

Board of Zoning Appeals
Hearing for Variance
1751 18th St, NW
January 15, 2013

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BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 18487
EXHIBIT NO. 28

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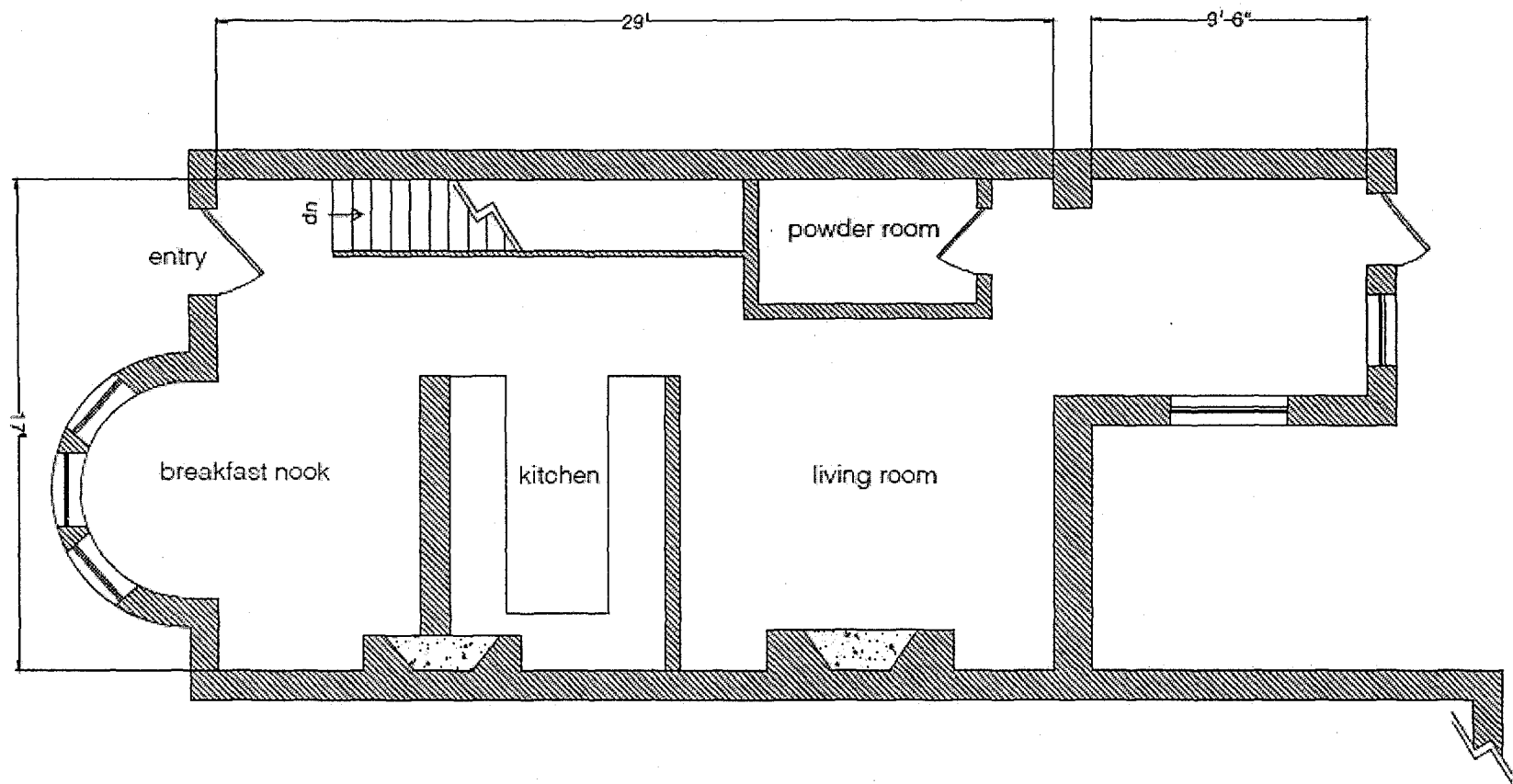
Who We Are

