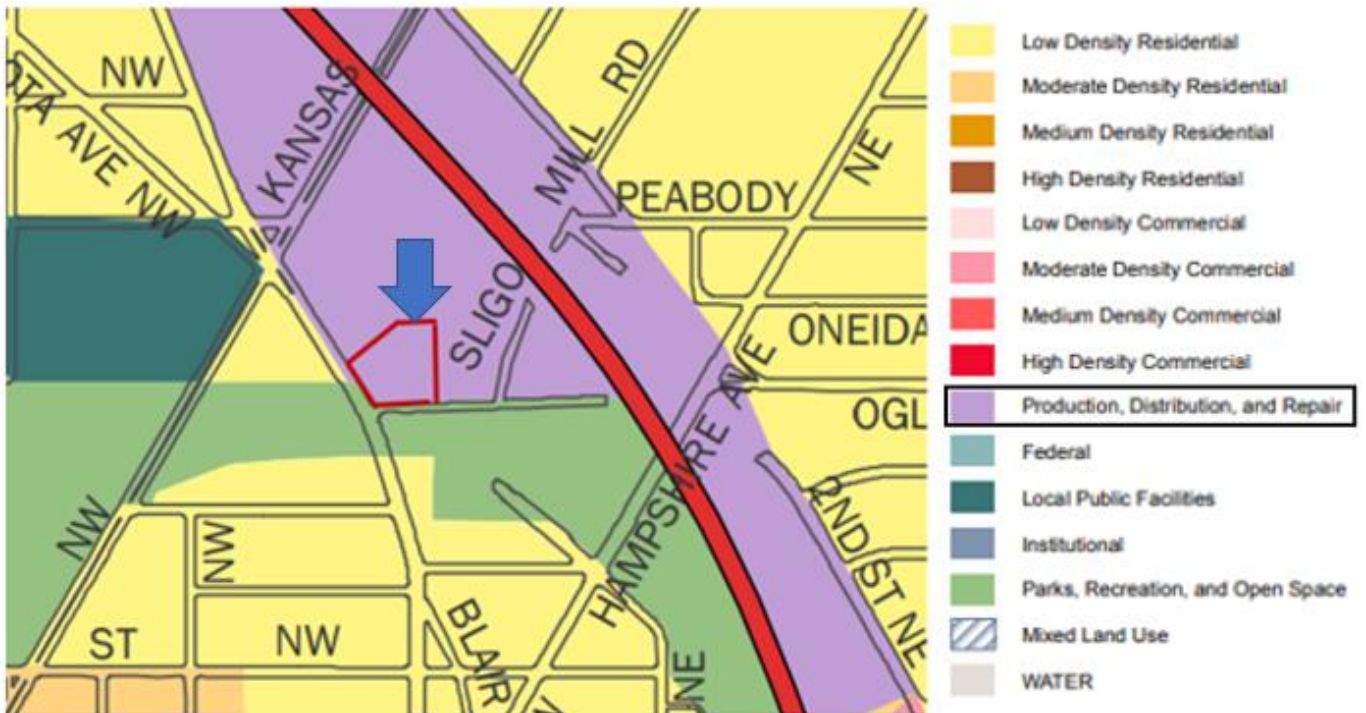
Zone: PDR-1	Regulation	Proposed
Height J § 203.1	50-foot max.	50 feet
Penthouse Height J § 203.6	12-foot max.	10 feet
Mechanical Penthouse Height	15-foot max.	15 feet
Penthouse FAR C § 1503.1(c)	0.4 max.	0.4
Lot Width	None Prescribed	114.25 feet
Lot Area	None Prescribed	27,074 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio J § 202	3.5 max.	3.5
Open Court J § 209	2.5 in./ft. of court height or 10.4 ft. min.	17 feet
Rear Yard J § 205	2.5 ft./foot of bldg. ht., but not less than 12 ft.	22 feet
Side Yard J § 206	None Required	East: 9 feet Northwest & West: None
Parking C § 701.5	1 per 3,000 square feet >3,000 square feet or min. 31 spaces	27 spaces, including two car-share spaces for an equivalent of 33 ¹
Loading C § 901.1	2 loading berths for >25,000 GFA	2 loading berths
Bicycle Parking C § 802.1	1 long term space/20,000 sq. ft or min. 5	5 spaces
GAR J § 208.1	0.3 min.	0.3
PDR Use Permissions U § 801.1(bb)	storage establishments permitted as a matter-of-right	storage establishment

