

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Anne Fothergill, Case Manager  
*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** December 1, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 19131, 1711 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.

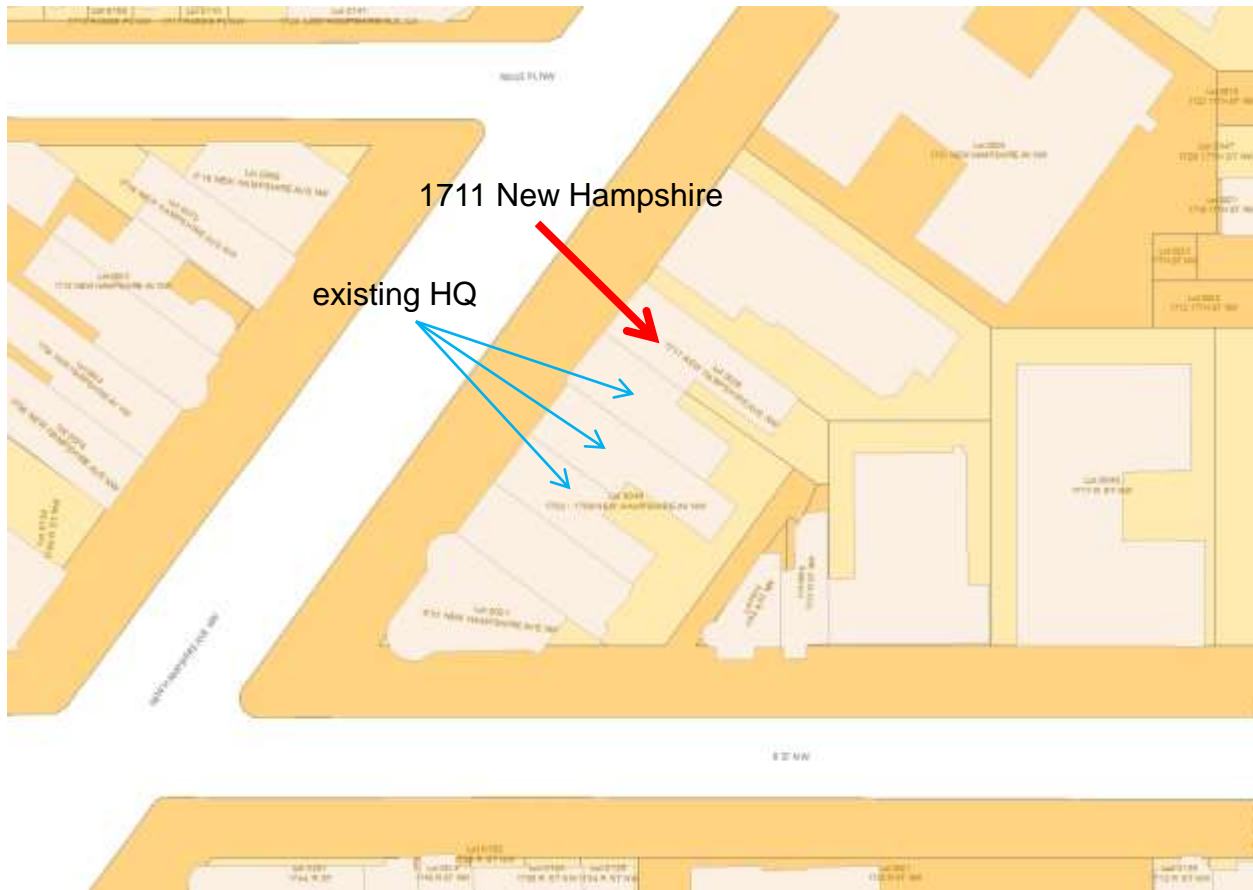
**I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

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

- § 217 - use of residential building for a nonprofit organization
- and the following variance relief:
- § 217.1(b) - gross floor area of the building less than 10,000 SF

**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1711 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
Legal Description	Square 0154, Lot 0026
Ward	2
Lot Characteristics	The lot is 25 feet wide and 92 feet deep on the north side and it is connected to a public alley at the rear.
Zoning	R-5-B – moderate height and density residential
Existing Development	Rowhouse dwelling, permitted in this zone.
Historic District	Dupont Circle Historic District
Adjacent Properties	The adjacent properties are four-story rowhouses to the south and a seven-story condominium building to the north. The headquarters of the non-profit organization, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., occupies the building to the south of the subject site. This adjacent building was three rowhouses that were combined into one office.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding blocks and neighborhood include many historic buildings with a mix of residential, office, embassy, hotel, institutional and commercial uses.



