

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: July 16, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA Case 20086 - Special Exception to construct an apartment house in the RA-1 Zone at 130-134 Ivanhoe Street S.E.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception:

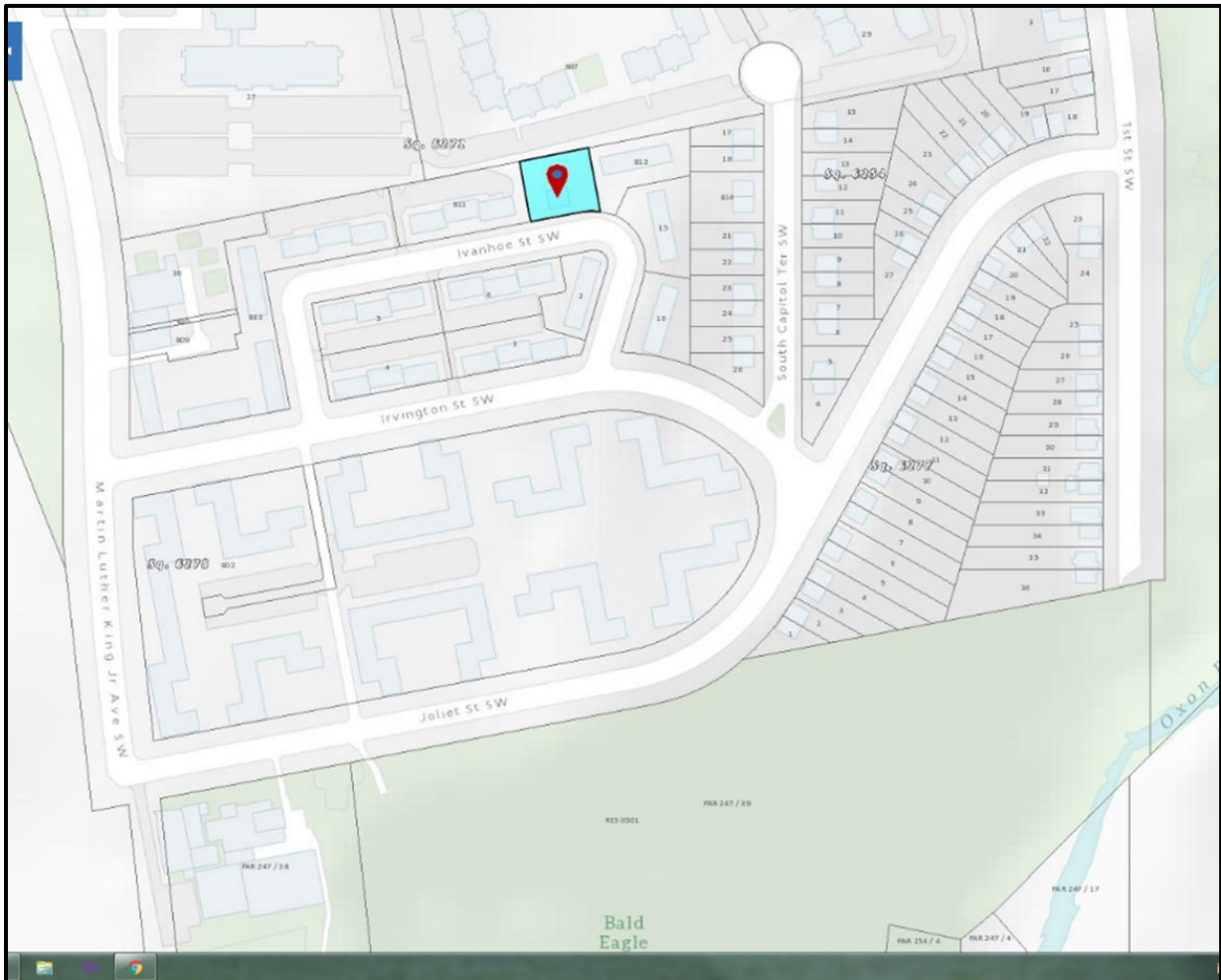
- Apartment Building, Subtitle U § 421.1 pursuant to Subtitle X § 900.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	130-134 Ivanhoe Street SW
Applicant	Solid Properties, LLC
Legal Description	Square 5728W, Lot 0008
Ward, ANC	8/ANC 8B02
Zone	RA-1: permits low- to moderate-density development, including detached dwellings, rowhouses, and low-rise apartments.
Lot Characteristics	The lot is rectangular for the most part with minimal grade differences across the lot. There is no alley at the rear to provide vehicle access.
Existing Development	The lot is currently developed with an abandoned pool house and pool.
Adjacent Properties	Adjacent lots are developed with three-story garden apartments.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The neighborhood is similarly developed with small apartment buildings in the RA-1 and semi-detached walk-up apartments in the RA-3 district.
Proposed Development	The proposal includes razing the existing swimming pool and accessory structure, and constructing a new, three-story 30-unit residential building. All five units on the first level would be assigned as accessible units, one of which would be a three-bedroom unit. All other units in the building would be one-bedroom units. The project may also include a solar system on the roof for on-site energy generation. The proposal would be subject to the Inclusionary Zoning requirements.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone- RA-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height F § 303.1	40 ft. max.	12 ft.	32 ft. 3 stories	None Required
Lot Width	N/A.	109 ft.	109 ft.	None Required
Lot Area	N/A	10,433 sf	10,433 sf	None Required
Floor Area Ratio F § 302.1	0.9 max.; 1.08 (IZ)	N/A	1.08	None Required
Lot Occupancy F § 304.1	40 % max.	8.6%	37.50 %	None Required
Rear Yard F § 305.1	20 ft. min.	54.94 ft..	32.10 ft.	None Required
Side Yard F § 306	8 ft. min.	24.75 ft; 48.75	11ft.; 16.5 ft.	None Required
Green Area Ratio F § 307	0.4 min. (2,287 sf)	N/A	2,332 sf	None Required
Parking C § 701.8 (b) Parking location	Permitted on another lot	N/A	5 spaces on adjacent lot owned by applicant	None Required
New Residential Development U § 421.1	Special Exception Review	Pool and bath-house	30-unit multi-family building	Special Exception