¹ Pursuant to C § 708.2, up to two dedicated car-share spaces may count as three parking spaces each.

IV. Comprehensive Plan



Generalized Policy Map



Future Land Use Map

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2.2.3: Restoration or Removal of Vacant and Abandoned Buildings

Reduce the number of vacant and abandoned buildings in the city through renovation, rehabilitation, and where necessary, demolition. Implement programs that encourage the owners of such buildings to sell or renovate them, and apply liens, fines, and other penalties for non-compliant properties. 310.4

Policy LU-3.1.2: Redevelopment of Obsolete Industrial Uses

Encourage the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive industrial sites, such as vacant warehouses and open storage yards, with higher value production, distribution, and repair uses and other activities which support the core sectors of the District economy (federal government, hospitality, higher education, etc.). 314.8

The subject property is currently developed with a one-story vacant warehouse building with on-site surface parking. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing improvements and replace them with a multi-story storage building with on-site parking that would provide a service to District residents in need of storage space.

Transportation Element

Policy T-1.1.4: Transit-Oriented Development

Support transit-oriented development by investing in pedestrian-oriented transportation improvements at or around transit stations, major bus corridors, and transfer points. 403.10

Policy T-2.4.1: Pedestrian Network

Develop, maintain, and improve pedestrian facilities. Improve the city's sidewalk system to form a network that links residents across the city. 410.5

The site is served by the K-2 and K-6 Metrobus routes and located less than one mile from the Fort Totten Metrorail station, making it easily accessible by public transit for employees at the site.

The original submission did not include the addition of a sidewalk on the north side of Oglethorpe Street. DDOT recommends the applicant construct this sidewalk and the applicant has agreed.

Environmental Element

Policy E-2.2.5: Energy Efficient Building and Site Planning

Include provisions for energy efficiency and for the use of alternative energy sources in the District's planning, zoning, and building standards. The planning and design of new development should contribute to energy efficiency goals. 610.7

Policy E-3.1.1: Maximizing Permeable Surfaces

Encourage the use of permeable materials for parking lots, driveways, walkways, and other paved surfaces as a way to absorb stormwater and reduce urban runoff. 613.2

Policy E-3.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff

Promote an increase in tree planting and landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces. 613.3

Policy E-3.2.1: Support for Green Building

Encourage the use of green building methods in new construction and rehabilitation projects, and develop green building methods for operation and maintenance activities. 614.2

Policy E-4.2.3: Control of Urban Runoff

Continue to implement water pollution control and “best management practice” measures aimed at slowing urban runoff and reducing pollution, including the flow of sediment and nutrients into streams, rivers, and wetlands. 619.8

The building is proposed to be designed to achieve LEEDv4 certification, to utilize high-efficiency fluorescent and LED lighting with time clocks to minimize light pollution. Solar panels are proposed in a portion of the southwest corner of the building (see Sheet P-102). Overall, the proposed GAR is 0.3, as required by the Zoning Regulations.

Although most of the on-site parking would be located beneath the building, permeable pavers would be used for the portion extending out beyond the building walls, consisting of approximately 1,552 square feet. Two extensive green roofs for the building would total approximately 12,911 square feet. In combination, this would have the potential to reduce urban runoff to waterways from the site.