- Jonathan has lived in Dupont Circle since 1992
- Bought 1753 18th St, NW (lot 096) in 2001
- Married Michelle in 2005
- Together, bought 1751 18th, NW (lot 095) in 2006 in anticipation of starting a family; sold lot 096
- Now live with our dog Fritz and our daughters Chloe (5 y/o) and Isabelle (3/yo), both of whom attend DCPS (Ross Elementary 2 blocks away)
- Ground floor (1BR apt) rented to a young couple

Practical Problems With Our Home

- No dining room
 - Breakfast nook only comfortably seats 4 adults
- Living room only can accommodate 4 people
 - Limited natural light from rear (East)
- Small galley kitchen
- 7 ½ x 9 ½ room in back is practically useless
- Poor outdoor space
 - 2nd floor deck is too small to be of practical use
 - Patio at grade is rendered unusable by rats and flies attracted to adjacent multifamily garbage
- Master bath is very small (stall shower)

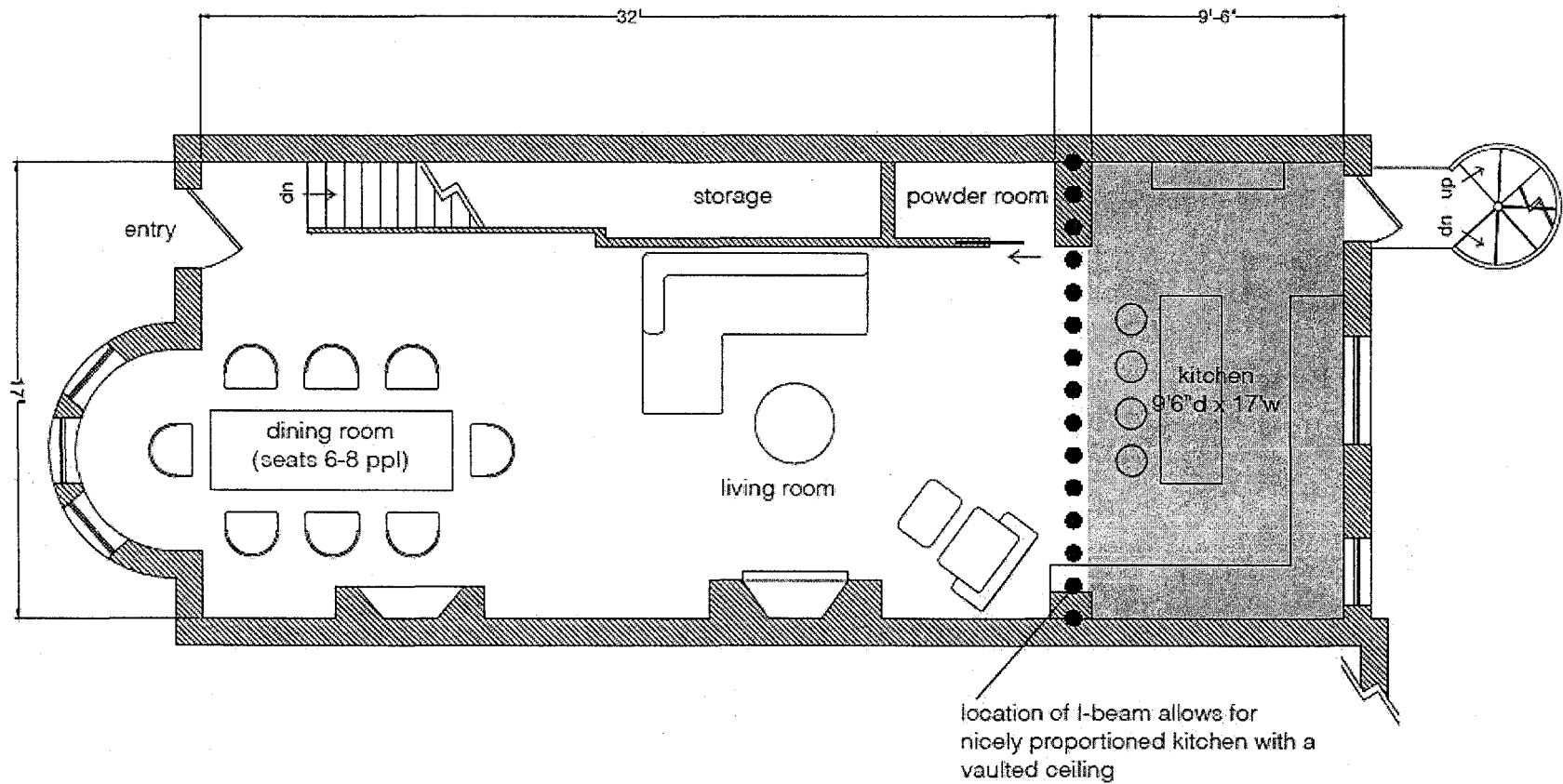
Existing 1st Floor



What We Propose to Do

- 1st Fl: Move back wall 3 ft and fill in “L”
 - Moderately-sized kitchen (9.5 ft deep) with island for informal dining; vaulted ceiling maximizes light
 - Living room to accommodate 6 adults
 - Dining room that comfortably seats 8, and can be expanded into living room for special occasions
- 2nd floor: Move wall back 3 ft and expand deck
 - Expand master bath to include bathtub
 - Deck expanded to width of house to provide usable outdoor space

