

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR



February 12, 2012

Marisa L. Stubbs, Director  
Food For Life  
801 North Carolina Avenue SE  
Washington, District of Columbia 20003

RE: Use of kitchen at Capitol Hill Methodist Church  
421 Seward Square, SE

Dear Ms. Stubbs:

You have requested a zoning determination from this Office regarding the use of the kitchen and multipurpose room located at Capitol Hill United Methodist Church (CHUMC), 421 Seward Square SE.

Based on the information you provided regarding Food For Life's ministry affiliation with the Care Company (CC), a Capitol Hill- based 501(c)3 ministry established by Christ Our Shepherd Church(COSC) , we understand that COSC and CC have been in ministry partnership with CHUMC to serve the local community. As you have explained, Food For Life's mission is to empower low-income young adults (ages 18-23) in Washington, D.C. to change their lives and communities by using food as a tool for training and education.

You have described Food For Life's proposed use of the kitchen and multipurpose room at CHUMC for cooking and related life skills and mentoring programs. According to you, the program will operate four days a week from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during which time then young adults will receive culinary instruction and prepare meals for sale to the community. You have advised that the meals will be sold to paying customers and the sales revenue from the meals is expected to cover one-third of Food For Life's 2012 budget and decrease reliance on charitable contributions. We understand that the youth that complete the twelve week program will receive a small stipend.

Based on the foregoing, this Office has determined that the proposed use is consistent with the activities of a church and that the use is subsumed under the current Certificate of Occupancy issued to CHUMC on July 20, 1966 (see attached). This letter serves as authorization of the Food For Life use of the kitchen and multipurpose room as described in this letter.

If you have any questions or we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Le Grant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Le Grant  
Zoning Administrator

Attachment

# **FOOD FOR LIFE**

**A ministry of CARE COMPANY**

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## **MISSION**

Food For Life (FFL) empowers low-income young adults (ages 18-23) in Washington, DC to change their lives and communities by using food as a tool for training and education.

## **OVERVIEW**

FFL is a culinary training and food education program that teaches unemployed young DC residents (ages 18-23) lacking educational and vocational options how to have productive and healthy lives. Through learning to prepare gourmet dinners for up to 60 prepaid customers, this social enterprise ensures that at-risk DC young adults have the skills, training, and social support needed to be successful as individuals and in their community. FFL takes a comprehensive approach to food by using it as a tool for (1) workforce development, (2) life skills training, (3) healthy lifestyles, and (4) community building. FFL's activities will be focused on 10 students per 12-week period, Tuesday through Thursday, 2-7pm.

## **OBJECTIVES**

A Food For Life graduate will receive:

1. Knowledge, skills, and experience in the culinary arts;
2. Knowledge, skills, and experience in making and preparing healthier food choices;
3. Assistance in finding and securing jobs;
4. Exposure to the wider food community and food justice issues that affect them personally;
5. Communication, teamwork, decision-making, and other life skills that improve their personal lives as well as prepare them for the workplace; and
6. A mentor relationship to provide additional accountability, direction, and support.

## **HISTORY**

In March 2011, FFL was incubated as a pilot program through Care Company (CC), a Capitol Hill-based 501(c)3 ministry established by Christ Our Shepherd Church (COSC) in SE, DC. The mission of CC and its programming is as follows:

*We seek to mobilize and provide resources for churches, communities, ministries and individuals seeking to serve the Lord and love our neighbors in Washington, DC. It is through connecting the community, service organizations, and local churches that a more cohesive ministry will be developed to the glory of God. Our goal is not to create something new, but to help provide a greater strength in our service by uniting our ideas, resources, and efforts.*

Since 2005, COSC and CC has been in ministry partnership with Capitol Hill United Methodist Church (CHUMC) to serve the local community. This relationship began through COSC/CC's participation in a weekly lunch to homeless neighbors established by CHUMC, a relationship that continues today. During one of these homeless lunches, a CHUMC member learned about the mission of FFL, its desire to reach poor/low-income young adults in the city, and the program's need for kitchen space. Because of (1) the prior relationship with CC, (2) the focus/reach of the program, and (3) that the kitchen space was not in use during proposed FFL hours, CHUMC leadership approved the request and FFL conducted its pilot program there from March to August 2011. Food For Life is currently in a planning phase to launch officially in 2012.

