

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Shepard Beamon, Development Review Specialist
 MBR
 Maxine Brown-Roberts, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: June 12, 2026
SUBJECT: BZA Case 20974-A – 505-517 H Street, NW, First Extension Request

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the requested two-year time extension.

II. LOCATION AND SUMMARY

Address:	509-517 H Street, NW
Applicant:	DC Chinatown Hotel Owner LLC
Legal Description:	Square 485, Lots 42, 43, 44 and 48
Ward / ANC	Ward 2; ANC 2C
Zone	D-4-R, high-density mixed-use zone in the downtown area; lodging use is permitted matter of right
Project Summary:	Construct a nine-story addition to an existing commercial buildings, for a long-term extended-stay hotel with approximately 85 lodging units. The project will retain the existing front portions of the historic row buildings and remove the buildings' rear wings.
Date of Order Issuance:	May 9, 2024
Previous Extension:	None
Date of Order Expiration:	May 9, 2026
Proposed Extension:	Two years (until May 9, 2028)

III. EVALUATION OF THE EXTENSION REQUEST

Subtitle Y § 705.2 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 April 7, 2026, 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 the Office of Planning, DDOT, and ANC 2C. There were no other parties to the original 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:

Since the original approval in 2020, there have been no substantial change to the RF-1 zone regulations that would impact the material facts upon which the Board based its original approval.

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:

Since the original approval of the application, the applicant has updated plans reflecting an evolution of the approved design while maintaining the approved aesthetic and compatibility with the historic context. Due to changes to the approved plans, the applicant has submitted an application (BZA #20974B) to modify the original BZA Order, scheduled for public hearing on September 2, 2026). The modified plans were reviewed and approved by the HPRB at its March 26, 2026 meeting.

- (1) ***An inability to obtain sufficient project financing due to economic and market conditions beyond the applicant's reasonable control;***

The applicant states that efforts to procure a hotel operator have not been confirmed but an operator agreement is in progress. As part of the agreement, the applicant is working to integrate operator-driven requirements into the design. The applicant also cites difficulty in obtaining sufficient project financing as an ongoing issue, particularly for downtown, mixed-use projects that require stabilized underwriting assumptions and a clearly defined operating plan.

- (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***

As stated above, the applicant has also filed a Modification With Hearing to the approved plans and design. Although the applicant requests modifications to the original approved BZA Order, OP does not believe this constitutes a delay of governmental agency approvals beyond the applicant's control as the modification was requested in April and would not have been able to be heard by the Board prior to the expiration of Order 20974 in May.

- (3) ***The existence of pending litigation or such other condition, circumstance, or factor beyond the applicant's reasonable control.***

Not applicable.

Subtitle Y § 705.3 of the Zoning Regulations allows for a time extension of a BZA approval for a period of no more than two years. OP believes that the applicant has demonstrated that they have pursued moving the project forward in good faith and have demonstrated good cause for the requested time extension. OP therefore recommends **approving the requested 2-year time extension to May 9, 2028.**

OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

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

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 2C has filed a letter of support of the time extension in Exhibit 5 in the case record.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

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