

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
 JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: March 24, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18958 - Expedited request pursuant to DCMR 11 § 3118 for special exception relief under § 223 to construct an addition to an existing single-family dwelling at 119 Varum Street, NW.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- § 405.3 (8 feet required, 0 feet proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	119 Varum Street, NW
Legal Description:	Square 3321, Lot 0007
Ward:	4/ ANC 4C
Lot Characteristics:	Flat rectangular lot with rear alley access.
Zoning:	R-5-A –single family dwellings.
Existing Development:	Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached and semi-detached dwellings and, with the approval of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, new residential development of low density residential uses including row houses, flats, and apartments.
Adjacent Properties:	Predominantly row dwellings and small apartment buildings opposite the subject property.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION IN BRIEF

Applicant	Patrick L Scott and Michael Sebastiani
Proposal	The project includes the renovation of a single-family home, including demolition of an existing rear two-story addition. A new rear two-story addition with a first floor screened porch, kitchen and second floor bedroom would be constructed as part of the home's renovation.

Board of Zoning Adjustment

Relief Sought:	§223 - Additions to a One-Family Dwellings or Flats, not meeting the side yard under Section 405.3.
----------------	---

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS

R-5-A Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief:
Height (ft.) § 400	40 ft. max.	23.75 ft (rear façade)	21 ft. (roof eave)	None required
Lot Width (ft.) § 401	None prescribed	20 ft.	20 ft.	None required
Lot Area (sq.ft.) § 401	None prescribed	3,100 sf	3,100 sf	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 401	0.9	0.72	0.83	None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	40 % max.	27.7%.	29.8 %	None required
Rear Yard (ft.) § 404	20 ft. min.	84.6 ft.	74.7 ft.	None required
Side Yard (ft.) § 405.3	8 ft. min.	0 ft.	0 ft.	Relief required
Court § 406	6 ft. min.	Not provided	None proposed	None 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.*

Single-family dwellings are a permitted use in this zone. The Applicant is requesting special exception relief under § 223 from the requirements of §405.3.

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 two-story rear addition would not be higher than what currently exists at the rear and it would align with the rear of the homes to the east and west. The existing separation between the residences to the east and west would be maintained. While the covered porch would extend beyond the rear of the abutting residences, the porches would

¹ Information provided by applicant.

be screened with a mesh, so as not to unduly obstruct the light and air available to the rear yards of the neighboring properties.

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

No change in the privacy of use and enjoyment of the neighboring properties is anticipated beyond what currently exists. The applicant's plans include the installation of privacy fencing along the lengths of the east and west property lines, which would replace the existing chain link fencing separating the neighboring properties, as shown in the submitted photos. No windows are proposed on the second level of the addition. Only one window at the first floor is proposed in the area of the new kitchen and the adjacent neighbor (#127 Varum St.) has not objected to this feature. (Letter of Support – Exhibit #7 of the record.)

- (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 rear addition would not be visible from the Varum Street frontage. As designed its massing would not be out of scale with the rear additions on neighboring properties. Letters in support from abutting neighbors to the west at 127 Varum Street and east at 117 Varum Street are submitted to the record.

- (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 satisfied this provision with the submission of the required plans and photographs. (Exhibit #6 of the record)

- 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 lot occupancy is proposed to be increased from 27.7% to 29.8%, which would remain within the required limits for the R-5-A District.

- 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.*

No additional treatment to the design or screening beyond that proposed should be necessary.

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

The existing single-family home is a permitted use in the R-5-A District.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Adjacent neighbors have submitted letters in support of the proposed renovation and are included in the record as Exhibits #7 and #8.

The plans were also presented to the ANC Commissioner-Elect 4C 10 (Ms. Kathleen Crowley) and a letter in support is shown as Exhibit #9 of the record. At the writing of this report, the ANC's recommendation based on a quorum has not been submitted to the record.