

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Elisa Vitale, Development Review Specialist
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: June 18, 2021
SUBJECT: BZA Case 20486 - request for special exception relief to allow an addition to an existing row building at 647 A Street SE.

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception pursuant to Subtitles X § 901 and E § 5201 from the following:

- E § 304.1, lot occupancy (60% maximum permitted; 50.3% existing; 69.9% proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	647 A Street SE
Applicant	Jennifer Fowler, architect, on behalf of Dave and Tracy Cronlund, owners.
Legal Description	Square 870, Lot 111
Ward / ANC	6 / 6B
Zone	RF-1 - provides for areas predominantly developed with row houses on small lots within which no more than two dwelling units are permitted by right.
Historic District	Capitol Hill Historic District
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular lot measuring 14.9 feet in width and 88.33 feet in depth. The property is bounded by A Street SE to the north, an improved 28-foot wide public alley to the south, and adjoining lots to the east and west.
Existing Development	The property is developed with a two-story row dwelling.
Adjacent Properties	The adjacent properties are developed with row buildings in residential use.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood is residential in character with the Eastern Market Metrorail station approximately three blocks to the south.
Proposed Development	The Applicant is proposing to construct a two-story addition at the rear of the existing row building.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief:
Height E § 303	35 ft. max.	25 ft.	25 ft.	None Required
Lot Width E § 201	18 ft. min.	14.9 ft.	14.9 ft.	Existing Nonconforming
Lot Area E § 201	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,316 sq. ft.	1,316 sq. ft.	Existing Nonconforming
Lot Occupancy E § 304	60% max.	50.3%	69.9%	SE Requested
Front Yard E § 305	Existing range of setback	Within range	Within range	None Required
Rear Yard E § 306	20 ft. min.	38 ft. 3.5 in.	26 ft. 6.75 in.	None Required
Side Yard E § 207	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	0 ft.	0 ft.	None Required
Parking C § 701	1 space	0 space	0 space	None Required

IV. ANALYSIS

a. Subtitle E Chapter 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 For an addition to a principal residential building on a non-alley lot or for a new principal residential building on a substandard non-alley record lot as described by Subtitle C § 301.1, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards of this subtitle as a special exception, subject to the provisions of this section and the general special exception criteria at Subtitle X, Chapter 9:

- (a) Lot occupancy up to a maximum of seventy percent (70%) for all new and existing structures on the lot;*
- (b) Yards, including alley centerline setback;*
- (c) Courts; and*
- (d) Pervious surface.*

The Applicant is requesting relief from the lot occupancy provisions.

5201.2 & 5201.3 not relevant to this application

5201.4 An applicant for special exception under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new building, or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:

¹ Information provided by the Applicant, Exhibit 4 dated March 23, 2021.

- (a) *The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected;*

The Applicant is proposing a two-story addition at the rear of the property that would not result in an increase to the overall height of the existing building and would not encroach on the required twenty-foot (20 ft.) rear yard.

The proposed addition would infill the four-foot eight-inch (4 ft. 8 in.) dogleg at the southeast corner of the house and would span the full width of the property extending five feet nine inches (5 ft. 9 in.) beyond the rear wall of 645 A Street SE and seven feet four inches (7 ft. 4 in.) beyond the rear wall of 649 A Street SE. The adjoining properties span lot line to lot line. Based on the above, the light and air available to neighboring properties should not be unduly affected.

- (b) *The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised;*

The proposed addition would not have windows on the north or south elevations. A door on the south elevation would provide access to the rear yard of the property and the Applicant is not proposing a deck or porch. Therefore, the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties should not be unduly compromised.

- (c) *The proposed addition or accessory structure, together with the original building, or the new principal building, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, shall not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage; and*

The proposed addition would not be visible from A Street SE but would be visible from the alley at the rear of the property. The alley segment at the rear of the subject property connects to Browns Court SE, which features a mix of one- and two-story alley buildings with a variety of architectural styles and finishes. The Applicant is proposing to clad the addition with Hardi Panel siding and trim. The proposed addition should not substantially visually intrude on the character, scale, or pattern of houses along the alley.

- (d) *In demonstrating compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this subsection, the applicant shall use graphical representations such as plans, photographs, or elevation and section drawings sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed addition or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

The Applicant provided plans and elevations (Exhibit 6) and photographs (Exhibit 5).

5201.5 *The Board of Zoning Adjustment may require special treatment in the way of design, screening, exterior or interior lighting, building materials, or other features for the protection of adjacent and nearby properties.*

No special treatment is recommended at this time.

5201.6 *This section shall not be used to permit the introduction or expansion of a*

nonconforming use, lot occupancy beyond what is authorized in this section, height, or number of stories, as a special exception.

The Applicant is proposing a lot occupancy of 69.9%, which would not exceed the maximum permitted lot occupancy of 70% in the RF-1 zone.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

Comments from other District Agencies had not been filed in the record at the time this report was drafted.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

Comments from ANC 6B had not been filed in the record at the time this report was drafted.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

Letters in support of the subject application were filed at Exhibit 12 from the owner of 649 A Street SE and at Exhibit 13 from the owner of 645 A Street SE. The Capitol Hill Restoration Society submitted a letter in support at Exhibit 31.

Attachment: Location Map

Figure 1: Location Map, 647 A Street SE

