GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Office of the Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Andrew Altman, Director
Office of Planning

DATE: October 22, 2002

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 16932 (ICG Bancroft Associates LLP)

APPLICATION

The application by ICG Bancroft Associates LLP requests, pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104.1, is for a special exception to allow an addition to a single-family dwelling under **Section 223, Additions to One-Family Dwellings or Flats (R-1)** and **Section 404 Rear Yard (R)**, in the R-3 District, at premises 2138 Bancroft Place, NW (Square 2532, Lot 56 and 811)

RECOMMENDATION IN BRIEF

The Office of Planning recommends **Approval** of the requested special exception.

SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION

The subject premises are in the Kalorama Heights neighborhood of Ward 1, located at 2138 Bancroft Place, N.W., which is on the south side of the block, where Bancroft and Phelps Places intersect. The referenced property is within an area, generally bounded by Leroy Place to the north, S Street to the south, Connecticut Avenue to the east and Phelps Place to the west. Low-density single-family dwellings are the predominant use in the subject neighborhood. However, most of the residential structures that are near or front on Connecticut Avenue to the northeast are moderate to medium density multi-family in character.

Approximately 4,272 square feet of space is contained on the subject lots. A majority of the space (4,211 square feet) is on Lots 56. The remainder of the property (60 square feet) is on Lot 811, a rectangular area at the southeast corner of the property. There is a fifteen-foot public alley at the rear of the property that runs east west.

BZA Case No. 16932 Exhibit No. 24

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16932
EXHIBIT NO.24

The subject property is within the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District and contributes to the historic character of the area. The original Renaissance Revival mansion was developed on the corner of Bancroft and Phelps Places in 1898. In 1910, a second phase was added to the east side of the original structure. It was later converted into a private school, (Kingsbury Center) which also included two structures across the alley to the south. The Kingsbury Center (founded in 1946) operated as a private school for a number of years. The structure is currently vacant. The applicant proposes to return it to residential use by creating two single-family attached dwellings.

Neighborhood commercial support services in the subject area are conveniently located along Florida/Connecticut Avenue Corridors, which is one block to the northeast from the subject property.


Leroy Pl NW
Connecticut Ave NW
R-3
2138 Bancroft Place, N.W.
SQR2531
SQR2531
R-5-D
Bancroft Pl NW
Phelps Pl NW
R-3
SQR2532
R-3
SQR2532
W
S St NW
Feature Key
Zoning Boundaries
Square Index
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Application No. 16932
DC Office of Planning
October 9, 2002
Scale 1:1050
25 0 25 50 Feet
Attachment 1

PROPOSAL



Proposed parking area for three-car garage/roof garden.

It is the applicant's intention to return the subject property to its original residential use, by subdividing the property into two record lots. This division would allow for the construction of two semi-detached single-family dwellings, one on each of the separate lots. The structure would be divided at the center, along the line that distinguishes the original portion of the structure from the more recent addition. The first addition would replace a two-story wing along the east property line with an in-fill addition extending the full height of the building. The second addition would consist of a three-car garage at the basement level to the rear of the property. The garage would be topped with a garden patio.

Under section 404 of the Zoning Regulations, properties in the R-4 District must have a minimum rear yard depth of twenty feet. After the garage addition is constructed, the rear yard will only be four and one-half feet, and will require zoning relief from §404.

ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The subject dwelling is in the R-3 District. The R-3 district is designed essentially for row dwellings but may include areas mingled with one-family detached dwellings, one-family semi-detached dwellings, and groups of three (3) or more dwellings. To maintain a family-life environment, permitted related uses are the same in R-3 as in R-1 districts.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE APPLICATION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan Generalized Land Use Map depicts the subject site in the ***Moderate Density Residential Land Use Category.*** Row houses and garden apartments are the predominant uses. Moderate density areas may also include some low-density housing.

The Comprehensive Plan Declaration of Major Policies in Section 300.2 recommends:

> **" A central theme of the Housing Element is that the District must stimulate a wide range of housing choices and strategies through the preservation of sound older stock."**

Section 300.2 (a) "Protect existing housing stock from demolition and conversion to non-housing uses."

The Comprehensive Plan sets goals of stabilizing and improving the quality of residential neighborhoods. Comprehensive Plan Section 1104.1(h) outlines a policy to:

"Develop techniques and programs to encourage the maintenance of existing housing stock and, where appropriate, the rehabilitation and new construction of detached and row housing."

The Ward 1 objectives for housing, is as follows:

Section 1205.1 (f) " To discourage city-owned and private housing from becoming vacant and to return vacant housing to housing use."

Ward 1 Action to Implement Housing Objectives:

Section 1207.1 (b) To reincorporate vacant and boarded up dwellings units into the ward and District's housing stock by doing the following:

"(2) Identifying and compiling an inventory of vacant buildings units that are suitable for rehabilitation and taking appropriate action to restore the vacant units to the housing stock."

REQUESTED ZONING RELIEF

The subject site is in the R-3 district, Sections 223 and 404of the Zoning regulations permit addition to one-family dwellings if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. It is subject to the following provisions outlined in Section 223:

§223.1 - An addition to a one-family dwelling or flat, where a flat is permitted, that does not comply with all the requirements of §§401, 403, 405 or 406 of this title shall be permitted if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment in accordance with the conditions specified in §3104 of chapter 31 of this title, subject to the provisions of this section.

