

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

**FROM:** Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager  
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

**DATE:** December 6, 2011

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 18288 - request for special exception relief under § 223 to construct an addition to an existing semi-detached dwelling at 3127 P Street, N.W.

**I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception relief pursuant to § 223:

- § 401, Lot Area (3,000 square feet required, 2,530 square feet existing);
- § 401, Lot Width (30 feet required, 23 feet existing);
- § 403, Side Yard (8 feet required, 2.7 feet proposed);
- § 405, Lot Occupancy (40 percent permitted, 56.3 percent proposed); and
- § 2001.3, Extension of Nonconformity.

**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

|                                    |                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address                            | 3127 P Street, N.W.                                                                                    |
| Legal Description                  | Square 1270, Lot 12                                                                                    |
| Ward                               | 2                                                                                                      |
| Lot Characteristics                | Rectangular lot with no alley access                                                                   |
| Zoning                             | R-3 – row dwellings                                                                                    |
| Existing Development               | Semi-detached dwelling, permitted in this zone                                                         |
| Historic District                  | Georgetown                                                                                             |
| Adjacent Properties                | East, West and South: One-family residential dwellings<br>North: Semi-detached dwelling on a large lot |
| Surrounding Neighborhood Character | Moderate density residential                                                                           |

**III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION IN BRIEF**

|           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Applicant | Diane and Scott Bassett |
|-----------|-------------------------|

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT**  
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

EXHIBIT NO.

18288  
29



|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Proposal      | <p>Construction of a two-story plus basement rear addition and a third floor addition atop an existing two-story addition at the rear of the semi-detached dwelling. The addition at the rear would provide a 5.34-foot wide east side yard, and the existing 5-foot wide east side yard provided by the existing rear addition would be continued by the proposed third-floor addition. The 2.7-foot wide side yard on the east side of the original portion of the dwelling would continue as it has since the building was constructed in 1900.</p> <p>The existing record lot predates the adoption of the 1958 Zoning Regulations, and is nonconforming for area and lot width. The subject application would have no effect on the existing lot dimensions.</p> |
| Relief Sought | § 223 - Additions to a One-Family Dwellings or Flats                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

#### IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS

| R-3 Zone               | Regulation                | Existing      | Proposed      | Relief        |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Height § 400           | 40 ft. max.               | 26.3 ft.      | 31.16 ft.     | None Required |
| Lot Width § 401        | 30 ft. min.               | 23 ft.        | 23 ft.        | Required      |
| Lot Area § 401         | 3,000 sq. ft. min.        | 2,530 sq. ft. | 2,530 sq. ft. | Required      |
| Floor Area Ratio § 401 | None prescribed           | --            | --            | None Required |
| Lot Occupancy § 403    | 40 % max./<br>70% by S.E. | 48 %          | 56.3 %        | Required      |
| Rear Yard § 404        | 20 ft. min.               | 43 ft.        | 31.2 ft.      | None Required |
| Side Yard § 405        | 8 ft. min.                | 2.7 ft.       | 2.7 ft.       | Required      |

#### V. OP ANALYSIS

##### 223 ZONING RELIEF FOR ADDITIONS TO ONE-FAMILY DWELLINGS OR FLATS (R-1) AND FOR NEW OR ENLARGED ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

*223.1 An addition to a one-family dwelling or flat, in those Residence districts where a flat is permitted, or a new or enlarged accessory structure on the same lot as a one-family dwelling or flat, shall be permitted even though the addition or accessory structure does not comply with all of the requirements of §§ 401, 403, 404, 405, 406, and 2001.3 shall be permitted as a special exception if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.*

Semi-detached dwellings are a permitted use in this zone. The applicant is requesting special exception relief under § 223 from the requirements of §§ 401, 403, 405 and 2001.3.

*223.2 The addition or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse affect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:*

*(a) The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected;*

The proposed building addition would extend out from the existing building into the rear yard by approximately 10.5 feet, or a distance similar to the rear addition of the adjacent property to the east. Although the addition would extend out beyond the rear wall of the dwelling to the west, it would only have a minimal effect on light and air and no effect on the afternoon sun to adjoining properties to either the east or west. The lot to the north is a

minimum rear yard as required would be provided by the subject property. Therefore, light and air available to neighboring properties would not be unduly affected.

- (b) *The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised;*

The proposed building addition would have no windows on the west side of the building. Windows would be provided on the east side and set back a minimum of five feet from the side lot line, but only on the first and second floors of the addition to minimize views into the rear yard of the adjoining property to the east, which has no windows facing the subject property. The third floor addition would also be set back 10.5 feet from the rear wall of the building, further restricting views into adjoining rear lots.

Windows would be provided on the north side of the building addition. However, the rear yard provided would be in excess of the minimum requirement, protecting the property to the north. Therefore, privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties would not be unduly compromised.

- (c) *The addition or accessory structure, together with the original building, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, shall not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the subject street frontage; and*

The proposed building addition would be minimally visible from 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. It would be similar to the existing character, scale and pattern of houses of houses along this block of P Street. Therefore, it would not visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses.

- (d) *In demonstrating compliance with paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this subsection, the applicant shall use graphical representations such as plans, photographs, or elevation and section drawings sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed addition or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

The applicant submitted plans, photographs, and elevation and section drawings sufficient to document the relationship of the proposed addition to adjacent buildings.

- 223.3 *The lot occupancy of all new and existing structures on the lot shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) in the R-1 and R-2 Districts or seventy percent (70%) in the R-3, R-4, and R-5 Districts.*

The proposed lot occupancy is 56.3 percent, less than the maximum 70 percent permitted within the R-3 zone.

- 223.4 *The Board may require special treatment in the way of design, screening, exterior or interior lighting, building materials, or other features for the protection of adjacent and nearby properties.*

The Office of Planning does not recommend any special treatments.

- 223.5 *This section may not be used to permit the introduction or expansion of a nonconforming use as a special exception.*

The application proposes the construction of a building addition to a semi-detached dwelling. No introduction or expansion of a nonconforming use is proposed.

## VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2E voted to support the application at its regularly scheduled meeting of November 1, 2011.

The adjoining neighbor to the east at 3129 P Street, N.W. submitted a letter to file in support of the application.

The proposal was approved by the Old Georgetown Board and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) at the CFA meeting of June 16, 2011.

## **VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

No comments were received from other District agencies.

Attachment: Location Map