Proposed 1st Floor



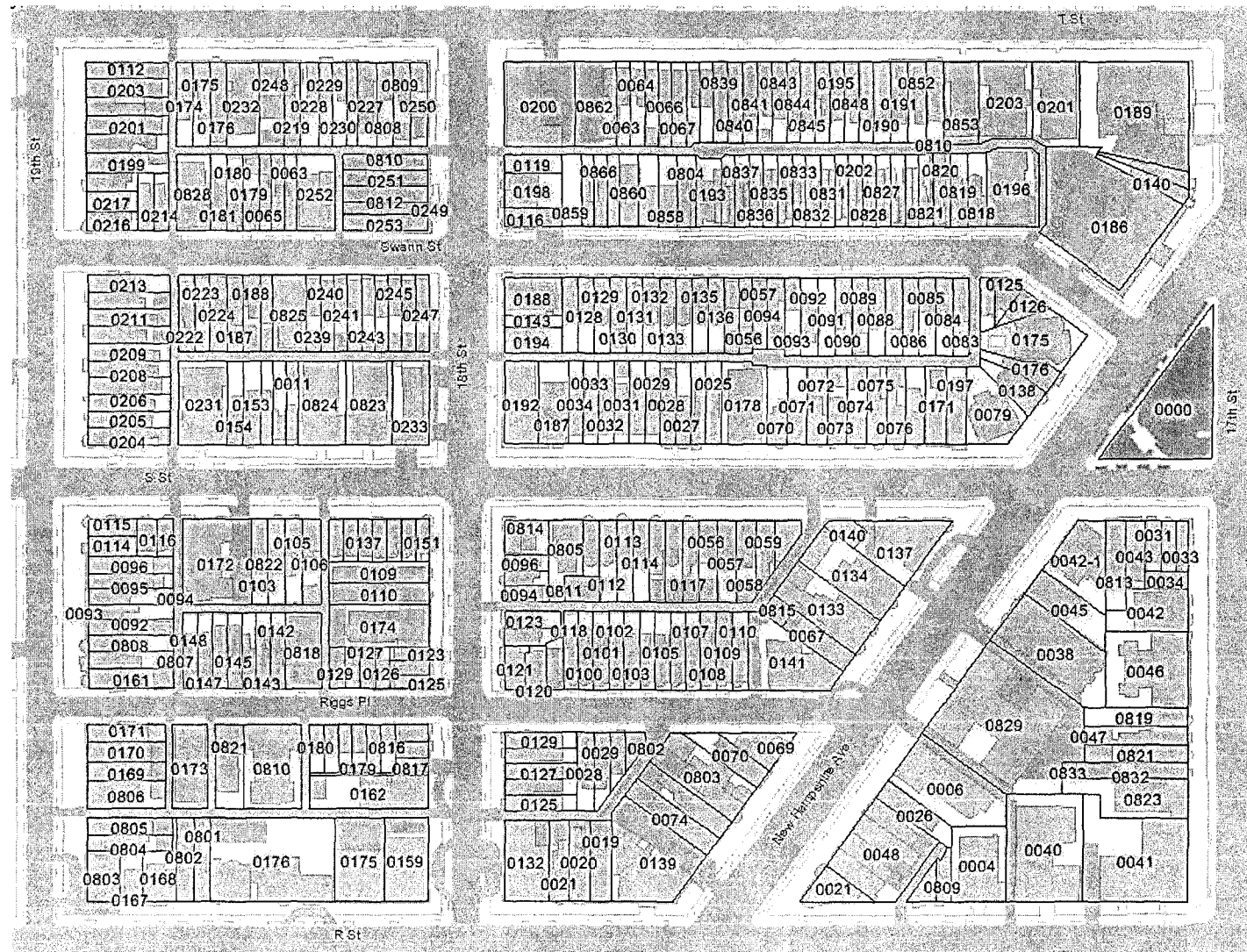
Variances Sought

- Increase lot occupancy from 79% to 90% (§402.4)
 - Move rear wall back 3 ft & filling in “L”
- Increase FAR from 2.03 to 2.4 (§403.2)
 - Above plus move 2nd floor wall back 3 ft and build deck over new 1st floor
- Reduce rear setback from 10 ft to 7 ft (§404.1)
 - Rear wall moves back 3 ft
 - Rear door landing / circular stairway accounts for 6ft
- Increasing nonconforming aspects (§2001.3)

