

Board of Zoning Adjustment
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street NW Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

April 19, 2016

Burden of Proof

James Little and William Colwell, owners of 26 Adams St NW, Washington DC 20001, are seeking a Special Exception Pursuant Section 400.24, for an alteration to the rear of the roof of the existing third story at their property. My clients have been referred the BZA by DCRA BZA, Case #FY-16-51-Z to seek said relief “to allow a third story addition that will significantly alter an existing rooftop element in R-4. (Section 3104.1).”

The current use of the property is Single Family Row house, and it is being converted to a 2-family flat, under approved Building Permit Application B160078. The owners will continue to occupy the property. The lot is zoned R-4.

In its current condition, the building has a partial third story that occupies about two thirds of its footprint. As a result, the property has a two level roof, with the smaller portion of it occupying the rear of the building’s footprint. That lower roof is being converted to a roof deck under the approved Building Permit. The requested relief is to alter the rear wall between the lower and upper roofs, to introduce a patio sliding door, and to raise the rear portion of the roof with a dormer over that patio sliding door, approximately 32” tall, allowing for a row of clerestory windows to be introduced.

Section 400.24 states the following:

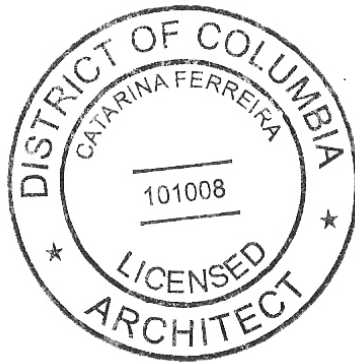
- 400.24 In an R-4 Zone District, the following provisions shall apply:
- (a) A roof top architectural element original to the building such as a turret, tower or dormers, shall not be removed or significantly altered, including changing its shape or increasing its height, elevation, or size;
 - (b) Any addition, including a roof structure or penthouse, shall not block or impede the functioning of a chimney or other external vent on an adjacent property required by any municipal code; and
 - (c) Any addition, including a roof structure or penthouse, shall not interfere with the operation of an existing or permitted solar energy system on an adjacent property, as evidenced through a shadow, shade, or other reputable study acceptable to the Zoning Administrator.

We feel that the localized proposed alterations to the alley facing elevation of the row house are 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 Maps for the following reasons:

1. All existing rooftop elements at the front elevation of the house, such as dormers, will remain unaltered.
2. The proposed dormer at the rear of the main roof is modest in height and occurs at the lowest section of the row house, not impacting the overall height of the building, or significantly affecting the views from neighboring properties or rights of way, and will not be visible from Adams Street.
3. We have prepared a solar shade study and provide photographic documentation illustrating that the proposed alterations will have little to no effect on neighboring properties' ability to add solar panels to their roofs, and will not impact any chimneys, vents, or similar elements.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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