

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Philip Isaiah, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: January 6, 2026

SUBJECT: First Extension Request – BZA Case 20968A, 1147 17th Street NW

I. RECOMMENDATION

OP recommends that the requested two-year time extension be **approved**.

II. LOCATION AND SUMMARY

Address:	1147 17th Street NW
Applicant:	Goulston and Storrs for National Geographic Society
Legal Description:	Square 0183 Lot 885
Ward / ANC	Ward 2; ANC 2C
Zone	D-6, High Density Mixed Use
Project Summary:	Amenity space and additional mechanical penthouse space on the south end of the roof, as well as a rooftop restaurant and bar and outdoor terrace and some green roof on the north side of the roof. The special exception was approved by the Board for a Rooftop eating and drinking establishment within a penthouse, pursuant to Subtitle C § 1501.1(d) and X § 901.
Date of Order Issuance:	November 8, 2023
Previous Extension:	None
Date of Order Expiration:	November 18, 2025
Proposed Extension:	Two years (until November 18, 2027)

III. EVALUATION OF THE EXTENSION REQUEST

Subtitle Y § 705 of the Zoning Regulations allows for the extension of a BZA approval for “good cause” shown upon the filing of a written request by the applicant before the expiration of the approval; provided that the BZA determines that the following requirements are met:

- (a) The extension request is served on all parties to the application by the applicant, and all parties are allowed thirty (30) days to respond.**

The application submitted to the BZA is dated November 12, 2025, and has been in the public record since filing. The filings indicate that a copy of the subject application and all supporting documentation were served to ANC 2C, the only party of record to the application.

- (b) There is no substantial change in any of the material facts upon which the Board based its original approval of the application that would undermine the Board's justification for approving the original application.**

Zoning Regulations:

While the referenced special exception relief is now cited under Subtitle C § 5100.3 (c) of the Zoning Regulations with minor text clarifications, the intent of the ordinance remains unchanged, and the subject use still requires BZA approval. The subject penthouse met all applicable height and setback requirements at the time of approval and continues to comply. Subsequently, OP does not find that any substantial zoning change has occurred that would undermine the Board's justification for approving the original application.

Surrounding Development:

OP is not aware of any proximate development which would impact the material facts upon which the BZA based its original decision.

Proposed Development:

The application indicates that no changes to the approved development are proposed as part of this extension request.

- (c) The applicant demonstrates that there is good cause for such extension, with substantial evidence of one or more of the following criteria.**

- (1) An inability to obtain sufficient project financing due to economic and market conditions beyond the applicant's reasonable control;**
- (2) An inability to secure all required governmental agency approvals by the expiration date of the Board's order because of delays that are beyond the applicant's reasonable control; or**
- (3) The existence of pending litigation or such other condition, circumstance, or factor beyond the applicant's reasonable control.**

The applicant intends to construct the subject penthouse restaurant as part of a matter-of-right office to hotel conversion. The applicant is also the owner of the adjacent lot 886 to the east, on which a museum renovation is underway. While the two projects were to be concurrently completed, the applicant states that financing constraints caused by interest rate changes resulted in the applicant prioritizing the project on lot 886, pausing the hotel project on the property.

The applicant notes an intent to proceed with the project as stated in Exhibit 4 of the record; however, the delay of the hotel project has caused the delay in pursuing building permits for the restaurant that was subject to this special exception. As such, the extension request by the

applicant is in response to a financing condition that the applicant did not cause and is therefore beyond the applicant's reasonable control, which meets subsection 3 of this standard.

OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of the date of this report, no other agency comments had been filed to the record.

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the date of this report, comments from the ANC had not been filed to the record.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

As of the date of this report, no community comments had been filed to the record.