

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Maxine Brown-Roberts, Project Manager  
*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review  
**DATE:** March 9, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 19706 - Special Exception review to allow expansion of an apartment building at 1005 Bunker Hill Road, NE.

**I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION**

Mary House Inc. (applicant) requests special exception review pursuant to Subtitle U § 421 and Subtitle X § 901.2 for the expansion of a six-unit apartment building to an eighteen-unit apartment building for low income families at 1005 Bunker Hill Road NW. The applicant also requests special exception review pursuant Subtitle C § 710.3 to locate the required parking spaces within the front yard. The property is zoned RA-1.

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the requested special exceptions pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.2;

- Subtitle U § 421, New Residential Developments (RA-1); and
- Subtitle C § 710.3, Parking in Front Yard.

**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1005 Bunker Hill Road, NE (See Attachment 1)
Legal Description	Square 3883, Lots 843 (The property consists of two lots (Lots 5 and 6) which have been combined into A/T Lot 843 to accommodate the proposed development.)
Ward / ANC	5, 5B
Zone	RA-1
Lot Characteristics	An irregularly shaped lot with an area of approximately 17,448 square feet. The portion of the property along Bunker Hill Road is fairly flat but is gently rolling on the rear portion.
Existing Development	The property is developed with a two-story, six-unit, apartment building. On the southern portion of the site (Lot 5) there is a gravel parking area.

Adjacent Properties	To the north is the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA dormitory; to the east, is the rear yard of a single-family, detached house which fronts on Otis Street, NE; to the south, is a three-story apartment building and a single-family, detached house; and to the west, across Bunker Hill Road, is vacant property.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood is a mixture of garden apartments, single family detached and attached residences; and small retail services. The property is in close proximity to the Brookland-CUA Metrorail Station.

**III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND RELIEF REQUESTED<sup>1</sup>**

RA-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Area (sq. ft.), F § 201.4	As specified by BZA	17,448 sq. ft.	17,448 sq. ft.	None
Lot Width (ft.), F § 201.4	As specified by BZA	135.3 ft.	135.3 ft.	None
FAR, F § 302 and C § 1002	0.9+20% IZ = 1.08 max.	0.341	0.902	None
Height (ft.), F § 303	40 ft./3 stories max.	23.2 ft./2 stories	37.5 ft./3 stories	None
Lot Occupancy, F § 304	40% max.	18.1%	38.7%	None
Rear Yard (ft.), F § 305	20 ft. min.	65.4 ft.	22.2 ft.	None
Side Yard (ft.), F § 306.3	1 side yard shall be provided unless the building contains 3 or more dwelling units/floor, in which case 2 side yards shall be provided, each with the minimum distance equal to 3"/ft. height but not less than 8 ft.	North side: 7.3 ft. South Side: 7.3 ft. (on Lot 6)	North side: 7.3 ft. South Side: 16.6 ft.	Existing Non-conforming side yard which would not change.
GAR F § 307	40%	Unknown	40%	None
Parking, C § 701	1 per 3 dwelling units in excess of 4 units = 3 spaces	None	2 spaces	None
Parking Reduction, C § 702.1(a)	Minimum requirement reduced by 50% if within ½ mile of a Metrorail Station = 2 spaces			
Parking in Front Yard, C § 710.2(b)		N/A	2 spaces within the front yard	Special Exception
Bike Parking, C § 802.1	Long Term: 1 space/3 units Short Term: 1 space/20 units	None	Long Term – 4 Short Term – 1	None

New Residential Development in RA-1 zone, U § 421	Special Exception review	Multifamily structure	Expansion of structure	Special Exception
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<sup>1</sup>Information provided by applicant.

#### IV. PROPOSAL

The applicant is proposing to modernize the existing, six-unit, apartment building and expand with a three-story addition with twelve units for a total of 18, one- and two-bedroom units. The proposal would also provide the two required parking spaces. The new portion of the building would have a mechanical roof structure which would meet all the setback and height requirements.

#### V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

##### **Special Exception for New Residential Development**

Special Exception Review pursuant to U § 421, New Residential Developments (RA-1).