Urban Design Element

Policy UD-2.2.7: Infill Development

Regardless of neighborhood identity, avoid overpowering contrasts of scale, height and density as infill development occurs. 910.15

The surrounding area is generally improved with one to three-story buildings. The proposed four-story building is consistent with the zoning on the property and would not be out of scale with existing neighborhood development.

Rock Creek East Area Element

Policy RCE-1.1.2: Design Compatibility

Ensure that renovation, additions, and new construction in the area’s low density neighborhoods respects the scale and densities of adjacent properties, avoids sharp contrasts in height and mass, and preserves parklike qualities such as dense tree cover and open space. 2208.3

Policy RCE-1.1.8: Industrial Zone Buffering

Provide improved buffering and screening along the interface between residential areas and industrial areas, especially along Blair Road, Chillum Place, and the CSX/Metrorail corridor. To protect nearby neighborhoods from noise and other industrial impacts, the expansion of industrial uses should be limited to areas designated for Production, Distribution, and Repair (PDR) on the Future Land Use Map. 2208.9

As noted above, the proposed building would respect the scale and density of the surrounding neighborhood. As a four-story low-intensity building, it would act as a screen to the CSX/Metrorail tracks to the east, buffering the nearby low-density residential neighborhoods to the west and south across Oglethorpe Street and Blair Road from the more intense PDR uses.

V. Analysis of Compliance with 10 DCMR, Chapter 23, Large Tract Review Procedures

The proposed public storage facility is subject to the review standards of Section 2301.3 and Section 2302.1 because it is for a development in excess of 50,000 square feet.

2301.3 Applicants for commercial and mixed-use commercial development projects of fifty thousand square feet (50,000 ft.²) or more shall submit ... the following documents:

(a) A completed certification form (forms shall be provided by the Office of Planning);

A completed application form was included as Exhibit A of the application package.

(b) The name, address and signature of all owners, or their authorized agent, and of property included in the area to be developed. If there is an agent, the applicant shall provide written authorization and the extent of the agent's authority;

The name, address and signature of the owner were submitted as a part of the application in Exhibit A. Exhibit C provides for an authorized agent.

(c) A map showing location of the proposed project and the existing zoning of the site;

Maps and photographs indicating the location of the subject property and its zoning were submitted as a part of the application under Exhibit D.

(d) A statement indicating the contribution of the project toward implementing city and community goals and policies;

The application includes a statement in support of the application.

(e) A statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development to the objectives of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital;

Section V of the statement, "Relationship of the Project to the Comprehensive Plan" indicates the relationship of the project to the Comprehensive Plan.

(f) A general site and development plan, indicating the proposed use, location, dimensions, number of stories and height of building;

Exhibit E of the application contains general site and development plans, including use, location, dimensions, and number of stories and height of the proposed building.

(g) A general circulation plan, including the location of vehicular and pedestrian access ways, other public space and the location and number of all off-street parking and loading spaces, loading berths and service delivery spaces;

Pedestrian and vehicular circulation plans, including loading, were included in the Comprehensive Transportation Review, Exhibit F of the application.

(h) A typical floor plan;

Exhibit E includes proposed plans for each floor of the building.

(i) A general statement of the approximate schedule of building construction;

Page 6 of the statement includes an approximate schedule of construction, proposing to break ground in September of 2019, with completion expected in late in 2020.

(j) Vehicular trip generation, trip assignment and before and after capacity analysis and level of service at critical intersections; and

The Comprehensive Transportation Review, Exhibit F of the application, includes a comprehensive analysis of the transportation aspects of the proposed development.

(k) Any other information needed to fully understand the final building proposed for the site.

The applicant submitted a letter from the Zoning Administrator (Exhibit H) indicating that the proposal was in compliance with the Zoning Regulations.