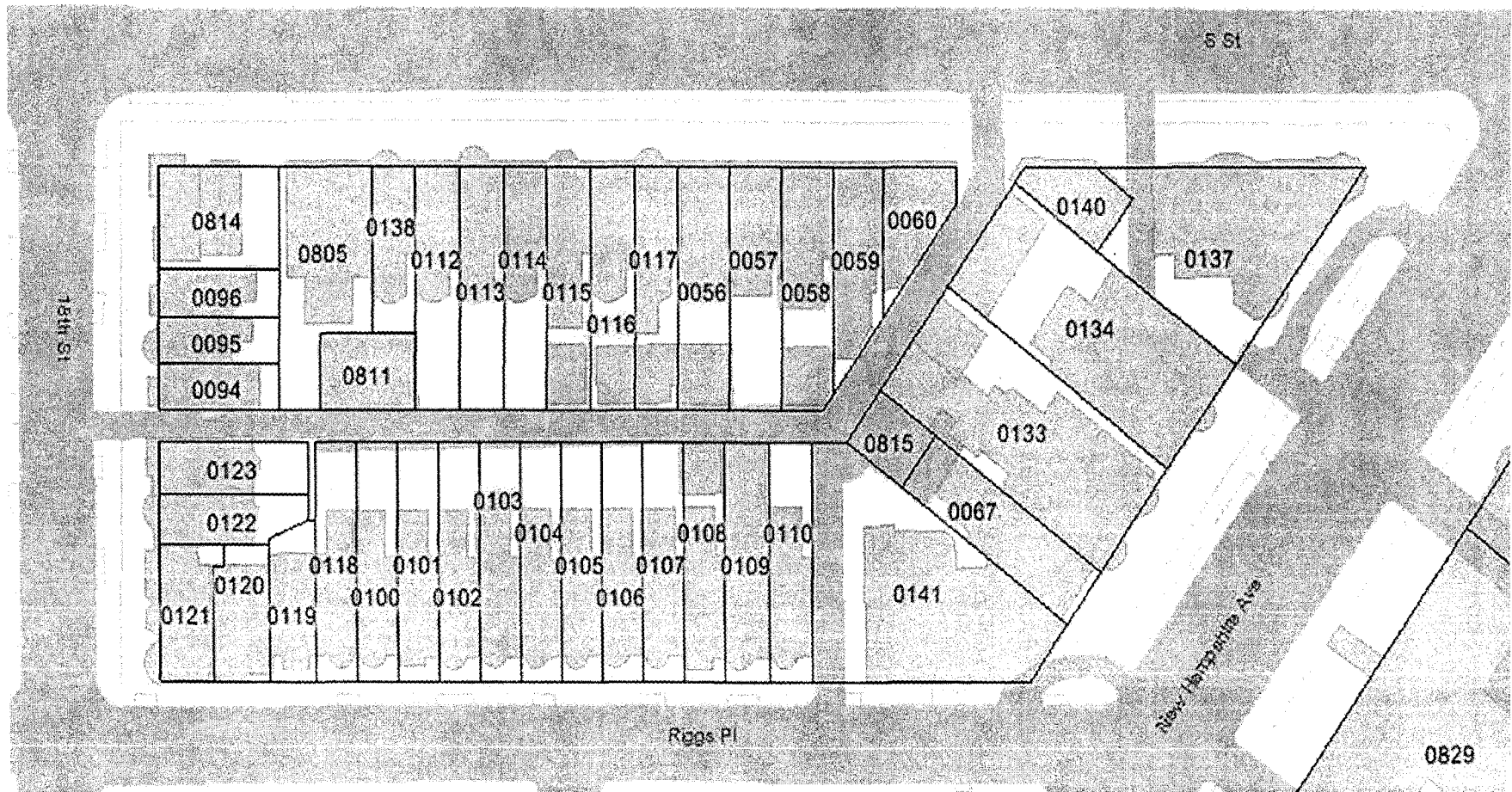
Standard for Variance - Uniqueness

- We have a uniquely small house on a uniquely small lot
- Majority of houses in the neighborhood: N/S orientation; 90 ft lot abutting alley
- Our house: E/W orientation; 52 ft; no alley
 - One of 6 smallest lots on square
 - Lots 801, 140 and 060 are odd and have 100% occupancy
 - Lot 094 already has lot occupancy equal to what we seek and FAR significantly in excess of what we seek
 - Lot 096 has lot occupancy and FAR in excess of ours
- We likely have the smallest house on the entire square

Our Neighborhood



Square 153



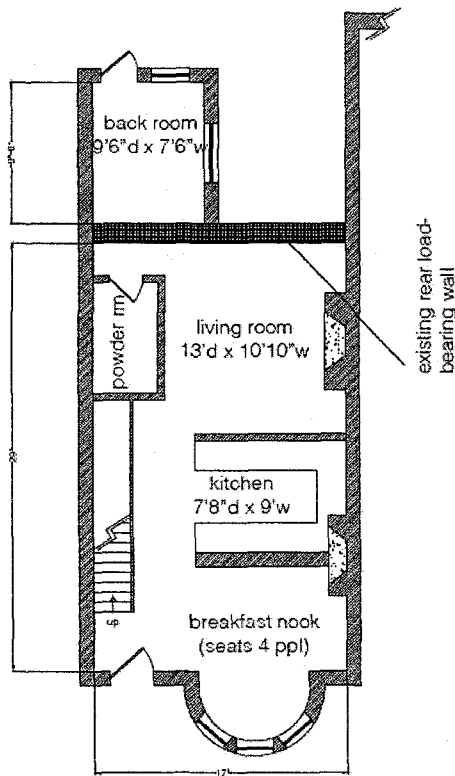
Standard for Variance – Practical Difficulties w/o Variance

- Current dimensions of the 1st floor only allows for a very small living room, a galley kitchen, a cramped breakfast nook and a powder room
 - 7 ½ x 9 ½ room in back is practically useless
- Limited natural light from rear
- 2nd floor deck is too small (8 x 10) to be of practical use
- Patio is infested by rats and flies from neighbor's garbage
- Master bath is only approx 52 sq. ft, which only allows for a stall shower
- We cannot add ANY living space without a variance
- We cannot achieve any of our goals of providing an adequately sized living area for our family on the ground floor unless we expand the footprint of our house by a modest amount