***421.1 In the RA-1 and RA-6 zones, all new residential developments, except those comprising all one-family detached and semi-detached dwellings, shall be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as special exceptions under Subtitle X, in accordance with the standards and requirements in this section.***

The applicant is proposing to renovate and expand the existing building with a three-story addition.

***421.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to the relevant District of Columbia agencies for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of the following:***

***(a) Existing and planned area schools to accommodate the numbers of students that can be expected to reside in the project; and***

The property is served by the Bunker Hill Elementary School, (0.57 mile to the north), Brookland Middle School (0.27 mile to the north), and Dunbar High School (2.56 miles to the southwest). The proposed 18 apartment units with one- and two-bedrooms would not generate a large number of students to negatively impact the capacity of these schools. The application was referred to the Office of State Superintendent of Education.

***(b) Public streets, recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents that can be expected to reside in the project.***

The property fronts on Bunker Hill Road which is in good condition. No new public streets would be necessary to accommodate the new residences. The applicant states that on the recommendation of the Department of Transportation (DDOT), the existing curb cut was slightly shifted to provide additional distance from the Bunker Hill Road/Otis Street intersection. The relocation would also provide additional distance from the adjacent apartment building which has units on the ground floor.

The property is approximately 0.5 mile south of the Turkey Thicket Recreation Center which offers a variety of recreational activities. There would be a small play area on-site with a playset on the rear of the property. No additional recreational facilities would be necessary to serve the new apartments. The application has been referred to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

***421.3 The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to the 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 surrounding neighborhood, and the relationship of the proposed project to public plans and projects.***

The proposed addition would be a simple rectangular building, predominantly brick and would be of a similar architecture to that of the existing building as well as being similar in style and architecture to other apartment buildings in the vicinity. The proposed addition would be set back 16.58 feet from the property line, allowing for adequate light, air and privacy to the units as well as to those in the adjacent apartment building.

The property fronts on Bunker Hill Road and the access to the two parking spaces would be from a relocated curb-cut, and would not seem to affect the pedestrian walkway, or vehicular traffic. The parking spaces would be hidden from view by a 42-inch high fence along Bunker Hill Road. A trash storage area would be located adjacent to the parking spaces and would also be enclosed by a 42-inch high fence.

The existing trees on the property would be retained and supplemented by additional landscaping including trees, shrubbery and grasses. The parking spaces and turnaround area would be of pervious pavement to limit runoff. As shown on the Existing Conditions Plan (Exhibit 31C, page 15) the western portion of the property is fairly flat with a small change in grade, and increases toward the rear of the property by approximately 10 feet. The new portion of the building would be constructed while maintaining the grade with minimal change as shown on the Preliminary Layout Plan (Exhibit 9, page 16).

The property is within the area covered by the Brookland/CUA Metro Station Small Area Plan, approved by the Council on March 2009. The subject property is not within any of the subareas specified for redevelopment and neither are there any specific recommendations for the redevelopment of the property. The property is in close proximity to the Metro Station subarea to the west and 12<sup>th</sup> Street Sub Area – North to the north and east of the property. No major development near the property in either sub-area is underway or proposed at this time.

***421.4 In addition to other filing requirements, the developer shall submit to the Board of Zoning Adjustment with the application a site plan and set of typical floor plans and elevations, grading plan (existing and final), landscaping plan, and plans for all new rights-of-way and easements.***

The applicant submitted site plans, elevations, floor plans, grading plans, and landscape plan. No new rights-of-way or easements are proposed.

**Special Exception for Parking in Front Yard**

Subtitle C § 701.2 outlines where parking spaces should be located and prohibits parking spaces within a front yard. However, it is allowed by special exception if the reasons of Subtitle C § 710.3 are met as demonstrated below:

***710.3 The Board of Zoning Adjustment may allow surface parking spaces to be located anywhere on the lot upon which the building or structure is located in accordance with the general special exception requirements of Subtitle X, and the applicant's demonstration of the following:***

***(a) The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall determine that it is not practical to locate the spaces in accordance with Subtitle C § 710.2 for the following reasons:***

***(1) Unusual topography, grades, shape, size, or dimensions of the lot;***

The property slopes up from Bunker Hill Road toward the rear of the property. The front portion of the property is fairly flat and currently accommodates a parking area. To create a parking lot at the rear of the property would necessitate some grading, provision of a long driveway, and a turning area. This would also be expensive construction for the non-profit organization.

