

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Crystal Myers, Case Manager

JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: August 30, 2018

SUBJECT: BZA Case 19814- 1724 Gainesville ST SE- Variance relief to develop a corner lot without a side yard

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **Approval** of the following variance relief:

Subtitle D§ 307.4, pursuant to Subtitle X § 1000 (5 feet minimum required; 0 feet proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1724 Gainesville ST, SE
Applicant	Sullivan & Barros, LLC on behalf of Stanton View Development, LLC
Legal Description	Square 5822, lot 103
Ward, ANC	Ward 8; ANC 8B
Zone	R-3
Historic District	None
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	Vacant rectangular lot at the end of a newly constructed rowhouse row. The lot abuts a public alley to the east.
Adjacent Properties and Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The square is composed of a mix of attached, detached, and semidetached single-family houses. Across Gainesville ST SE is a multifamily development.
Proposed Development	The proposal would allow for the development of a corner lot with a new rowhouse to complete a recently constructed row.

III. LOCATION MAP

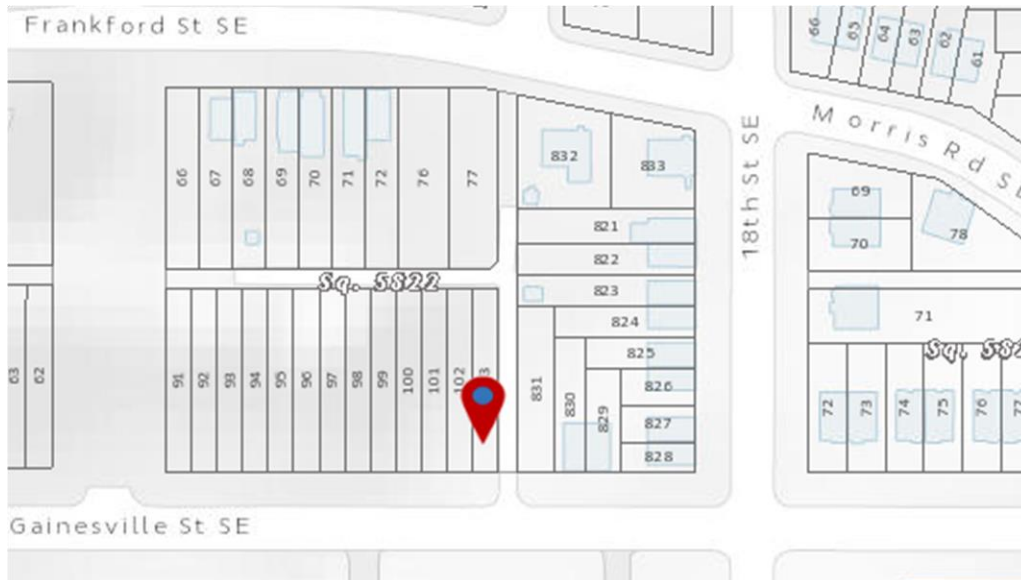


Figure 1. Location Map for 1724 Gainesville ST SE (Lot 103)

IV. PROPOSAL AND ZONING REQUIREMENT

The Applicant is requesting side yard relief to construct a 20-foot wide semidetached house on Lot 103. This lot is a part of a 13-lot rowhouse subdivision. The subdivision plan was approved in 2016 and 12 of the lots now have constructed rowhouses. The 13th lot, Lot 103, is currently vacant because on its eastern side, it is adjacent to a public alley. Since its eastern side is not adjacent to a developable lot, it is required to provide a 5-foot side yard.

