

Government of the District of Columbia


Department of Transportation



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Neighborhood Planning Manager 

DATE: June 28, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 20027 – 520 Groff Court NE

APPLICATION

Kara Benson (the “Applicant”), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, seeks approval for special exceptions under Subtitle E §§ 5108.1 and 5204.1, from the rear yard requirements of Subtitle E § 5104.1, and the nonconforming structure requirements of Subtitle C § 202.2, and pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 10, for area variances from the height requirements of Subtitle E § 5102.1, and the alley centerline setback requirements of Subtitle E § 5106.1, to construct a two-story addition to an existing semi-detached, principal dwelling unit. The site is located in the RF-3 Zone at premises 520 Groff Court N.E. (Square 779, Lot 0179).

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation’s capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District’s multi-modal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT’s review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District’s transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

- The Applicant is proposing to expand an existing building, which currently meets the alley centerline setback from the 10 foot alley (north of the site), but does not meet the setback from the 20 foot Groff Court NE alley (east of the site);
- The proposed expansion, onto an adjacent corner property, would extend the existing front wall and would not be set back the required two feet along the 20 foot alley. The expansion would also not be set back seven feet from the 10 foot alley;
- Similar conditions exists along another alley building, which does not comply with the alley centerline requirement, but is set back several feet from the 10 foot public alley;
- The proposed development would not create a building setback and would build directly up to the property line, which would narrow the existing alley system and may create turning and access conflicts for cars and trucks accessing the alley system;
- It appears from the Applicant's photos that trash collection and driveway access currently occurs along the Groff Court NE public alley; and
- The Department of Public Works (DPW) conducted a site visit and indicated that the existing H style alley requires crews to manually walk trash bins to trash trucks and narrowing the alley may create additional operational conflicts for trash collection operations.

RECOMMENDATION

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action will not have adverse impacts on the District's transportation network. DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application, however defers to DPW for a suitable set back distance for trash collection and operations.

PUBLIC SPACE

This review only pertains to zoning issues and does not consider potential impacts to District owned public space. DDOT's lack of objection to this application should not be viewed as an approval of public space design. If any portion of the project has elements in the public space requiring approval, the Applicant is required to pursue a public space permit through DDOT's permitting process.

DDOT expects the proposed public space design to meet all District standards. The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A, and 24 of the DCMR, DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual, and DDOT's Public Realm Design Manual for public space regulations and guidance.

AC:cl