




SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM:  Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: December 27, 2024

SUBJECT: BZA 20507B – Hawaii Avenue and Webster Street NE – Request for a modification to Case 20507.

I. BACKGROUND

In BZA Case No. 20507, the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) granted special exception approval to enlarge existing buildings and increase the number units on each of the 11 lots from 8 units to 16 units.

In Case No. 20507A, the BZA approved modifications to the originally approved plans for two of the lots, to add three residential units to the cellar level of each building, but not do the proposed additions. This reduced the number of units in each of the two buildings from 16 to 11, and reduced the extent of the approved relief accordingly.

In the current modification request, the applicant is proposing to revert the approved plans back to the originally approved 3 story buildings, with some design changes to the third story, such that the third story would have three units instead of the originally approved four units. This would result in a total of 14 units in each of these buildings.

The current case was originally filed as a modification without hearing, and OP filed a report accordingly, at Exhibit 17. The item was placed on the BZA Consent Calendar of September 18, 2024, at which the BZA determined this to be a modification requiring a public hearing. A hearing date of November 20, 2024 was established, but it was rescheduled to January 20, 2025. The applicant has submitted additional information since then (Exhibits 22-24).

II. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) continues to recommend **approval** of the requested modifications to reinstate the originally approved third story additions and three of the four units in two of the subject buildings as approved under Board of Zoning Adjustment Order No. 20507, plus retain the approval for the cellar units approved in Order 20507A. This modification would not appear to result in new or expanded relief from the zoning regulations beyond what was originally approved.

For additional analysis of the site and full analysis of the originally approved relief, which was for a larger number of units per building (16) than currently proposed (14), please refer to applicant filings and the OP report at [Exhibit 54](#) for the original BZA Case 20507.

III. ANALYSIS

Special Exception Criteria of Subtitle X § 901.2.

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

The RA-1 Zone provides for low to moderate-density residential development, including multi-family buildings by special exception. The area is made up of a mix of multi-family residential developments and single-family dwellings uses. The proposed modifications are for additions to two existing residential buildings with 14 units each - fewer units than what the Board originally approved.

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

As addressed below, the requested modification would not appear to adversely affect the use neighboring property.

Requirements of U § 421.

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 Zoning Adjustment as special exceptions under Subtitle X, in accordance with the standards and requirements in this section.

The applicant proposes to re-instate most of the apartment units approved as part of Case 20507, but removed as part of 20507A within an otherwise conforming third floor addition.

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*

The original application was referred to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and no comments were provided. The assigned in-boundary schools for this development are Bunker Hill Elementary School, Brookland Middle School, and Dunbar High School. It is not anticipated that the number of units proposed in this modification would significantly impact school enrollment.

- (b) Public streets, recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents that can be expected to reside in the project.*

The subject properties are currently developed with apartment buildings and include a street and alley network sufficient to meet the needs of the proposed density. The applicant includes the provision of off-street vehicle parking spaces where none currently exist. The development is less than a mile from the Fort Totten Metro Station, and bus lines are accessible from the site.

DDOT filed a report to the original case (Exhibit 54), noting that it may increase vehicle, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle trips on local streets, but noted no objection to the proposal subject to a Transportation Demand Management Plan. The original Order for this case includes a number of Transportation Demand Management conditions, which would remain valid.

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.

As noted in the OP Report for the original case, the existing site layout includes the arrangement of buildings and structures and location of public rights-of-way. The proposed building additions are within the permitted building height and should not substantially impact light and air to neighboring properties. The BZA approved the requested relief for some side yards, but adequate separation between buildings would be provided, typically more than the required amount, including large front yards along Webster Street and Hawaii Avenue.

The proposal as approved includes the provision of a total of 54 parking spaces, where none are currently provided, which should reduce demand for on-street parking. The applicant would provide secure, screened trash pickup in the rear adjacent to the proposed parking spaces, which should improve the current alley condition.

The grade of the lots would not be altered, except for the provision of parking spaces at the rear of the lots, and several bioretention areas would be added throughout the development and the approved parking spaces would be of a pervious surface. All properties are subject to stormwater management requirements and would be reviewed for compliance with those requirements during the permit review process.

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.

In addition to site and landscape plans filed as part of the original approval, the applicant has provided revised plans for this requested modification at Exhibits 9 through 12.

IV. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of the writing of this report, no other District agency had submitted comments on this case. DDOT indicated no objection to the original case 20507, conditioned on a Transportation Demand Management Plan. The OP report for modification request 20507A indicated DDOT had no objection.

V. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the writing of this report there is no ANC report filed to the record. ANC 5B indicated support with conditions for the original case 20507. ANC 5B did not file comments to the record for the first modification request 20507A.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

As of the writing of this report there are no community comments in the record for this case. The record for the original case 20507 includes a number of letters in opposition; there were no public comments filed to the record for the 20507A modification.