

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Shepard Beamon, Development Review Specialist
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: October 20, 2024

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21172, to construct four new units at 1321 Anacostia Road SE.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Subtitle U § 421, New Residential Developments.

In response to OP comments about the design, the applicant has agreed to amend the design of the front of the building, to provide a mansard roof at the top of the third floor addition, to better reflect the character of surrounding development.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1321 Anacostia Road SE
Applicant	Zachary Williams
Legal Description	Lot 18, Square5507
Ward, ANC	7B
Zone	RA-1
Lot Characteristics	An interior lot measuring 6,139 sq. ft. in area with rear alley access.
Existing Development	Two-story plus cellar apartment building with four units.
Adjacent Properties	Two-story semi-detached apartment buildings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood consists of a mix of housing types, including attached, semi-detached, and detached single-family homes and apartment buildings.
Proposed Development	Three-story plus cellar apartment building with eight units within the existing building footprint.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone: RA-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Apartment House / Rowhouse U § 421	Permitted by sp. ex.	4-unit apartment building	8-unit apartment building	Relief requested

Zone: RA-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Density F § 201	0.9	0.57	0.85	None requested
Lot Width F § 202	N/A	35 ft.	No change	None requested
Lot Area F § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	6,139 sq. ft.	No change	None requested
Height F § 203	40 ft. max./3 stories	22 ft. 9 in.	35 ft. 10 in.	None requested
Rear Yard F § 207	20 ft. min.	65 ft.	No change	None requested
Side Yard F § 208	8 ¾ ft. (3 in. per foot of building height but not less than 8 ft.)	8 ft. 4 ¾ in.	8 ft. 5 in.	None requested
Lot Occupancy F § 210	40% max.	28.4%	No change	None requested
Parking C § 701	1 per 3 units > 4 units (1 space min.)	0	3 parking spaces	None requested

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Special Exception Relief from Subtitle U § 421, New Residential Developments (RA-1)

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 construct four new apartment units in addition to the existing four units in the cellar and a proposed third story.

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 application was referred to the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) at [Exhibit 12](#). While comments were not received, 2023-2024 DCPS School Profiles presents the following in-boundary data for the relevant public schools:

Randle Highlands Elementary School – 55.05%

Sousa Middle School – 29.43%

Anacostia High School – 29.5%

The 2023-2024 Facilities Utilization Data indicates there is capacity for in-boundary enrollment of new students. It is unlikely school-aged children who may reside in the four proposed units would have a significant impact on designated schools.

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

The application was referred to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) at [Exhibit 12](#). The property is within .10 miles of the A31, V2 and V4 WMATA bus stop along Minnesota Avenue.

The Pope Branch and Fort Dupont Parks, and the Therapeutic Recreation Center are within less than a mile. OP does not anticipate the addition of four units should not negatively impact the city's infrastructure or amenities. OP defers to the DPR for comment on the adequacy of the neighborhood recreation facilities and on the DDOT for comments on the adequacy of the public streets.

- 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.*

The current design shows the main building entrance on the south-facing façade with the retention of the existing entrance and architectural features, and the removal of the existing rear exits and stairs from the first and second floors on the north-facing façade. The renovation of the cellar to include two additional units should not result in significant changes to the exterior of the building, except for new window wells which would include steel railing to restrict passage from the ground level. The window wells should have limited visual impacts at the front, rear and side of the building. There should be minimal impacts to grading on the site.

The existing two-story building is brick, with a faux mansard roof on the front elevation. The proposed third floor would not exceed the maximum height allowed for the zone and the degree of privacy for adjacent properties should not change. As originally proposed, the third floor was designed to remove the existing rooftop elements, be flush with the existing front façade and have vinyl siding for the entire addition, including the parapet. OP discussed with the applicant keeping the existing mansard roofline and pushing the proposed third-floor apartments behind that, which would maintain the roofline and improve visual consistency with the attached apartment building. However, the applicant informed OP that this was not feasible, as it would impact four separate units, making the project no longer viable. Instead, the applicant has agreed to include instead a similar mansard roof atop the third floor, to which OP has no objection. The applicant will supplement the record with these revised drawings.

The applicant proposes to remove trees in the rear yard to provide parking and trees in the front to allow a window well. Although these trees are not Special or Heritage

Trees, so their removal is permitted, the applicant is encouraged to provide additional trees on the property as replacement.

The applicant also proposes a wooden trash enclosure in the rear yard with pick-up access from the rear public alley. Three off-street parking spaces are proposed in the rear yard, one of which would be an accessible space. Parking and trash would be accessed by a paved path from the front of the building.

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.*

Exhibits 2, 5 and 6 are provided in the record as the Applicant's plat, photographs and plans respectively. The plan includes the Site/Landscape plan at Sheet AR100 (page 7) that shows proposed tree removal, proposed parking and trash enclosure, all towards the rear of the of the property.

Subtitle X § 901.2

- a. *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 areas predominantly developed with low- to moderate-density development, including low-rise apartments, which are permitted with the approval of a special exception, but does not establish a maximum number of units. For this proposal, the applicant proposes four additional apartments and a third story which would not exceed the maximum number of stories/building height or lot occupancy. No height or bulk related relief is requested. Therefore, the request is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning maps.

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

The requested special exception relief would not appear to adversely affect the use, light, air or privacy of the abutting property, which is also an apartment building. The applicant has proposed three parking spaces off-street, accessible from the rear alley, which exceeds the minimum required number of parking spaces.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT has informed OP that they intend to file a separate report before the hearing.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

To date, ANC 7B has not provided any comments to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

There have been no community comments submitted to the record at the filing of this report.

LOCATION MAP