LOCATION MAP

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Special Exception Relief from Subtitle U § 421

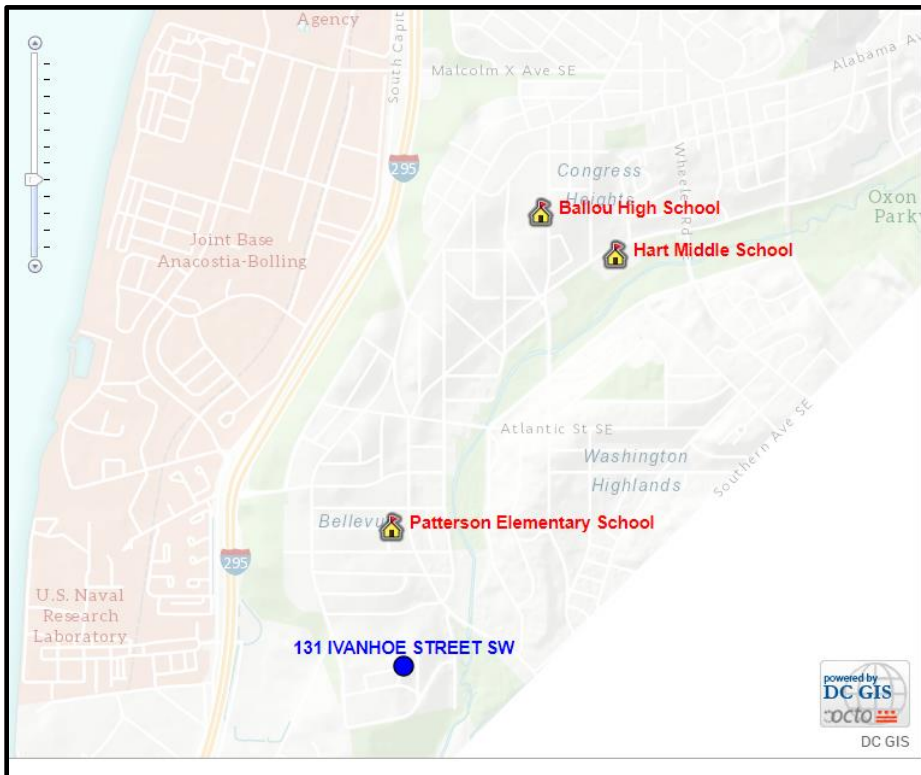
421 NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS (RA-1 and RA-6)