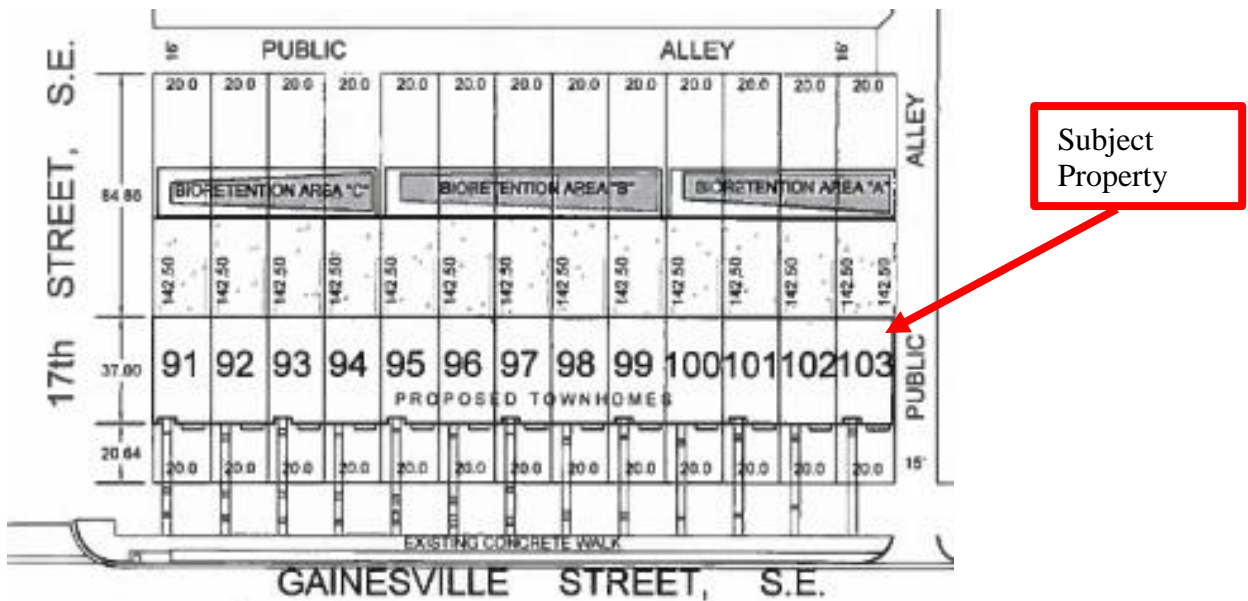


Figure 2. Approved Subdivision Plan for 1700-1724 Gainesville ST. SE

Zoning Table

R-3 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height D§ 303	40 ft. max.	n/a	40 ft.	None Required
Lot Width D§ 302	30 ft. min (semidetached) 20ft. min (attached)	20 ft.	unchanged	None Required
Lot Area D§ 302	3,000 sq.ft. min. (semidetached) 2,000 sq.ft. min (attached)	2,850 sq.ft.	unchanged	None Required
Lot Occupancy D § 304	60 % max.	n/a	Less than 60%	None Required
Rear Yard D§ 306	20 ft. min.	n/a	84.86 ft.	None Required
Side Yard D § 307	5 ft. min.	n/a	0 ft.	Variance Relief Requested

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Variance Relief from Subtitle D § 307.4

Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

In 2016, the approved subdivision plan for lots 91 to 103 in square 5822 created Lot 103 as a 20-foot wide lot (Exhibit 9). Lot 103’s width is the same as all of the other lots in the subdivision. These lots are the narrowest lots in the square. Unlike the other lots, Lot 103 is required to provide a side yard because it borders a public alley and not another developable lot.

In the R-3 zone lots for semidetached houses are required to have a width of 30 feet. As such, Lot 103 is the narrowest semidetached lot in square 5822. The zoning regulations for semidetached lots require a 5-foot wide side yard. Requiring a 5-foot wide side yard for a 20-foot wide lot would result in a 15-foot wide house. A 15-foot wide house would be considerably out of character with the neighboring houses in the row and it would be out of character with the surrounding houses in the square.

The Applicant plans for Lot 103 to have the same style 20-foot wide rowhouse as all the other lots in the subdivision. Redesigning one unit on a block of otherwise identical units would be a practical difficulty to the Applicant. According to Exhibit 32, providing a 5-foot wide side yard would severely impact the internal configuration of the rowhouse. It would reduce the space in the living room, dining room, and kitchen and eliminate at least one of the three bedrooms. It would also reduce the two-car garage into a one-car garage.

No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

Granting variance relief for Lot 103 to be developed without a side yard would not cause substantial detriment to the public good. On the eastern side of the lot the closest house, which is

at 1734 Gainesville ST SE is separated from Lot 103 by a 15-foot wide public alley, a vacant lot at 1730 Gainesville ST SE, and the house's own side yard. Therefore, 1734 Gainesville ST SE's light, air, and privacy would not be impacted.

No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

Granting variance relief for Lot 103 would not substantially harm the zoning regulations. Variance relief for Lot 103 would allow the Applicant to construct a 20-foot wide rowhouse consistent with the other rowhouses in the row. The square is composed of wider lots for semidetached houses so constructing a narrow semidetached house on this uniquely narrow semidetached lot would be out of character for the area and against the intent of the zoning regulations.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of the writing of this report, no comments have been submitted from the other District agencies.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

ANC 8B submitted a report in support of the application (Exhibit 27). As of the writing of this report, no other community comments have been filed to the record.