

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW

DATE: August 12, 2010
FROM: Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner
ADDRESS: 4700-4725 Block of Western Avenue NW
APPLICATION: Curb cut and driveway

Site Information

Zone: R-1-B
Historic District: No
CFA: No
Neighborhood Character: Residential

Background:

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on August 3, 2010.

Relevant Policies of Planning Initiatives

Policy HP-2.5.4: Landscaped Yards in Public Space

Preserve the continuous and open green quality of landscaped front and side yards in public space. Take special care at historic landmarks and in historic districts to protect this public environment from intrusions, whether from excess paving, vehicular access and parking, high walls and fencing, or undue disruption of the natural contours or bermed terraces.

Policy UD-2.2.1 Neighborhood Character and Identity

Strengthen the defining visual qualities of Washington's neighborhoods. This should be achieved in part by relating the scale of infill development, alterations, renovations and additions to existing neighborhood context.

KEY ISSUES

The proposal is for a new driveway and curb cut for a residence on Western Avenue, NW, between 49th and Chesapeake Streets. The area of the new driveway is 430 square feet in public space. The width of the proposed driveway is 10 feet.

The block in which this property is located does have an internal alley, which is 15'. The alley is unimproved and located in Montgomery County, Maryland. Most of the immediately surrounding blocks have alleys, the majority of properties do not have curb cuts to the street, and very few do have curb cuts. In addition, the proposed curb cut is nearby to an existing curb cut and driveway that appears to be shared among two residences, including the one that is the subject of this application.

This property is located in Maryland, but it is located on Western Avenue; this streets right-of-way of under the jurisdiction of the District. The alley that serves this property appears to be in poor condition, but is a public right-of-way providing access to the property in question.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning discourages new curb cuts for existing properties that do not have them. There is already a nearby curb cut and driveway that is shared with the applicant, and the property has access to a 15' existing alley.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be denied.