2302.1 The scope of review to be used by District departments and agencies in assessing projects under this chapter shall include the following:

(a) Consistency with laws in the District of Columbia, including the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and regulations enacted pursuant thereto;

The subject application includes a letter from the Office of the Zoning Administrator (Exhibit H of the Application), dated November 19, 2018, stating that the “*proposed redevelopment of the Property complies with the PDR-1 District requirements, and is permitted as a matter-of-right.*” The application also is not inconsistent with many elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including Land Use, Transportation, Environmental and Rock Creek East, as described above. It would be consistent with the requirements DDOT, including the Urban Forestry Division, subject to conformance with the Urban Forestry Division for the preservation of a willow oak tree and the construction of a sidewalk as requested by Planning and Sustainability Division (see Section VI for more details).

(b) Potential traffic, neighborhood and design impact; and

The Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR), dated December 19, 2018 and submitted as a part of the application, concluded “**the project will not have a detrimental impact** to the surrounding transportation network assuming that all planned site design elements are implemented.” Those improvements include on-site bicycle parking with showers and lockers, two car-share spaces, a loading management plan and a transportation demand management plan. In addition to those improvements proposed by the applicant and included in the CTR, DDOT requested and the applicant agreed to construct a public sidewalk along the south side of property, adjacent to the Oglethorpe Street public space, where none currently exists, to facilitate pedestrian circulation.

(c) Quality of life and environmental impact.

Construction of a public sidewalk on the north side of Oglethorpe Street would improve the quality of life for pedestrians in the area. Preservation of the willow oak within the Blair Road public space, in addition to provision of an intensive green roof, use of

permeable pavement and the addition of two car-share spaces, would to minimize the impact the proposed building would have on the environment, while expanding alternative transportation options to residents, visitors and employees within the area.

VI. Department Responses

Application materials were distributed to the following departments for review and comment:

- Department of Transportation, Planning and Sustainability Division (DDOT-PSD)
- Department of Transportation, Urban Forestry Division (DDOT-UFD)
- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
- Department of Employment Services (DOES)
- Department of the Environment (DDOE)
- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department (FEMS)
- Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)
- Office of Planning, Design Division (OP-DD)
- Office of Planning, Neighborhood Planning Division (OP-NP)

Comments were received from the following agencies.

DDOT-PSD, in a memorandum dated January 31, 2019, recommended the following:

1. Construct a sidewalk on the north side of Oglethorpe Street from Blair Road to the Humane Rescue Alliance curb cut. The sidewalk should be six feet wide with a four-foot buffer between the sidewalk and Oglethorpe Street. The sidewalk should be clear of all signs, sign posts, utility poles, guy wires, or any other obstructions. These items should be placed in the buffer. The Applicant should also build a curb and gutter as part of the sidewalk at the current curb line on the north side of Oglethorpe Street;
2. Implement the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan as proposed by the Applicant in the December 19, 2018 CTR, for the life of the project as noted at the end of this report; and
3. Implement the Loading Management Plan as proposed by the Applicant.

The applicant is working with DDOT to construct a six-foot wide sidewalk and curb on the north side of Oglethorpe Street, with two feet of the sidewalk on the applicant's property. The applicant informed OP that it agrees to implement the TDM and the Loading Management Plan.

DDOT-UFD, in a memorandum dated January 31, 2019, commented that the applicant must abide by the following:

1. Show distance between the 37.9-inch diameter Willow Oak on Blair Road and the property line.
2. Show the Critical Root Zone (CRZ) and Structural Root Zone for the 37.9-inch diameter Willow Oak. The critical root zone is measured at 4.5 feet above the ground (diameter breast height (DBH)) from all sides of the tree trunk. The CRZ equals the measurement from the face (not center) of the trunk to the distance that equals the tree's diameter multiplied by one-foot (1.5 feet preferred).

