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District of Columbia
Office of Planning



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: October 22, 2013

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18646: Application of 3053 Q Street LLC, pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3103.2, for a variance from the nonconforming structure provisions under subsection 2001.3, to allow the expansion of the existing fourth floor of a one-family dwelling not meeting the number of stories limitation in the R-1-B District (§ 400) at premises 3053 Q Street, N.W. (Square 1282, Lot 863).

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following variance request for the proposed expansion of the existing fourth floor of the residence at 3053 Q Street, N.W:

- § 400, number of stories (maximum 3, 4 existing); and
- § 2001.3, addition to an existing nonconforming structure

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	3053 Q Street, N.W
Legal Description	Square 1282, Lot 863
Ward	2
Lot Characteristics	Irregularly shaped lot, which has a gradient rise from the front to the rear. The lot has no alley access from the rear. There is a 15-foot wide unimproved alley access abutting the east property line.
Zoning	R-1-B: Low density residential.
Existing Development	Single family semi-detached row dwelling, constructed around 1956.
Historic District	Georgetown Historic District
Adjacent Properties	To the East: 15-foot wide private driveway of the large flag-shaped lot (Lot 0869) which fronts on Avon Lane. West: Adjacent row homes. Across 31 st Street – Row homes and small apartment buildings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The immediate neighborhood is primarily developed with single-family residential homes and a few mid-sized apartment buildings.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18646

EXHIBIT NO. 27

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III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant, 3053 Q Street, LLC proposes renovation of the single-family home, including the expansion of the fourth floor with a bedroom unit, consistent with the Old Georgetown Board's approval (O.G. 13-184; H.P.A. 13-307).

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and REQUESTED RELIEF

R-1-B Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height, stories § 400	40-foot max		39' 3"	Relief required
Lot Width § 401	50 ft	20.6 ft.	20.6 ft.	Existing nonconformity
Lot Area § 401	5,000 sf.	2,045 sf.	2,045 sf.	Existing nonconformity
Lot Occupancy § 403.2	40% (50% SE)	40%	40%	None required
Enlargements or additions to nonconforming structures § 2001.3	a) The structure shall conform to percentage of lot occupancy requirements, except as provided in § 2001.13, and	40%	40%	None required
	b) The addition or enlargement itself shall:	Residential	Residential	None required
	(1) Conform to use and structure requirements; and (2) Neither increase or extend any existing, nonconforming aspect of the structure; nor create any new nonconformity of structure and addition combined.	Number of stories (4) (as above)	Number of stories (4) (as above)	Required as above

The semi-detached row structure is a nonconforming structure in the R-1-B District, which is predominantly developed with single-family detached dwellings. The Zoning Administrator confirmed with OP that the existing structure has a 4th floor since it is well above 6 feet in height.

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Variance Relief: § 400, # of stories and § 2001.3 Addition to a nonconforming structure

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The existing 4-story home built in 1956 is a semidetached row structure on an irregularly shaped lot, which narrows from the property line on Q Street at 29 feet wide to 10 feet wide at the rear. In addition, the rear yard is approximately 8 feet higher than the front of the home. Thus, the combination of the lot's dimension and gradient is an exceptional situation, whereby there is little area for a meaningful rear addition. Further, any redesign which involved the use of the basement would effectively remove the garage space from within the building, and would require additional relief from the off-street parking requirement.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good



The one-room addition which would expand the existing 4th floor would not be detrimental to the public good, since it would not:

- extend to the full length of the 4th floor, thereby reducing potential shadows to the apartment building to the east or the residence to the west;
- extend beyond the abutting property's west elevation, which currently extends beyond the rear wall of the subject property; and
- impact the neighborhood's character as viewed from the street as the building's north

elevation as viewed from the street would not be altered. Similarly, the availability of light and air and privacy to the abutting residence and to neighboring properties would not be adversely impacted.

The Old Georgetown Board and The Commission of Fine Arts had no objection to the concept design for the proposed rear addition at the fourth floor, as stated at its July 18th, 2013 public meeting (O.G. 13-184; H.P.A. 13-307).

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The lot's existing nonconformities related to its dimensions and structure predate the current Zoning Regulations. The expansion on the 4th floor would preserve the existing lot occupancy as required under § 2001.3 (a), and would remain in conformance with the use and structure requirements as a residence (§ 2001.3 (b (1))). In this case, the addition to the existing 4th floor would be preferred in this neighborhood, since it would maintain the off-street parking requirement for the residence, without need for relief.

Therefore, grant of the requested variance relief would allow the renovation or contemporary upgrade to the nonconforming residence as anticipated by the regulations. There would be no substantial harm to the Zoning Regulations.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The proposal received unanimous support by ANC 2E, at its regularly scheduled meeting of September 30, 2013. The letter has been submitted to the record.

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No comments were received from other District agencies.

Attachment: Location Map