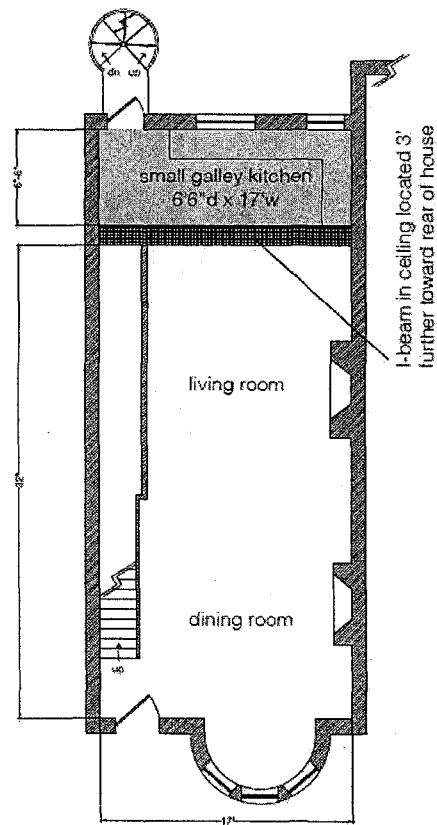
Practical Difficulties with Alternative Proposed by Office of Planning

- OP does not oppose “filling in the L,” but does oppose moving rear wall of 1st floor back 3 feet
- Extra 3 feet is necessary because 1 beam to support 2nd floor back wall (over existing 1st floor) requires soffit beneath it and support columns on north and south walls that will project into the house
 - Creates natural room break that can be built into wall/threshold separating the living room and powder room from the kitchen
 - Without moving rear wall back 3 feet, kitchen depth would only be 6.5 feet, which is insufficient for cabinets, appliances and small island
 - Deck would also be overly rectangular (18 x 7)
 - Kitchen reduction 9.5 to 6.5 ft also vastly reduces both aesthetic and practical impact of vaulted ceiling

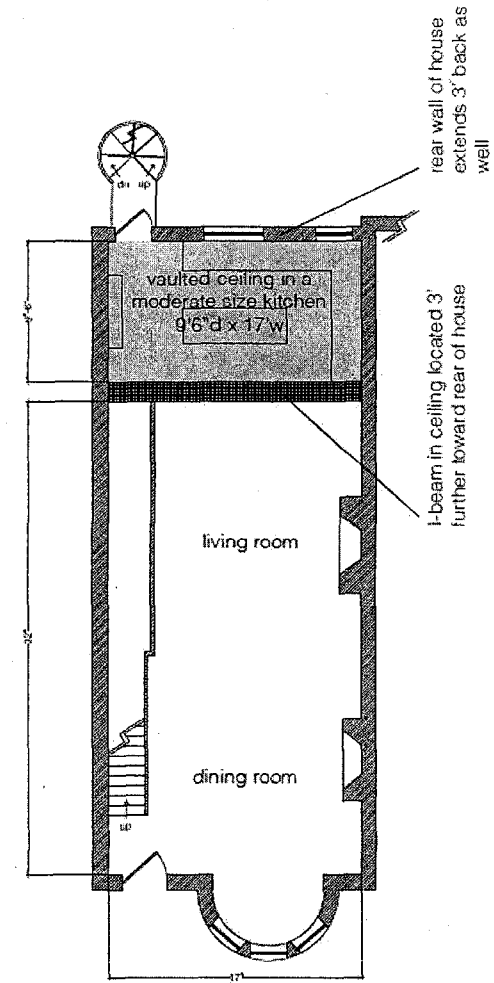
Practical Difficulties with OP Alternative



existing ceiling plan
1/8" scale



problematic ceiling plan
1/8" scale



proposed ceiling plan
1/8" scale

Standard for Variance – No Detriment to Public Good

- Does not diminish any neighbor's light, air or view
 - Proposed stepped levels maximize flow of light and air
- No material change to view from any public space
- Improves aesthetics
 - Replaces 70s style sunroom with brick exterior
- Letters of support from both next door neighbors – 094 and 096 – and other properties within view 814, 811, 123
- Unanimous support of the Dupont ANC

Standard for Variance – No Detriment to Intent/Purpose/Integrity of Zoning Regs.

- House predated R5B zoning plan; became nonconforming upon enactment
- Use (2 unit flat) remain consistent with R5B
- 7 ft setback from adjacent multifamily parking lot is adequate
- Light and air adequate given stepped floors and neighboring properties
- Goals of the District include providing additional housing stock for families; this modest addition would make our home better suited for a family
- Regulations were written with the typical property in mind and not uniquely shaped and sized properties like ours