3. Contractor shall install DDOT Tree Preservation Sign as per DDOT Standard Drawing 608.10. Signage can be obtained from the DDOT Permits Office at 1100 4th Street, SW or the DDOT HQ at 55 M Street, SE- Urban Forestry Division.
4. Add the following notes for the 37.9-inch diameter Willow Oak to be preserved:
 - None of the following shall occur within the critical root zone: staging/storage of construction materials, equipment, soil or debris; disposal of any liquids (e.g. concrete, gas, oil, paint, or blacktop and trenching.)
 - No heavy equipment shall be used to excavate within the critical root zone. Excavations shall proceed with care by use of hand tools or equipment that will not cause injury to tree trunks, branches, and roots.
 - No roots greater than two inches in diameter shall be cut without the DDOT Urban Forestry Division's Ward Arborists permission. Exposed roots two inches and larger in diameter shall be wrapped in burlap or other approved material and kept moist at all times.
 - If for any reason the scope of the project requires work to be performed within the chain link preservation zone, the permit holder must contact Joel Conlon, DDOT Ward Arborist at joel.conlon@dc.gov or call 202-557-4118 to receive clearance to continue the conflicting work.
 - Pruning the Willow Oak requires a Public Space Construction permit for Landscaping: Tree Pruning.

The applicant informed OP that the plans have been revised to show the location of the willow oak and the CRZ, and that a tree preservation sign will be installed with the notes as outlined above.

DPR, in an email to OP dated January 31, 2019, stated that it had no comments on the application.

FEMS, in a meeting with OP on March 1, 2019, indicated that it had no emergency access issues with the application.

OP-Design Division made the following comments:

1. One of the bay windows does not have windows and part of an electrical room is in a window projection. Projections are intended to be embellishment and secondary elements of a building. Electrical rooms need to be entirely within private property.
2. Bay window projections must have windows on each floor. One of the projections has several floors without windows and one projection has no windows at all. Windows need to be added.
3. Efforts should be made to include a sidewalk on Oglethorpe Street.
4. There is no entrance on Blair Road. Buildings must have an entrance on the street to which it is addressed.
5. The front entrance doors need to swing in if opening into public space.

The applicant agrees to these comments and informed OP that they have been addressed in the plans.

OP-Neighborhood Planning made the following comments:

1. The corner windows are transparent to fake doors.
2. Can artwork be added to the big blank walls?

The applicant informed OP that the building is designed to include display windows into the facility, and as the design of the building progresses, artwork will be considered.

No other agencies provided comments on this application.

VII. Community Review

Application materials were distributed to the following for their review and comment:

- ANC 4B;
- Property owners within 200 feet of the site; and
- Lamond-Riggs Public Library.

The applicant informed OP that it presented the proposal before ANC 4B on January 28, 2019 and received few comments, aside from questions regarding if the use was similar to the public storage use adjacent and to the north. No correspondence was received from the ANC.

The applicant informed OP that it contacted the Manor Park Citizens Association, but received no response.

VIII. LTR Application Findings

The project proposed by this Large Tract Review Application is generally consistent with the purposes and goals of the LTR regulations and not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Office of Planning recommends the applicant consider the following revisions to the proposal:

- Provide an electric vehicle charging station within the garage.
- Construct a six-foot wide sidewalk clear of all signs, sign posts, utility poles, guy wire or any other obstructions with a four-foot buffer between the sidewalk and the street on the north side of Oglethorpe Street, from Blair Road to the Humane Rescue Alliance curb cut, and a curb and gutter at the existing curb line on the north side of Oglethorpe Street on the subject property. Any obstructions should be placed within the buffer.
- Design to provide additional rooftop solar to maximize solar generation;
- Pursue LEED Gold certification;
- Consider materials with high reflectivity for the private drive to combat urban heat island effect; and
- Protect the 37.9-inch Willow Oak within the Blair Road public space, as directed by DDOT-UFD.

cc: David Gorman, 5901 Blair Rd, LLC
Samantha Mazo, Cozen O'Connor
District Department of Transportation
District Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
District Department of Energy and Environment

JS/sjm
Stephen J. Mordfin, Project Manager

Attachment: Location Map

