


## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

**FROM:** Ron Barron, Case Manager  
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

**DATE:** October 30, 2024

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 21192: Request for special exception relief to construct a community center in an existing semi-detached building at 3320 Brown Street, NW.

### I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 and Subtitle X § 901:

- Subtitle U § 201, matter of right uses (Residential use allowed by-right; Corner Store use (vacant) existing; Community Center use proposed)

### II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	3320 Brown Street, NW
Applicant:	Brown Street Maker Cooperative
Legal Description:	Square 2611, Lot 804
Ward / ANC:	Ward 1; ANC 1D
Zone:	RF-1
Historic Districts	Mount Pleasant Historic District
Lot Characteristics:	Regular corner lot with approx. 14 ft. front and rear lot lines and 60 ft. side lot lines.
Existing Development:	One story commercial structure most recently used as a corner store, now vacant.
Adjacent Properties:	To the north, the subject property shares a front lot line with Newton St. NW; to the east, it abuts Brown St. NW; to the south it abuts 3314 Brown St. NW, a private residence; to the east it abuts 1642 Newton St. NW, a private residence.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The neighborhood is primarily residential in character, typified by two- and three-story attached residential structures.
Proposed Development:	To convert an existing attached, one-story commercial building on a corner lot to a community center. The application does not indicate external additions or major alterations to the building.

### III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed <sup>1</sup>	Relief:
Density E § 201 (302)	2 principal units max.	n/a – non-residential use	No Change	None Requested
Lot Width E § 202 (201)	18 ft. min.	13.9 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Area E § 202 (201)	1,800 sq. ft. min.	832 sq.ft.	No Change	None Requested
Height E § 203 (303)	35 ft. max.	18.2 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Front Yard E § 206 (305)	Within range of nearest neighbors	Conforming	No Change	None Requested
Rear Yard E § 207 (306)	20 ft. min.	0 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Side Yard E § 208 (307)	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	12.3 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210 (304)	60% max.	77.5%	No Change	None Requested
Parking C § 701	0 spaces	0 spaces	No Change	None Requested
<b>Matter of right uses U § 201</b>	<b>Special exception required for Community Center use</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Community Center Use</b>	<b>Sp. Ex. Requested</b>

### IV. OP ANALYSIS

#### Subtitle U, § 203 SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES – R-USE GROUPS A, B, AND C

203.1 *The following uses shall be permitted in R-Use Groups A, B, and C, if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as a special exception pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 9 and subject to the applicable conditions for each use below:*

- (d) *Community center building, park, playground, swimming pool, or athletic field, operated by a local community organization or association, subject to the following conditions:*
  - (1) *The use shall not be organized for profit, but shall be organized exclusively for the promotion of the social welfare of the neighborhood in which it is proposed to be located;*

Proposed use will not be organized for profit. The applicant operates a nonprofit organization and the proposed use would be consistent with the requirements of this section. The proposed makerspace is intended for the enrichment and use of nearby residents as well as residents throughout the district.

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- (2) *The use shall not include retail sales to the general public but may charge a fee to members for services, which may include refreshments;*

The proposed use would not include retail sales. The applicant intends to use the space for classes and community events exclusively.

- (3) *The use shall not likely become objectionable in a R zone because of noise or traffic; and*

The proposed community use space would be unlikely to create objectionable conditions due to noise or traffic. The space would be utilized for classes and community enrichment activities. Further the space has a limited capacity which would minimize the potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

- (4) *The use shall be reasonably necessary or convenient to the neighborhood in which it is proposed to be located;*

Approval of the proposed special exception would be consistent with the requirements of this section. The proposed use is intended to provide education and community enrichment activities which would be conveniently accessible to the immediate neighbors and adjacent neighborhoods.

#### **Subtitle X Section 901 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW STANDARDS**

*901.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment is authorized under § 8 of the Zoning Act, D.C. Official Code § 6-641.07(g)(2), to grant special exceptions, as provided in this title, where, in the judgment of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the special exceptions:*

- (a) *Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;*

Approval of the requested special exception would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning regulations and the zoning maps. The RF-1 zone specifically envisions nonresidential activities which are complementary to the matter of right residential uses. The proposed Community Center with its classes and other community activities would be consistent with the purpose and intent of this zone.

- (b) *Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and*

Approval of the requested special exception would be unlikely to adversely affect the use of neighboring properties. The subject property sits on a corner lot what and although it does immediately abut multiple residential properties, the main activity what take place along Newton and Brown streets NW.

#### **V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

DDOT reviewed the application and indicated they had no objection to approval of the requested special exception.

No other district agencies have provided comment to the record at the time of this writing.

## VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 1D has not submitted a report to the record at the time of this writing.

## VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

No comments have been submitted by members of the community at the time of this writing.

**Figure 1: Location Map**

