

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Maxine Brown-Roberts, Development Review Specialist
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: September 17, 2021

SUBJECT: BZA Case 20502: Request for special exception relief to permit a rear addition at 921 G Street, SE.

I. RECOMMENDATION

Michael and Cathryn Siemer (“Applicants”) propose a two-story rear addition and infill of a side dogleg. To accommodate the addition, the Applicants request special exception relief from the lot occupancy requirements. The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exceptions pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 and Subtitle X, Chapter 9:

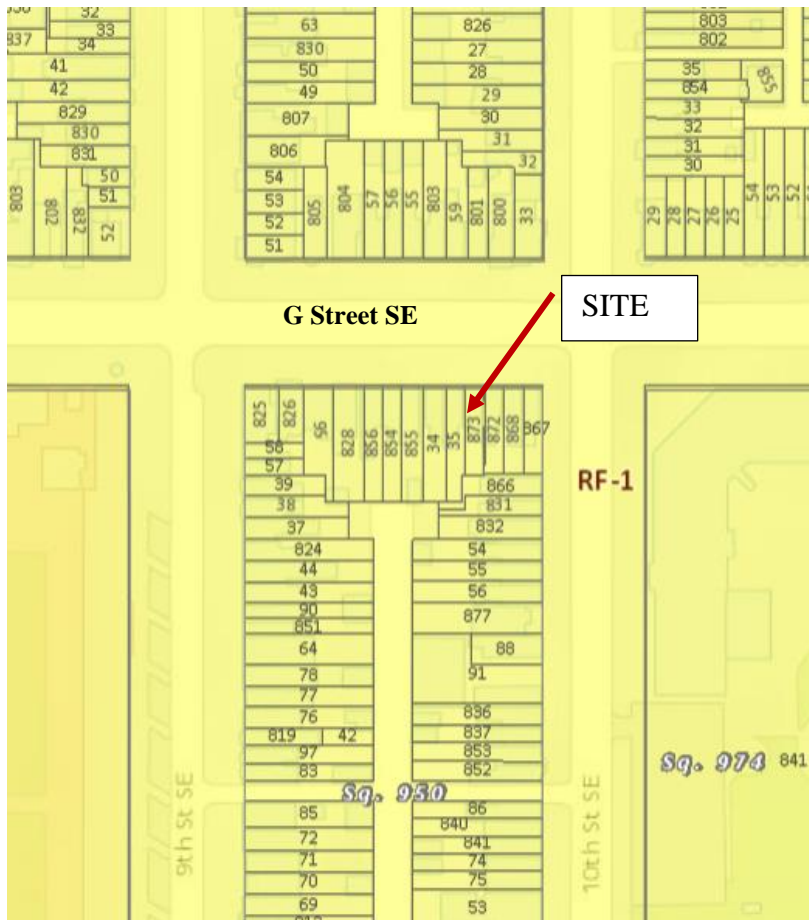
- Subtitle E § 304.1, Lot Occupancy (60 percent permitted; 53 percent existing; 66.9 percent proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	921 G Street, SE
Applicants	Michael and Cathryn Siemer
Legal Description	Square 0950, Lot 0873
Ward, ANC	Ward 6, ANC 6B
Zone	RF-1
Lot Characteristics	Fairly flat, rectangular lot with no rear alley access
Existing Development	One family, two-story, row dwelling
Adjacent Properties	Directly north, south, east, and west are similar two-story row dwellings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Generally two-story, row dwellings with the Marine Barracks to the west across 10 th Street and the Tyler Elementary school to the east across 10 th Street, SE. t
Historic District	Capitol Hill Historic District
Proposed Development	Two-story rear addition plus filling in a dog leg to the existing row house. House would remain a one-family dwelling.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height E § 303	35-foot max.	22.375 feet	22.375 feet	None Required
Lot Width E § 201	18-foot min.	15.5 feet	15.5 feet	None Required
Lot Area E § 201	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,071 sq. ft.	1,071 sq. ft.	None Required
Side Yard	NA	1 ft.	1 foot	None Required
Lot Occupancy E § 304 E § 5201.1(a)	60% max. 70% by SE	54%	66.9%	REQUIRED
Rear Yard E § 306	20-foot min.	25.2 feet	20.2 feet	None Required



IV. ANALYSIS

The existing two-story, semi-detached, row dwelling that has a one-foot side yard on one side of the building, and 3.83 feet wide dogleg on the rear portion of the building. There is also an open deck on the second floor.

The proposal would remove the rear deck and add a two-story rear addition which includes filling in the dogleg. The addition would extend five feet beyond the house to the north and three feet from the house to the south.

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 applicants request relief from the lot occupancy requirements to increase the lot occupancy to 66.9% for a rear addition as allowed by this section.

5201.2 & 5201.3 Not applicable.

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:

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

The proposed building addition would extend three feet beyond the existing house and would cast limited additional shadow on the adjacent properties, onto the rear yard of the property to the east (923 G Street, SE). The property to the west (919 G Street, SE) has a window and door on that side of the building. However, light and the availability of air should not be unduly impacted. The addition also should not affect light or air to the property to the south at 707 10th Street, SE.

The adjacent property owners, 919 and 923 G Street, SE and 707 10th Street, SE have each submitted letters of support for the addition at Exhibits 9, 10 and 11.

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

The proposed rear building addition would not include windows with direct views into the adjacent properties. The windows and doors on the addition would face into the applicant's rear yard, with only oblique views into other rear yards. Although the new building addition would bring the rear wall slightly closer to the building to the south of the property, the impact on privacy would be minimize by meeting the minimum the rear yard requirement as well the provision of a wall along the rear property line. Therefore, the privacy of uses and enjoyment of the 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 highly visible from G Street, and only somewhat visible from 10th Street, which is three houses away. The addition would be of similar materials to the adjacent and other houses on the bloc, and would be similar in character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street.

(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 submitted plans, photographs, and elevation drawings sufficient to represent the proposed building addition to adjacent buildings.

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.

OP makes no recommendation for special treatment.

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 house will continue to be used as a single-family residence, a conforming use. The proposal meets the maximum height and number of stories and the lot occupancy 66.9% is within the 70% allowed by Subtitle C § 5201.1(a).

General Special Exception Requirements of Subtitle X § 901.2

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

The lot occupancy is intended to ensure the provision of adequate light, air, and privacy to adjacent neighbors. As discussed above, the proposal would not significantly affect these intents.

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

The proposed addition should not adversely affect the light, air and privacy to adjacent residents as demonstrated above and therefore the use of the neighboring property should not be impaired. The proposal is supported by the adjacent neighbors.

V. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The property is within the Capitol Hill Historic District and the proposal was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) at their February 4, 2021 meeting. The HPRB recommendation was as follows:

“CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

921 G Street SE, HPA 21-132, concept/fill in dogleg, add third story.

The Board voted to support a two-story rear addition but determined that a third story addition that was visible from street view in the front, side, and rear, with the addition establishing a new higher height than other buildings in this row, was incompatible. The Board addressed the ANC resolution in support of the application by explaining that its decision was consistent with how it had reviewed other similar applications. Vote: 4-2”.

The proposed design before the BZA does not include a third floor to the addition.

VI. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No comments from other District agencies had been submitted to the record as of the date of the filing of this report.

VII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

The property is within ANC-6B. At the time of this report, the ANC has not submitted a recommendation to the file.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

Three letters from adjacent neighbors were submitted to the record in support of the application at Exhibits 9, 10 and 11.