## **PROGRAM PLAN FOR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

As a nonprofit program, FFL will have a diversified funding base comprised of more traditional sources (individual donors, foundation grants, and special events) as well as developing revenue streams based on fulfilling its mission to educate and train unemployed and low-income young adults in Washington, DC. A major aspect of FFL's model is culinary training in the context of a food venture. FFL will advertise an upcoming menu online, and customers can purchase meals in advance and decide a pick-up date for Tuesday or Thursday. On those two days, from 2-6pm, 10 students will learn culinary job skills alongside a chef instructor and an assistant by producing up to 60 meals per day, which will be served fresh as meals to-go that night. Customers pick up these meals from 6-7pm, during which time students also learn customer service skills.

The sale of meals accomplishes three things: (1) it creates something valuable that people are willing to purchase, immediately giving students self-confidence and demonstrating to them that they are capable of successfully contributing to the community; (2) it teaches students how to produce to scale (a needed skill in the food industry) while minimizing waste; and (3) it provides a source of revenue to cover program costs. Sales revenue from meals covers one-third of Food For Life's project 2012 budget of \$139,000 and decreases FFL's reliance on charitable contributions.

Students participate in the training program for free, but they earn money based on meeting program requirements (for example, attendance, timely arrival, setting/meeting goals, completing assignments in a timely fashion) that prepare them for job sites.

## **KITCHEN SPACE**

The kitchen space at CHUMC, where FFL held its pilot program and desires to launch the next phase of its program, is currently located in a residential zone: **421 Seward Square, SE, Washington, DC 20003**. Students were positively impacted, and the meals. Based on the feedback from the CHUMC community, the participating students, and supporters who enjoyed the meals, the pilot phase demonstrated that both the model and the CHUMC kitchen space were viable options for the next stage of growth.

