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MEMORANDUM



TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen Cochran, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: January 7, 2014

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18689

EXHIBIT NO. 23

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18689: 1620 A Street, S.E. – Square 1085, Lot 801

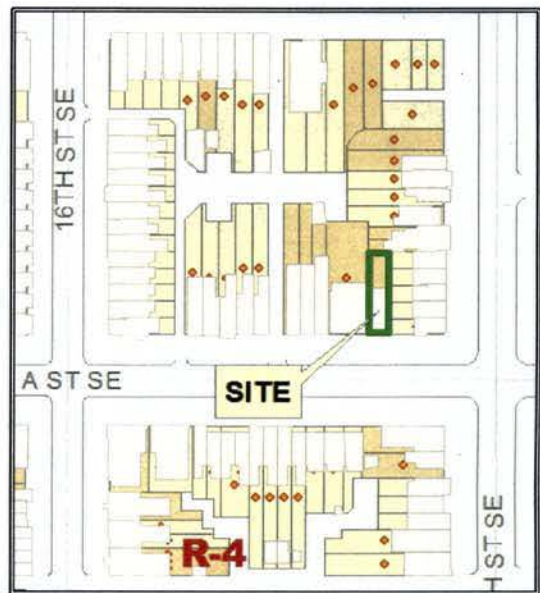
I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends the Board **approve** the following requested area variance relief for the proposed replacement of an R-4 zoned two story semi-detached commercial/residential structure, without parking, with a two-household flat, also without parking.

- § 2101.1 Required Parking Spaces (one required; none proposed).

The applicant's original proposed plans would have required closed court relief for spaces created by the proposed rear deck and stairways. The plans have since been revised to eliminate the need for such relief.

OP notes that the site does not meet the minimum lot dimensions specified in § 401.3. However, the Zoning Administrator has determined that no lot dimensional relief is necessary.



II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION



Address: 1620 A Street, SE	Legal Description: Square 1085, Lot 801	Zone: R-4	Ward/ANC: 6B
Owner: Hong Deng & Lixin Pan	Agent: Will Teass, AIA	Historic District: None	
Lots:	Rectangular 20 ft. by 80 ft. pre-1958 lot, without a rear alley		
Existing Development:	2-story semi-detached building with grocery on 1 st floor, unoccupied residential space on 2 nd floor, and no parking.		
Adjacent Properties:	West: 2 story apartment bldg.; East: 3-story flat		
Neighborhood Character:	Mix of two and 3 story row houses, small apartments buildings and flats		
Project Description: Demolish existing semi-detached structure. Construct two-unit row house with no parking.			



III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant plans to demolish a two-story semi-detached structure that has a certificate of occupancy for a grocery store on the first floor and has an unoccupied apartment on the second floor. This would be replaced with three-story-plus-cellar flat that would extend from lot-line to lot-line. Each unit would have three bedrooms. The lot does not have alley access.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTED RELIEF

R-4	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Area (sf)	1800 sf	1600 sf	No change	Not required by Zoning Administrator
Lot Width (ft.)	18 ft.	20 ft.	No change	None
Height (ft.) § 400	40 ft. & 3 stories max.	2 stories	38 ft. 7 in., 3 stories	None
§ 402.4 FAR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
§ 403 Lot Occupancy	60% max.	55.2%	60%	none
§ 404.1Rear Yard (ft.)	20 ft.	36 ft. 8 in.	28 ft.	none
§ 405Side Yard (ft.)	If provided, at least 8 ft. wide	2.3 feet	none	none
§ 406.1 Open Court Width (ft.),	If provided, at least 10 feet	none	none	none
§ 406.1 Closed Court, if provided	If provided, at least 15 ft. wide & 350 sf	none	None*	none
Parking	1	0	0	1

* REVISED PLANS ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR OPEN COURT RELIEF

V. OP ANALYSIS

In order to be granted a variance, the applicant must show that the application meets the three part test described in §3103:

1. **Does the property exhibit specific uniqueness with respect to exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape, topography or other extraordinary or exceptional situations or conditions that;**
2. **Imposes a practical difficulty which is unnecessarily burdensome to the applicant?**

The applicant has demonstrated that the lot does not have alley access. To provide on-site parking it would be necessary to secure a new curb cut and to construct either an interior garage or reduce the width of the twenty-foot building frontage by approximately 12 feet, to a depth of at least 16 feet, to accommodate a driveway. Of the 53 lots in Square 1085, 11 do not have alley access. While

the absence of an alley is not, in and of itself, an exceptional situation, when that condition is combined with the District Department of Transportation's indication that a curb cut would not be permitted, the absence of an alley does constitute an exceptional condition that would impose a practical difficulty on the applicant if the relief were not granted.

3. Can the relief be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent, purpose and integrity of the Zoning Regulations and Map?

Yes. The absence of a parking space on a site that is three blocks from the Stadium-Armory Metro station would not significantly deviate from the established character of the moderate density neighborhood. The relief would not substantially impair the zoning regulations. There would be no difference between the amount of parking required, and not supplied, between the existing structure and use, and the proposed structure and use.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The site is not a landmark and is not located within a historic district.

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has indicated to OP that it would not likely approve a curb cut at the subject site.

In an e-mail to OP dated December 13, 2013, the Zoning Administrator determined that "A request for BZA relief from parking, or some other non-lot related zoning standard, does not trigger the need for minimum lot size relief. Only if the lot was never developed or is being created via a subdivision, does relief from minimum lot size come into play."

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC6B voted unanimously to support the requested relief on December 16, 2013.