### III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant is proposing to expand their existing nonprofit organization's headquarters building by connecting to the adjacent rowhouse to the north.

### IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

The applicant has requested zoning relief from §§ 217 and 217.1(b) to allow the conversion of the residential building for a nonprofit organizational use.

#### **Special Exception Relief pursuant to §217**

217.1 The use of existing residential buildings and the land on which they are located by a nonprofit organization for the purposes of the nonprofit organization shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-1 District in the following instances if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section:

- (a) If the building is listed in the District of Columbia's Inventory of Historic Sites contained in the comprehensive statewide historic preservation survey and plan prepared pursuant to § 101(a) of

the National Historic Preservation Act, approved October 15, 1966 (80 Stat. 915, as amended; 16 U.S.C. § 470a), or, if the building is located within a district, site, area, or place listed on the District of Columbia's Inventory of Historic Sites;

The building is a contributing structure within the Dupont Circle Historic District.

- (b) If the gross floor area of the building in question, not including other buildings on the lot, is ten thousand square feet (10,000 ft.<sup>2</sup>) or greater;

The gross floor area of the building is 6,000 SF on the subject site, so it does not meet the 10,000 SF minimum requirement. The Applicant has requested variance relief from this requirement and OAG has confirmed that an Applicant can get a variance from § 217.1(b). The building will be connected to the adjacent 26,361 SF building, utilized by the same non-profit organization for a total building size of 32,361 SF.

- 217.2 Use of existing residential buildings and land by a nonprofit organization shall not adversely affect the use of the neighboring properties.

The proposed use of a nonprofit organization should not adversely affect use of neighboring properties. The nonprofit organization's headquarters currently occupies the adjacent building and the subject property would be an expansion of that office space. The Applicant currently has no plans to hire new employees but some of the current 45 employees will have their offices relocated in the subject property. ANC 2B supports the application (see Exhibit 27).

- 217.3 The amount and arrangement of parking spaces shall be adequate and located to minimize traffic impact on the adjacent neighborhood.

There will be no additional parking demand as a result of this building expansion. The subject property has two parking spaces and the adjacent building has 13 spaces for a total of 15 spaces for 45 employees. Many current employees take public transit and any future employees would be required to take public transit.

- 217.4 No goods, chattel, wares, or merchandise shall be commercially created, exchanged, or sold in the residential buildings or on the land by a nonprofit organization, except for the sale of publications, materials, or other items related to the purposes of the nonprofit organization.

No goods will be sold in the building.

- 217.5 Any additions to the building or any major modifications to the exterior of the building or to the site shall require the prior approval of the Board. The Board shall refer any proposed additions or modifications to the State Historic Preservation Officer, who, acting with the advice of the D.C. Professional Review Committee for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, shall provide the Board with a report to determine possible detrimental consequences that the proposed addition or modification may have on the architectural or historical significance of the building or site or district in which the building is located.

No addition is proposed for the building.

**Variance Relief from § 217.1(b)**

**i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty**

The subject property is less than the 10,000 SF that is required but it will be connected to the nonprofit organization's 26,361 SF headquarters in the adjacent building for a total combined building size of 32,361 SF, which would meet the Special Exception criteria. The size of the building creates a practical difficulty for meeting the Special Exception criteria except when combined with the adjacent buildings, which the Applicant proposes to do.

**ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good**

The proposed nonprofit organization's use of the residential building as an expansion of their adjacent headquarters building would not be detrimental to the public good. ANC 2B supports the application and finds that this organization "has been an excellent neighbor" with "residential-style landscaping." (see Exhibit 27)

**iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations**

The building is located between residential, hotel and office buildings and the proposed use would be an expansion of the existing organization headquarters, which has proven to be quiet and not create a lot of traffic, and the relief would not cause substantial harm to zoning regulations.

**V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

District Department of Transportation: At the time of this staff report, DDOT had not submitted a report.

**VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

ANC 2B approved a resolution to support the application for zoning relief (Exhibit 27).