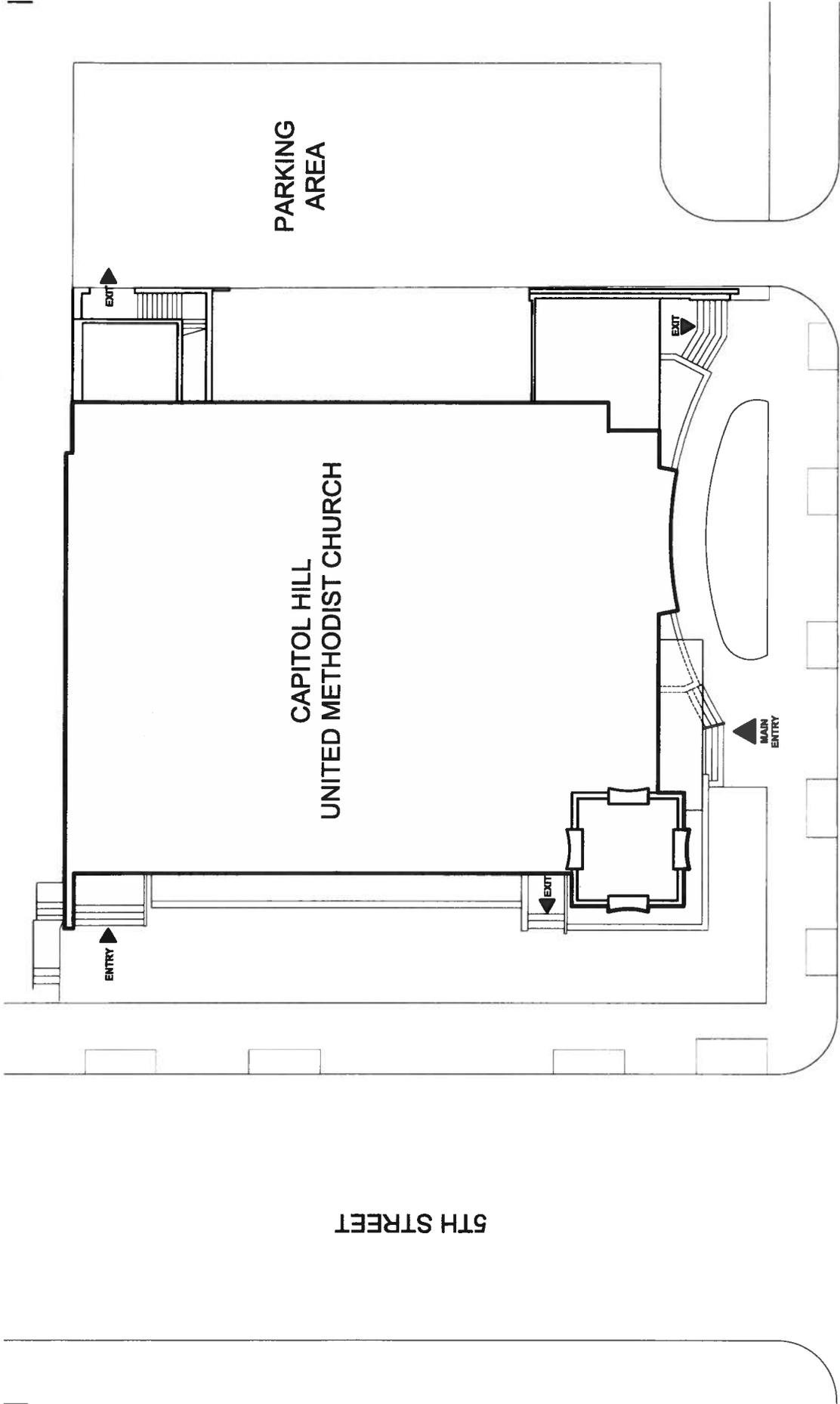
During the pilot, CHUMC asked FFL to consider pursuing commercialization in its kitchen space. FFL consulted with CHUMC leadership for how their space can be improved for CHUMC ministry and service to the community. Improvements to this space will not only benefit FFL, but also CHUMC and its ministry partners as they continue to serve breakfast daily and lunch weekly to homeless neighbors.

FFL needs an inspected commercial kitchen in order to fulfill its mission (empowering young adults through education and training) and program model (creating a sustainable organization by developing revenue streams through the sale of meals). However, pursuing a change from residential to commercial zoning indicates a level of operations that is misleading. FFL requests to pursue commercialization of the CHUMC kitchen space under current residential zoning. FFL will only serve up to 60 meals two times per week. However, this translates into a maximum of 20-25 customers picking up meals on-site, as our pilot program revealed that most customers order more than one meal.

Further, not all of FFL's programming revolves around meal sales. Twice a week students learn needed life skills/workforce readiness skills and build relationships/community through other activities. For this reason, FFL needs kitchen space that is also conducive to more traditional youth development work. The kitchen space at CHUMC helps us to meet all of these aims.

Finally, further assessment of the CHUMC kitchen space as an ideal site for FFL with minimal disruption for the local community and the church itself follows:

- Initial assessment of the work reveals **limited and specific upgrades/replacements** to surfaces and equipment in order for the CHUMC kitchen to meet DCRA codes. **This is not an expansion project.**
- The CHUMC parking lot means **minimal disruption of residential street parking** during the one-hour customer pick-up period.
- A separate service entrance for any necessary food deliveries as well students/ customer arrivals/departures **minimizes disruption to church programming.**
- Proposed **FFL program hours do not conflict with current church programming or space utilization.**
- The CHUMC kitchen and project scope fits within the framework of FFL's launch and program plan for the next 3-5 years. **For substantive program growth, FFL will seek separate kitchen space.**

