

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Anne Fothergill, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: November 24, 2015
SUBJECT: BZA Case 19056, 3324 Dent Place, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following variance relief:

- § 2101.1 minimum off-street parking (2 required, 0 proposed); and
- § 405.1 minimum side yard (8' required, 7.5' proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	3324 Dent Place, N.W.
Legal Description	Square 1278, Lot 0251
Ward	2
Lot Characteristics	The 5,250 SF lot is 35' wide and 150' deep. The historic house on the lot was razed in 2012. There is a swimming pool toward the rear of the lot.
Zoning	R-3 – row dwellings
Existing Development	Vacant lot
Historic District	Old Georgetown Historic District
Adjacent Properties	The adjacent properties are row dwellings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The neighborhood is residential and the block is predominantly row dwellings.

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to construct one single-family detached dwelling on the subject property. The house would be 20 feet wide and 60 feet deep. The new house would be centered on the lot with yards on each side and would not have off-street parking. Originally the applicant requested lot width relief for a subdivision to create two rowhouse lots, but the applicant revised their proposal based on discussions with neighbors and community groups and is no longer requesting relief from minimum lot width.



3324 Dent Place prior to demolition (photo date unknown)



IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R-3 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	40 feet max.	N/A	<40 feet	None required
Lot Width § 401	20 feet min.	35 feet	35 feet	None required
Lot Area § 401	2,000 SF min.	5,250 SF	2,625 SF	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	None prescribed			None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	60 % max.	0	58%	None required
Rear Yard § 404	20 feet min.	N/A	>20 feet	None required
Side Yard § 405	8 feet min.	N/A	7.5 feet	Relief requested
Parking § 2101.1	1 per dwelling	N/A	0	Relief requested

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Variance Relief from § 405 – requirement of 8’ minimum side yard

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The applicant has revised their proposal from two rowhouses to one single family house centered on the lot, which will allow for yards on each side. The Old Georgetown Board recommended that the house be centered on the lot. In order to have a 20 foot wide house, which is needed for efficiency of layout, the resulting side yards are 6 inches less than the required dimension. The neighbors were strongly opposed to the original proposal for rowhouses with no side yards due to the desire for sight lines through the property, which was based on the conditions of the previous house on the lot. The applicant has responded to the various concerns by proposing to build one house centered on the lot and with side yards.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The proposed side yard relief is only six inches on each side and would not cause a substantial detriment to the public good. The adjacent property owners and other community members all support side yards for this property to continue the sight lines through the property which existed with the previous house.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The requested relief is minimal (6.3% of the linear requirements) and the applicant could have requested that the Zoning Administrator consider it for a deviation under §407.1 but instead chose to proceed with the variance request to allow for community input. The minimal relief would not substantially harm the zoning regulations.

b. Variance Relief from § 2101.1 – requirement of off-street parking for 1 car

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

Off-street parking would not be possible for this property. DDOT would not support a new curb cut off Dent Place to access a new driveway, the neighbors do not agree to a shared driveway, and there is no alley behind this lot, which are all conditions causing a practical difficulty that supports the granting of the variance.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

DDOT does not support a new curb cut for a number of reasons including it would not be in keeping with their policy on driveway spacing, it would cause the removal of an on-street parking space, it could cause conflicts for pedestrians where the driveway crosses the sidewalk, and a new driveway would remove green pervious area adjacent to the house.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

Allowing the relief from the off-street parking requirement would not harm the intent of the zoning regulations and would be in keeping with DDOT's recommendation to support the variance and also their recommendation against a new curb cut in this location.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT previously had no objection to the original application for parking relief for two vehicles. DDOT staff also communicated to the applicant and to OP staff that if the applicant was to apply for a curb cut for a driveway on this property, DDOT most likely would not support it.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Initially there was significant neighborhood opposition to the proposal and The Citizens Association of Georgetown (CAG) and neighbors at 3321 Dent Place, 3322 Dent Place, and 3326 Dent Place were given Party Status. The applicant has revised the proposal substantially to address the concerns that were raised by the community and CAG and the neighbors with Party Status submitted a letter of support for the current proposal and zoning relief.

ANC 2E has met with the applicant and will review the revised proposal on November 30, 2015.

The Commission of Fine Arts/Old Georgetown Board has reviewed a concept application for this proposal but has not yet taken final action. The applicant has made revisions to the design and massing in response to OGB's concerns.