

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW

DATE: September 13, 2010
FROM: Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner
ADDRESS: Tilden & Shoemaker Streets NW
APPLICATION: Curb cut, driveway, lead walk and steps

Site Information

Zone: FH-TSP/R-1-A
Historic District: Rock Creek Park Historic District
CFA: Yes
Neighborhood Character: Residential

Background:

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on August 4, 2010. A PDRM was held for the site in December 2009, at which time several issues were raised. The District sent a letter to NPS on February 17, 2010 to provide comments on the Environment Assessment for Pierce Mill. Historic Preservation Office staff and CFA have reviewed and approved the application.

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 curb cut, driveway, lead walk and steps for Pierce Mill on Tilden Street, NW, between Linnean Avenue and Rock Creek Parkway. The width of the driveway should be a maximum of 14'. District regulations only require a width of 14' for this type of driveway.

The block in which this property is located does not have an internal alley. Most of the surrounding blocks do not have alleys, the majority of properties do have curb cuts to the street, and very few do not have curb cuts.

OP raised the following issues on the Pierce Mill project in a letter to NPS in February 2010:

- A sidewalk is recommended along the north side of the new bus drop-off area, between the accessible parking spaces and Tilden Street
- The design of the bus drop-off area must leave enough space between the driveway and Tilden Street to allow for a future sidewalk and planting strip along Tilden Street

- Outstanding issues regarding a raised crosswalk or a pedestrian actuated signal across Tilden Street remain to be worked out with DDOT
- The existing and proposed multi-use trail along Rock Creek should have a minimum width of 10 feet as per AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities
- Bicycle parking should be added in multiple locations including areas adjacent to the multi-use trail near the existing kiosk, close to the main entrance of the barn, and across Tilden Street near the expanded parking lot
- A new section of multi-use trail along Rock Creek should be included in the plan to show where it will cross the site to join the existing multi-use trail
- Information on the expected volume of bus and vehicle traffic in the new bus turn around area should be expanded, as well as information on where buses will park after visitors are dropped off

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning discourages new curb cuts for existing properties that do not have them. However, this majority of blocks in this neighborhood do not have internal alleys. The proposed width of the curb cut should be a maximum of 14' in accordance with regulations.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved with the condition that the issues with DDOT have been resolved.