Memorandum

To: **Office of Zoning**
District of Columbia

From: **Jason and Sandra Nelson**
Owner/ Applicant

Date: **April 3, 2005**

Subject : **BZA Application No._____- Nelson Addition**
1515 A Street SE (Square 1072, Lot 45)

Jason and Sandra Nelson, owners and residents of 1515 A Street SE, apply for a special exception to build a two-story addition in the rear of their row house to replace the existing one story enclosed porch. The aspects of the proposed project that fall outside the current zoning regulation are as follows:

First, the proposed construction raises the lot occupancy from 817.2 SF to 918 SF, which is 5% over the allowed lot occupancy for a row-house in the R-4 Zoning District (I I DCMR 403.2) and 7% over the existing lot occupancy.

Second, the proposed construction extends the eastern wall of the existing porch by nine (9) feet, and extends the five (5) foot width of the preexisting open court, rather than the minimum six (6) foot minimum width of an open court required for a one-family dwelling in an R-4 zone (11 DCMR 406.1)

I. Summary

A. Special exception qualifies under 11 DCMR Section 223 because the lot occupancy for the R-4 does not exceed 70% (11 DCMR 223.3) and the addition will not have a substantially adverse affect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property (11 DCMR 223.2)

B. The proposed addition seeks to extend the southern wall of the residence 9 feet beyond the existing enclosed porch.

C. The proposed replacement structure will be similar in size to the existing rear addition at 1513 A Street SE.

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BZA
Case No. 17340
Exhibit No. 4

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17340
EXHIBIT NO. 4

11. Bases for Grant of Special Exception

Section 223 provides relief based on satisfying specific criteria under which additions to single-family dwellings may be permitted with a residential district. Those criteria are addressed separately below:

223. I An addition to a one-family dwelling or flat, in those Residence Districts where a flat is permitted, that does not comply with all of the applicable area 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.

The two story addition is to a permitted single-family residence that is currently in conformance with Section 403.2 (lot occupancy). The residence is not currently in conformance with Section 406.1 (minimum width of open court)

The existing house has a lot occupancy of 58% which will be increased to 65% with the proposed two story addition. This is a 5% increase over the matter-of-right lot occupancy allowed in the R-4 district, 7% increase over the current footprint of the residence, but it is below the 70% allowed by Section 223.3 as a special exception.

223.2 The addition 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;

Impact on Adjacent Neighbors

The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected by this project because the addition is modest in size (9 feet beyond the existing enclosed porch). The wide open nature of the alley allows for long views and unobstructed southern exposure. The proposed addition will only minimally impact the views and sun exposure of the two adjacent properties.

The owner/occupants of the adjacent properties at 1513 A Street SE and 1517 A Street SE have been presented with the proposed plans for the addition, and have indicated in the enclosed signed letters that they are in support of the project.

Impact on Neighbors Directly South

Directly south of the proposed addition is a three story apartment building. It sits directly across the broad rear alley and apartment parking lot. To the east of the apartment building are homes. The distance from the proposed addition to the apartment block is roughly 200 feet; it is roughly 230 feet to the rear of the nearest house to the south. As a result of the distance, the proposed addition will not have an impact on the light or the availability of air on neighbors across the rear alley.

(b) The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly

compromised:

Impact on Adjacent Neighbors

The proposed addition will not unduly compromise the privacy or enjoyment of the adjacent neighbors because:

The proposed addition is modest in size (9 feet beyond the existing enclosed porch)

The west façade of the addition lies along the property line and is windowless. Thus the privacy of 1513 A Street will not be affected.

The east façade has two (2) full size windows and one (1) clerestory window on the first floor, and three (3) clerestory windows on the second floor. The proposed windows on the east side will cause only a minor increase in visibility of the neighboring property from 1515 A Street SE. The clerestory windows on the second floor of the addition will not allow any views of the neighboring property.

The existing enclosed porch has two full size windows facing directly towards windows on the side of 1517 A Street. These existing windows will be replaced with a clerestory window which will increase the privacy of 1517 A Street

The owner/occupants of 1513 and 1517 A Street SE, have explicitly stated their approval for the building of the proposed addition. Their signatures appear on the letters attached to this application.

Neighbors to the South

The project will not impact the privacy of the southern neighbor's property, because:

a) Directly behind the site of the proposed addition is a three story apartment building. It sits approximately 200 feet from the rear of the proposed addition. The space between the proposed addition and the apartment building provide ample space to ensure privacy is maintained.
b) The houses located to the east of the apartment building are approximately 230 feet across a wide alley from the rear of the proposed addition.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed replacement will not unduly impact the privacy and enjoyment of neighbors' property.

(c) the replacement, together with the original building, as viewed from the street, alley, or other public way, shall not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the subject street frontage; and

The replacement will be built in the same style as other additions in the alley and in the neighborhood, and to a similar scale. It will be made of wood siding in a similar style to the other additions in the alley, the windows matching the style of the home on the property, and it will have a roof that matches the style of the other additions in the alley.

The proposed addition will not be visible from the front of the house.

The proposed addition will be significantly more in keeping with the visual character of the additions in the area than the current structure, which is shoddily constructed, and in its rundown appearance.

The desire to improve the aesthetics of the alley likely contributed to the unanimous support of immediate neighbors to the north and south of 1515 A Street SE, of the proposed replacement of the existing enclosed porch with the proposed two story addition.

(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 to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.

Along with this application, we have included the following items:

a) Photos of the current enclosed porch and surroundings;

b) Signatures of support from neighbors for replacing the existing enclosed porch with a new two story addition;

c) Plan and elevation drawings of proposed addition, including a site plan showing the relationship of the proposed addition to adjacent buildings.

d) Official Plat from the DC Office of the Surveyor.

If you require any further clarification or have any questions regarding our application, Jason Nelson and/or authorized agent Jennifer Fowler, A.I.A. are available at any time to discuss them with you.

Thank you,

Jason Nelson

Sandra Nelson