§223.2 – The addition shall not have a substantially adverse affect on the use of or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property; in particular;

(a) Will the proposed addition affect unduly the availability of light and air to neighboring properties?



Neighboring abutting garage/patio with a rooftop garden, east side of subject property.

No. The proposed addition will not affect unduly the availability of light and air to neighboring properties. The only property abutting the subject property is a row dwelling, on the east side. The adjacent property has an existing garage/patio with a rooftop garden. The proposed project will not extend above an existing privacy fence that separates the two structures. The upper portion of the subject garage addition will serve as a garden wall to the neighbor's patio, and will be no more than six feet in height. Because the height and size of the proposed addition will be about the same as the improvements to the east, it is unlikely that the project will adversely affect the light and air from entering the abutting property. The applicant has discussed the proposed addition with the owner of the referenced property. The fifteen-foot public alley to the south of the proposed garage will also provide for uninterrupted light and air to enter the neighboring property, as well as the subject property.

(b) Will the addition unduly compromise the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties?



The property has a twelve-foot slope from front to rear.

No. The new addition will not compromise the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties as a result of the subject garage addition. The garage addition will be below the first floor level of the dwellings to the east and west. There are residential dwellings on the west side of Phelps Place, but they are on a higher elevation and a reasonable distance from the subject property. The proposed garage addition will abut a wall and a

privacy fence between the subject property and the adjacent property to the east, which already has an existing garage/patio. There are structures on the south side of the alley, directly across from the proposed garage site, but these units are built on a diagonal site line fronting on Phelps Place. These units have limited views onto the designated space for the subject garage/patio.

(c) Will the addition, together with the original building, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the street frontage?



Front view of subject property.

No. The proposed new rear garage/patio addition, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, will not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the street frontage. The proposed garage addition is being designed to blend in with the scale and character of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District. The new addition will not be visible from the front of property, because the grade of the property drops off sharply (approximately twelve feet) from Bancroft Place to the fifteen-foot east west public alley at the rear of the property, where the garage addition will be constructed. The subject structure consumes most of the southeast corner of Bancroft and Phelps Places.

The subject building is rather large, measuring approximately forty-three feet in width fifty-five feet in depth and thirty-three feet in height from the finish grade at the middle of the front of the building to the ceiling of the first floor. Because the building slopes sharply from front to rear, the basement level is relatively small, in light of the twelve-foot grade change from the front of the property to the rear.

(a) In demonstrating compliance with ¶¶ (a), (b), and (c) of this subsection, the applicant shall use graphical representations such as plans, photographs or elevation and section drawing sufficient to represent the relation of the proposed addiction to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.

The applicant will present building plans, photographs and section drawing sufficient to represent the relation of the proposed addition to rear

of the existing building to represent the relation of the proposed addition to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.

223.3 - The lot occupancy of the dwelling or flat, together with the addition, 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 subject property is in the R-3 District. Under § 223 of the Zoning Regulations, lot occupancy of the dwelling or flat, together with the addition, shall not exceed seventy per cent (70%) in the R-3 district. The proposed addition will not increase the existing 57.5% lot occupancy currently on the subject lot. This is because the garage/ roof garden addition will be below the main floor of the existing building, (as a result of the slope of the property from front to rear) and should not be included in the lot occupancy calculations.

DOES THE APPLICATION MEET THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION TEST?

Will the special exception be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning regulations and Maps?

Yes. The proposed garage/rooftop addition will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Maps. The subject dwelling was constructed and modified between 1898 and 1910 as a residential dwelling. It served as a private school for a number of years, and more recent, has been vacant. The applicant proposes to renovate the structure and return it to its original residential use. The site is in a residentially designated zone; which are reinforced by several Comprehensive Plan policies and objectives.

Will the special exception adversely affect the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Maps?

No. The proposal to construct a garage addition to the rear of the property at 2138 Bancroft Place, N.W., will not adversely affect the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Maps. The only abutting property is a row dwelling to the east of the subject structure, and its owner does not oppose the application. The addition will not be visible from the front of the property because the property slopes approximately twelve feet from front to rear. The addition will not be visible from view of most other neighboring properties.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The applicants proposal to build a garage addition on the rear of the subject property was presented to Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 1D on September 19, 2002. The ANC requested that the applicant provide more detail drawing, which better depicted

the project. The applicant will return to the ANC on October 21, 2002, the day prior to the Board hearing on this matter.

The applicant met with the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic Association on October 8, 2002. The Association voted to support the project.

The D.C Historic Preservation Board has recommended the design of the garage addition for approval. The staff report found that the garage addition was consistent with the character of the Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District and with the purposes of the historic preservation law. The Board and the staff recommended that the applicant restudy the wall above the garage roof by introducing lighter elements to relieve the monolithic brick expanse at the south property line. The applicant is working with HPRB staff and the community on this design issue.

OP SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the application submitted by ICG Bancroft Associates, LLC, requesting a special exception to build a garage addition to the rear of the structure at 2138 Bancroft Place, N.W., the Office of Planning finds that the applicant has satisfactorily met all the tests specified in Section 3104.1, and 223 and concluded the application will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.