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.

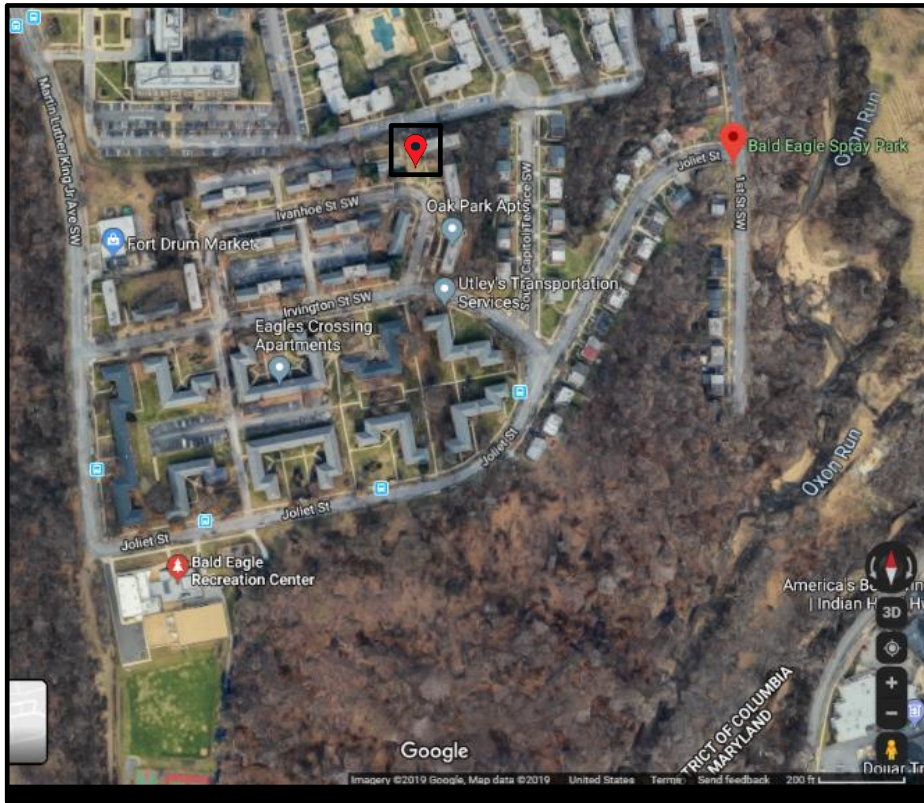
421.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to the relevant District of Columbia agencies for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of the following:

- (a) Existing and planned area schools to accommodate the numbers of students that can be expected to reside in the project; and
- (b) Public streets, recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents that can be expected to reside in the project.

The application was forwarded to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and to the Department of Recreation for comments (Exhibits 26, 21). The application was also forwarded by OP to DC Public Schools (DCPS). DDOT’s comments would be submitted separately to the record. At the writing of this report comments were not received from DCPS or DPR. However, DCPS’s website provides information on the project location’s school district as follows:



The map at left shows the location’s in-bound elementary school as Patterson Elementary School, 0.36 miles from the subject property. Seven bus lines serve this area. The school feeds into Hart Middle School and Ballou High School. The schools are part of the neighborhood cluster including Bellevue. Given the small number of units proposed, it can be anticipated that the existing schools could accommodate potential families with school-aged children who may reside in the building.