***(2) The lack of an alley or the lack of appropriate ingress or egress through existing or proposed alleys or streets;***

There is no alley or street providing access to the rear of the property from which the spaces could be accessed.

***(3) Traffic hazards caused by unusual street grades; or***

N/A

***(4) The location of required parking spaces elsewhere on the same lot or on another lot would result in more efficient use of land, better design or landscaping, safer ingress or egress, and less adverse impact on neighboring properties;***

The placement of the parking spaces in the front yard is the most efficient location as there is no alley access to the rear of the property. This location would preserve the topography and landscaping on the site that would be disturbed with a long driveway, the parking spaces and a turnaround area. Further, locating the parking spaces to the rear of the property would necessitate a driveway which may disturb the residents on the lower floor of the proposed building and the adjacent apartment building. To meet the required driveway width and the parking spaces would mean a reduction in the size of the building which would reduce the number of units provided.

***(b) The accessory parking spaces shall be located so as to furnish reasonable and convenient parking facilities for the occupants or guests of the building or structures that they are designed to serve; and***

The two parking spaces would be located within the front yard with walkways to the building and would be convenient to the users of the building.

- (c) *The Board of Zoning Adjustment may impose conditions as to screening, coping, setbacks, fences, the location of entrances and exits, or any other requirement it deems necessary to protect adjacent or nearby property. It may also impose other conditions it deems necessary to assure the continued provision and maintenance of the spaces.*

OP does not propose any conditions.

## **VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

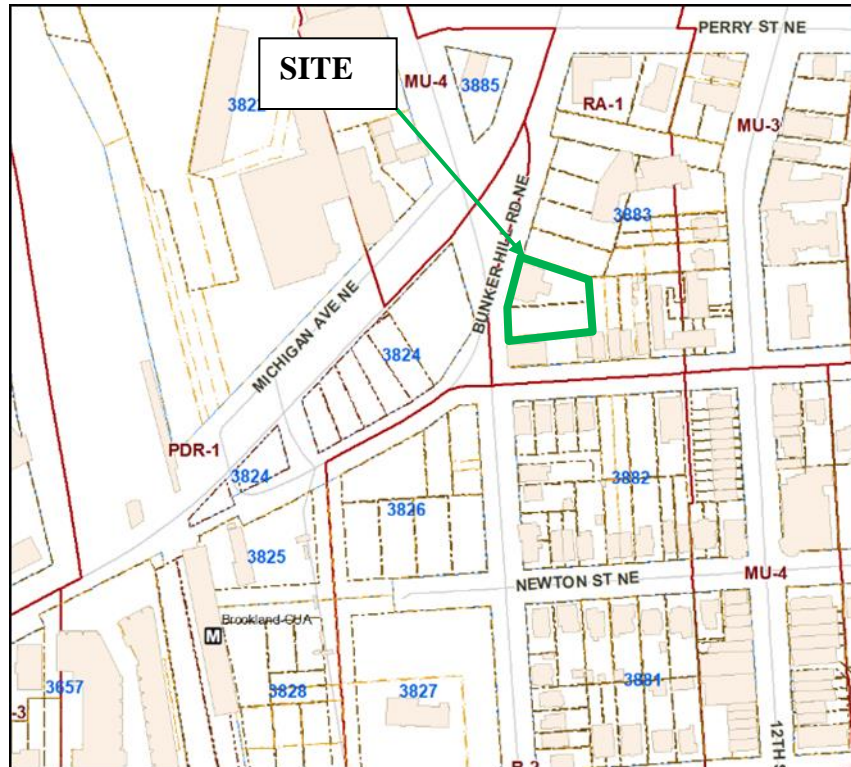
No agency has filed comments as of the date of this report.

## **VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

The subject property is within ANC-5B. The applicant indicated that the ANC voted to recommend approval of the proposal at their February 28, 2018 meeting. At the time of this report, the ANC had not submitted its recommendation to the Board.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Site Location and Aerial

ATTACHMENT 1



Site Location



Aerial