

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Jonathan Kirschenbaum, AICP, Development Review Specialist
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: November 5, 2021

SUBJECT: BZA Case 20546 (2916 18th Street, NW) to permit a new one-story deck in the rear of an existing single household row dwelling.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Lot Occupancy, Subtitle E § 304.1, pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 (60 percent maximum permitted; 58 percent existing; 67.6 percent proposed), and
- Rear Yard, Subtitle E § 306.6, pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 (20 feet minimum required; 20 feet existing; 10.5 feet proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	2916 18 th Street, NW
Applicant	George Preston Ratliff
Legal Description	Square 2587, Lot 492
Ward / ANC	1 / 1C
Zone	RF-1, which permits one family dwellings and flats as a detached, semi-detached, or rowhouse.
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular interior lot measuring 20 feet by 89.48 feet. The lot is bounded by 18 th Street, NW to the east, row buildings to the north and south, and a 10-foot public alley to the east.
Existing Development	Single household row dwelling.
Adjacent Properties	Residential row buildings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Residential row buildings and apartment houses.
Proposed Development	The applicant proposes to construct a one-story deck in the rear of the subject property.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone – RF-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width E § 201	18 ft. min.	20 ft.	No change	None Required
Lot Area E § 201	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,790 sq. ft.	No change	None Required
Height E § 303	35 ft. max./ 3 stories	23 ft/ 3 stories	No change	None Required
Lot Occupancy E § 304	60% max.	58%	67.6%	Special Exception
Rear Yard E § 306	20 ft. min.	20 ft. min	10.5 ft.	Special Exception
Front Setback E § 305	Setback must be in range of existing front setbacks	Front setback is in range of existing front setbacks	No change	None Required
Side Yard E § 207	No side yard required for row buildings.	N.A.	N.A.	None required
Parking C § 701	1 parking space	2 parking spaces	No change	None Required

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Subtitle E Chapter 5201 SPECIAL EXCEPTION RELIEF FROM CERTAIN REQUIRED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

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 has requested relief from the lot occupancy and rear yard development standards, consistent with this section, for an addition to a principal residential building with one principal dwelling unit.

5201.2 & 5201.3 not relevant to this application

5201.4 An application for special exception relief under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new principal building, or accessory structure shall not have a

substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, specifically:

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

The proposed deck would be unenclosed, open to the sky and one-story. The deck would be substantially under the maximum height permitted in the zone. Any new shadows that may be created and cast on the property to the north located at 2918 18th Street, NW should be minimal. The property owners of this property submitted a letter of support to the record at Exhibit 27. It is not anticipated that the proposed porch would create and cast new shadows on 2914 18th Street, NW because it is located to the south of the subject property. The property owners of this property submitted a letter of support to the record at Exhibit 7.

The provision of air should not be reduced as the deck would be open on all sides.

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

Privacy and enjoyment of neighboring properties should not be unduly compromised as there would be a privacy lattice and evergreen shrubs along the northern property line. The applicant states that the rear yards of the abutting properties are shallow and are used primarily for parking purposes. The deck would not directly face windows on abutting properties. The neighbor to the south submitted a letter of support to the record at Exhibit 7.

(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 deck should not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street frontage because it would be in the rear of the subject property. There appear to be some other rear decks and additions to the rear of buildings along this alley, and there is a multi-family building across the alley, so the proposal should not negatively impact the character, scale, and 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 has provided plans, photographs, and elevations to sufficiently represent the relationship of the proposed screened porch from public ways.

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 does not recommend any special treatment for the proposal.

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 number of stories and total height of the existing house would not change and would be conforming.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

To date, no comments from other District agencies had been filed to the record.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 1C filed a recommendation of approval to the record at Exhibit 28.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

As noted above, the neighbor to the north submitted a letter of support to the record at Exhibit 27 and the neighbor to the south submitted a letter of support to the record at Exhibit 7.

Attachment: Location Map