The location is also within walking or biking distance of the Bald Eagle Recreation Center, which is equipped with specialized program areas such as a boxing gym, a fitness center, computer lab, large multi-purpose room, classroom and indoor gymnasium. (shown), which includes a playground and other on-site recreational facilities. It is not anticipated that these facilities would be overburdened by the number of residents who may eventually reside in the apartment building.

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.

Site Plan and Design (Exhibits 37A1, 37A2):

The siting and scale of the proposed building would provide the required side yards and rear yard, ensuring sufficient light and air to and through the development. The proposal would also satisfy the bulk requirements for the zone.

The 3-story building with cellar would be centered on the lot from the Building Restriction Line (BRL) and would be oriented toward the street frontage, reviving an abandoned underutilized gap on the residential street. All five first level units would be accessible units, one of which would be the building's three-bedroom unit. All the other units would be one-bedroom/one bath units. The rear of the property would include passive recreation areas including 2 patios for residents' use. A 48-inch high metal fence would enclose the property, where none currently exists.

OP's Design Division requested the applicant to consider changes to design elements including

- *Provide a more generous ground floor entrance lobby that does not require residents of ground floor units to pass through a stairwell.*
- *Consider swapping the location of the leasing office with the living room of the ground floor unit and shift the building entrance to the center of the building.*

- *The exterior of the building should be more compatible with all other buildings on the street and surrounding complex.*
- *Highlight the building entrance on the exterior with a decorative element through change of material, embellishment, canopy, or all of the above.*
- *Redesign the exterior to reflect other elements found on adjacent buildings (ie. brick material, belt courses, brick work at corners, etc.). Provide room in the lobby for mail boxes.*

These were forwarded to the applicant, and a revised set of architectural plans has been provided (Exhibit 37). The building façade has now been designed to be more consistent with the appearance of other apartment buildings along Ivanhoe Street. The main entrance would be centered on the façade and windows would be evenly and symmetrically spaced on each floor. Several architectural features have been incorporated into the building that help it relate to adjacent apartment buildings; brick has been incorporated at the base; brick is also used around the primary entrance in a way that reflects subtle ornamentation at other building entrances; coining demarcates the corners; and, a horizontal band across the facade differentiates the 2nd and 3rd floor. The materials are shown on [Sheet A5.02](#). A more generous ground floor entrance lobby and relocation of the leasing office presents a more inviting entrance to the residential building. Access to the roof is only provided for maintenance purposes.

Parking:

Parking spaces would be provided on the surface lot of the adjacent apartment building to the west, pursuant to Subtitle C 701.8 (b). The existing apartment buildings are also owned by the applicant. Secured bike parking would also be provided within the building for residents.

Landscaping and Environmental Elements

Landscaping features would include shrubs within the side yards, lawn, and canopy trees at the front of the building. An area on the roof would be explored for solar panel installation at OP's request ([Exhibit 37A1, Sheet-A 1.01](#)). The applicant was advised to consult with the District Department of Energy and the Environment (DDOE) regarding targeted programs for similar development.

Major development near the property is not proposed at this time. The property is not covered by a Small Area Plan.

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.

Revised site plans are included in the record as [Exhibits 37A1 and 37A2](#).

X § 900 SPECIAL EXCEPTION

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The apartment use is permitted in the zone subject to the criteria under U § 421, which the proposal satisfies, including the overall density and area requirements of the regulations. The development would fill in an underutilized gap on the block with new housing, including all affordable units.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

The use of neighboring property should not be adversely impacted, as area requirements to maintain light and air for abutting neighbors and all other bulk requirements would be satisfied. Required parking would be located on the adjacent property west of the lot, consistent with Subtitle C § 701.8(b) to alleviate potential impacts to the on-street parking supply.

V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT's comments would be submitted separately to the record. Requested comments from DPR and DCPS were not included in the record at the writing of this report.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

ANC 8D's report is not included in the record to date. At the writing of this report, letters of support are included in the record at Exhibits 15,16, 19 and 20.