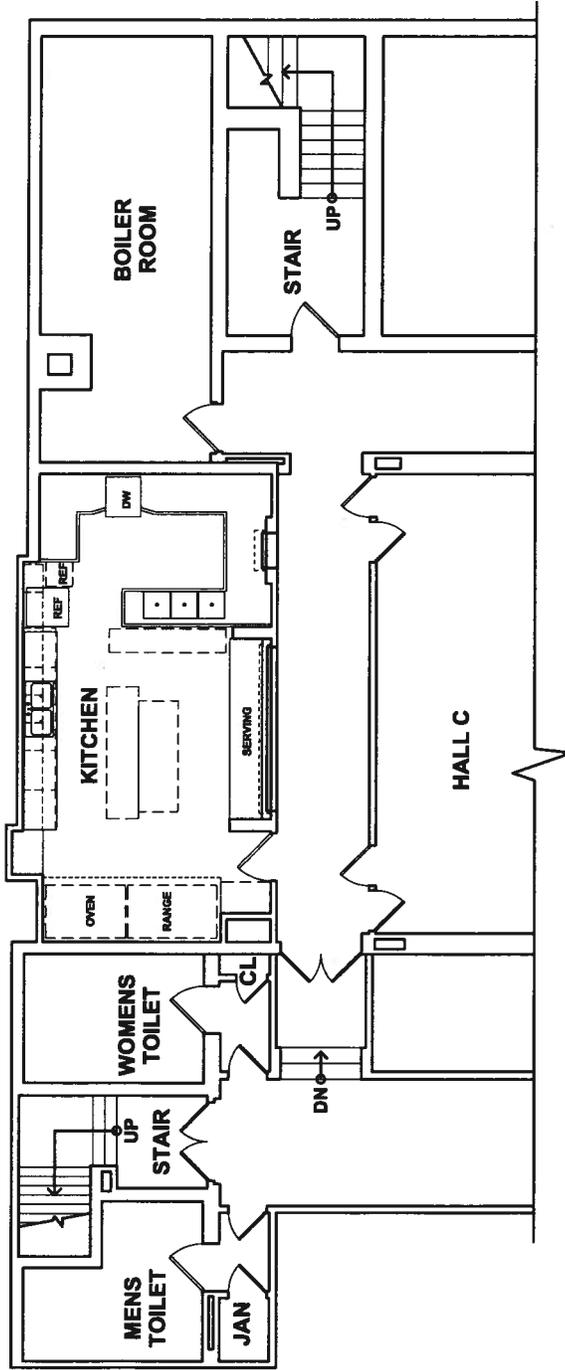


PARKING  
AREA

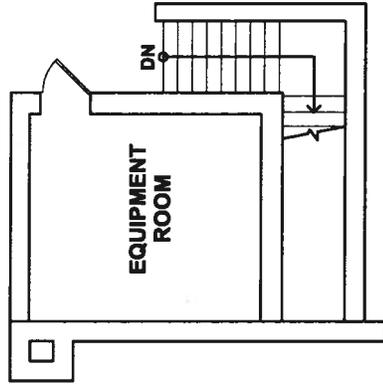
CAPITOL HILL  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5TH STREET

SEWARD SQUARE



PARTIAL GROUND LEVEL PLAN



PARTIAL LEVEL 1 PLAN

Form U-201

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

No. B 56805

Washington, D.C.

JUL 7 20TH 19 56

BOARD OF TRUSTEES,

Permission is hereby granted to CAPITOL HILL METHODIST CHURCH

to use the ALL 4 BASEMENT (floor(s) of the building located on Lot A, B, C, D ~~8728X~~ Square 020 & 819

known as premises 424 SEWARD SQUARE, S. E. for the following

purpose(s): CHURCH & SUNDAY SCHOOL

THIS CERTIFICATE SHALL BE POSTED CONSPICUOUSLY ON THE ABOVE PREMISES AT ALL TIMES. IT IS VALID INDEFINITELY, unless an expiration date is stated, ONLY for the premises, or part thereof, and for the purposes, indicated above, and IS NOT TRANSFERABLE to another person or premises under ANY conditions. ANY CHANGE in the type of business, ownership of business, or part of premises used, therefor, will render this Certificate VOID and a NEW Certificate must be obtained.

DEPT. OF LICENSES & INSPECTIONS, GOVT. OF DIST. OF COL.

ZONE

R-4

FEE \$

12.00

Chief, Permit Branch

*Mary H. ...*  
Permit Clerk

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