



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Maxine Brown-Roberts, Project Manager
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: April 7, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA #18973 – 508 Rhode Island Avenue, NW

I. APPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Pouria Saidi and Gholam Paknejad (Applicant) requests variance relief pursuant to § 3103.2 and § 2101.1, Parking, for a three unit apartment.

- § 2101 Parking (1 space per 2 units required; zero proposed).

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the variance relief. OP notes that the property is currently non-conforming to lot occupancy. No additions or demolitions are proposed which would change the existing condition relating to land and building area.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	504 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Legal Description	Square 476, Lot 20
Ward and ANC	6, 6E
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	An irregularly shaped lot with an area of 913 square feet. The lot is developed with a three story row building. The lot has minimal access to a 17.62-foot wide public alley on the southwest.
Zoning	C-2-A
Historic District	Not within a historic district.
Adjacent Properties	To the immediate east, west, north and south are row houses with residential uses.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The square is mostly developed with row buildings most of which have residential uses but some are occupied by retail, service and institutional uses. One property at the south eastern intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and 6 th Street is a vehicular repair shop. The wider community has a mixture of residential rowhouses, apartments and institutional uses

Location Map



Photograph of Site



III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The Applicant proposes to change the current commercial use to a three unit apartment building and seeks parking relief from the required two spaces. The applicant states that

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTED RELIEF

C-2-A Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height (ft.) § 770.1	50 ft.	25 ft.	25 ft.	Conforming
FAR § 771.1	2.5	2.19	2.19	Conforming
Lot Occupancy § 772.1	60% max.	74.6%	74.6 %	Existing Non-Conforming - Required
Rear Yard (ft.) § 774.1	15 ft. min.	15 ft. +	15 ft. +	Conforming

C-2-A Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Side Yard (ft.) §	None required	None required	No side yard	Conforming
Parking § 2101	1 space/2 units = 2 spaces	0 spaces	0 spaces	Required

V. ANALYSIS

In order to be granted a variance, the applicant must show that they meet the three part test described in § 3103.

1. Exceptional Situation Resulting in an Undue Hardship or a Practical Difficulty

The subject property is irregularly shaped with a four foot wide “leg” connecting to the 17.62 feet wide public alley to the rear. The width of the leg would not only allow an average size car to access the property. Secondly, the building sits on the front and side property lines and therefore parking cannot be accommodated in those areas. The condition of the lot therefore is a practical difficulty as it precludes any opportunity to provide on-site parking.

2. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The requested relief could be granted without detriment to the public good. The use requires one parking space per two units (2 spaces total). The neighborhood is served by transit, with the Shaw Metro station located about three blocks away, the G2 and G8 buses running along Rhode Island Avenue and other bus routes along 7th Street to the west and New Jersey Avenue to the east. This transit service and walkability means residents are less likely to need a car.

3. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

Granting the requested relief would not impair the integrity of the Zoning Regulations. While the regulations generally intended that on-site parking be provided for the proposed use, doing so in this case would not be possible.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The property is within ANC-6F. As of this writing, OP has received no comments from the ANC. The Applicant has submitted nine letters of support to the record (Exhibit 27).