

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: October 13, 2015
SUBJECT: BZA Case 19083, 2205 16th Street, S.E.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception:

- § 353, New Residential Developments

OP recommends **approval** of the following variance:

- § 2101, Off-Street Parking (four spaces required; two proposed)

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The parking pad shall be constructed of pervious materials.
2. The applicant shall provide an overhang for the exterior entrance to the basement apartment.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	2205 16 th Street, S.E.
Legal Description	Square 5795, Lot 27
Ward	8A
Lot Characteristics	Quadrilateral shaped lot with a 15-foot building restriction line across the front and alley access from the side
Zoning	R-5-A: low density general residence district
Existing Development	Vacant lot
Adjacent Properties	North and South: Apartment buildings East: Across 16 th Street, one-family detached and semi-detached dwellings West: Row houses, flats, apartments and a health clinic
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Moderate density residential

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The applicant proposes to construct a four-unit two-story plus cellar apartment building with two off-street parking spaces within the rear yard, directly accessible from the public alley. One exterior door would provide access to the three units located on the first and second floors. A separate entrance would provide direct access to the basement unit.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R-5-A Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	40-foot max.	N/A	26 feet	None required
Lot Width § 401	None prescribed	36.5 feet	36.5 feet	None required
Lot Area § 401	None prescribed	2,598 SF	2,598 SF	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	0.90 max.	NA	0.76	None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	50% max.	N/A	38%	None required
Rear Yard § 404	20-foot min.	N/A	24.4 feet	None required
Off-Street Parking § 2101	1 per unit or 4	N/A	2	Required

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Variance Relief from § 2101, Off-Street Parking

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject lot is unusually shaped, with the rear lot line at an angle, reducing the width of the rear from south to north, away from the public alley. With a fifteen foot building restriction line across the front and a minimum lot depth on the north side of 66 feet, the lot is not deep enough to provide for a typical residential building, plus an aisle and off-street parking. Instead, parking spaces that are perpendicular to the public alley are proposed, but the width of the lot is sufficient for the provision of no more than two spaces.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The requested reduction in off-street parking by two spaces would allow for the redevelopment of this vacant lot, with a building that would fill in the street wall along this portion of 16th Street. On-street parking is permitted to the front of the lot. Adequate access would be provided for the two proposed spaces, utilizing the public alley without the need to construct a new curb cut across the public sidewalk. The spaces would not be directly visible from 16th Street or the front of the property.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

With the exception of the number of parking spaces, the subject application conforms to the area provisions of the R-5-A district, and the proposed parking would be directly accessible from a public alley. The spaces would otherwise conform to the provisions of Chapter 21 of the Zoning Regulations, Off-Street Parking.

b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 353, New Residential Developments

- i. 353.2 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Board of Education for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of existing and planned area schools to accommodate the numbers of students that can be expected to reside in the project.*

District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) indicated to OP in an email dated September 11, 2015 that adequate school facilities exist to accommodate the proposed development.

- 353.3 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Departments of Transportation and Housing recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents of the project and the relationship of the proposed project to public plans and projects.*

No comments were received from either the Department of Housing and Community Development or the District Department of Transportation.

- 353.4 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Office of Planning for comment and recommendation on the site plan, arrangement of buildings and structures, and provisions of light, air, parking, recreation, landscaping, and grading as they relate to the future residents of the project and the surrounding neighborhood.*

One building is proposed for the site, with the front wall of the building aligning with the adjacent buildings to the north and south, continuing the street wall along 16th Street. Two exterior entrances are proposed; one for the units on the first and second floors and a second for the basement apartment. An overhang is proposed for the entrance to the units on the upper floors, but none is proposed for the basement apartment. OP recommends that an overhang also be provided for this entrance to provide shelter and protect residents and visitors from the elements.

Vehicular access would be from the public alley only, with a parking pad for two vehicles within the rear yard, which OP recommends be constructed of pervious materials. The remainder of the rear yard would provide for open space for residents of the building. Flowering ornamental trees, two in the front and three in the rear, would enhance the site.

- 353.5 *In addition to other filing requirements, the developer shall submit to the Board with the application, four (4) site plans and two (2) sets of typical floor plans and elevations, grading plans (existing and final), landscaping plans, and plans for all new rights-of-way and easements.*

The required plans were submitted. No new rights-of-way or easements are proposed.

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The proposed building would permit a structure that, with the exception of off-street parking, is otherwise consistent with the requirements of the R-5-A zone.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

The proposed building would be generally similar to the existing buildings to the north and south, continuing a pattern of small two-story apartment buildings. It would fill in a gap in the street wall on the west side of 16th Street south of W Street, eliminating a vacant lot.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

District of Columbia Public Schools, in an email dated September 11, 2015, indicated that the proposed development could be accommodated.

No other agency comments were received.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

No community comments were received.

Attachment: Location Map

