


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Maxine Brown-Roberts, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: March 25, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA # 21255: Special Exception relief for a garage at the rear of 4725 Yuma Street, NW in the R-1B zone

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exceptions pursuant to Subtitle D § 5201 and Subtitle X, § 901.2:

- Subtitle D § 207.1, Rear Yard (25 ft. max.; 61.66 feet existing; 42.58 ft. proposed); and
- Subtitle D § 5004.1(a), Accessory Building in a rear yard.

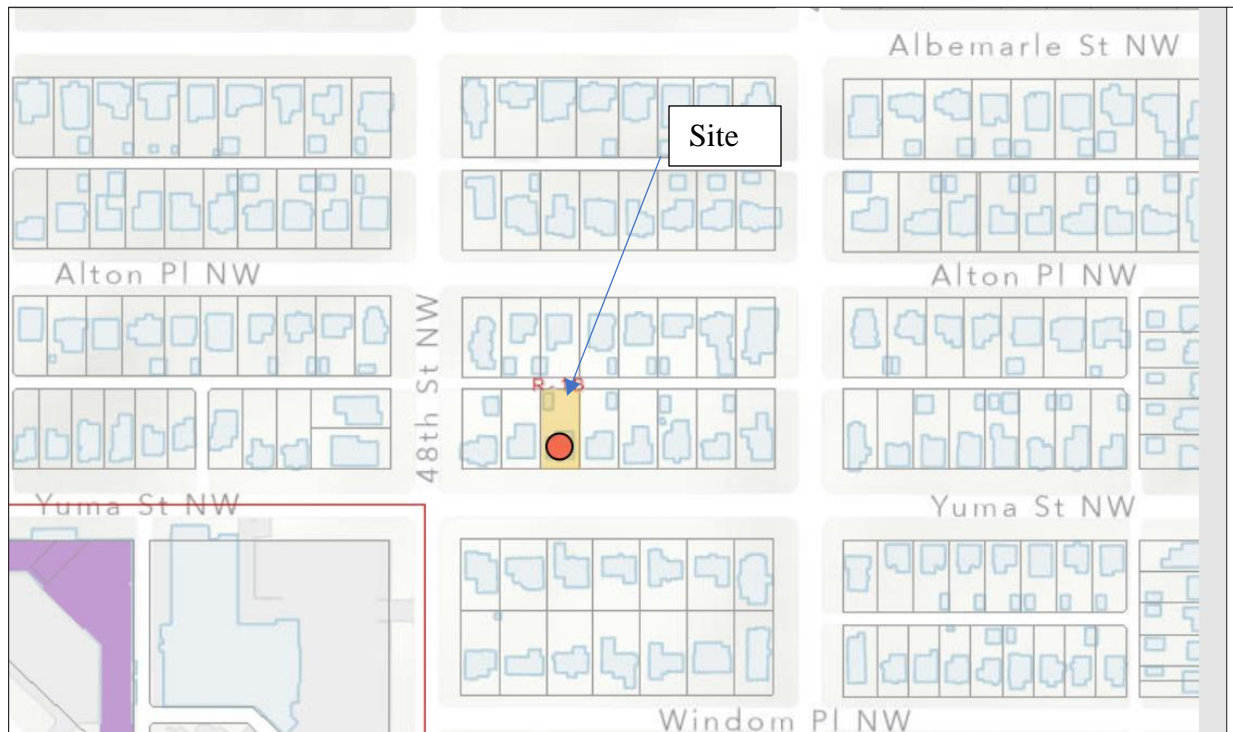
The applicant, in this self-certified filing, requests both rear yard relief and relief to allow the accessory building to be partially within the required rear yard. The rear yard relief does not appear to be required under the current zoning regulations, as the property would maintain a rear yard well in access of the required, although the proposed addition would result in the accessory building being partially within the rear yard, requiring relief. As the special exception review standards are the same for both forms of relief, OP had provided analysis and recommendation accordingly.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	4725 Yuma Street, N.W.
Applicants	William Paul Wallace represented by Studiombdc.com
Legal Description	Square 1534, Lot 33
Ward, ANC	Ward 3, ANC 3E
Zone	R-1B – low density residential
Historic Districts	None
Lot Characteristics	The rectangular lot has 5,100 square feet of area and 50-feet of frontage along Yuma Street. The rear of the lot abuts a 16-foot-wide alley.
Existing Development	The property is currently developed with a two-story detached house.
Adjacent Properties	Adjacent properties are developed with detached dwellings.

Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood character is low density residential, consisting primarily of detached dwellings.
Proposed Development	The Applicant proposes a two-story, rear addition and a one-story rear porch addition.

Site Location and Zoning



III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R-1-B Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width D § 302	50 ft. min.	50 ft.	50 ft.	Conforming
Lot Area D § 302	5,000 sq. ft. min.	5,100 sq. ft.	5,100 sq. ft.	Conforming
Height D § 303	40 ft. max.	22.6 ft.	44.6 ft.	None requested
Accessory Building D § 5002.1	2-stories/22 ft.	15 ft./1-story	15 ft./1-story	None requested
Lot Occupancy D § 304	40% max by-right 50% max. by sp.ex.	20.2%	35%	None requested
Front Setback D § 305	Within the range of existing setbacks on the same side of the street.	15 ft.	unchanged	None requested

R-1-B Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Rear Yard D § 306	25 ft. min.	61.66 ft.	42.58 ft.	Sp. Ex. Requested
Accessory Building D § 5004.1(a),	Not within the required rear yard.	Not within the required rear yard.	Partly within the required rear yard.	Sp. Ex. Required
Side Yard D § 206	8 ft. min., both sides	East – 8.33ft. West – 8.5 ft.	East – 8.33 ft. West – 8.5 ft.	None requested
Alley Centerline Setback D § 5004.1(b)	Minimum 8 ft. from the centerline of alley.	12.66 ft.	unchanged	None requested
Pervious Surface D § 308	50% min.	Not provided	Not provided	None requested
Parking C § 701	1	1	1	None requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

The property currently has a rear yard of 61.66 feet of which 25 feet is the required rear yard. With the addition, the rear yard would be reduced to 42.58 feet. With the reduced rear yard, the existing garage would be partially within the area of the required rear yard. The Applicant seeks relief for the reduced rear yard, although as noted above, it does not appear this relief is needed, and the accessory building within the rear yard (Subtitle D § 5004.1(a) pursuant to Subtitle D § 5201 and Subtitle X § 901, which does appear to be required.

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

5201.1 not applicable

5201.2 *For a new or enlarged accessory structure to a residential building with only one (1) principal dwelling unit on a non-alley lot, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards 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 as limited in Table D § 5201.1(a):*
- (b) *Maximum building area of an accessory building;*
- (c) ***Yards**, including alley centerline setback; and*
- (d) *Pervious surface.*

The Applicant proposes to construct a rear addition to the principal building. The existing accessory garage, partially within the rear yard of the principal building, would remain. The Applicant has requested relief for an accessory structure partially within a required rear yard, consistent with this provision.

5201.3 Not applicable 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 one-story garage sits on the northwestern portion of the site at an elevation that is lower than the house to the east, is setback from the house to the west and is also separated by vegetation and fencing on both properties. The proposed house addition would maintain larger than required rear and side yards, and would be no taller than the existing house. Therefore, the proposed construction should continue to not unduly effect the light and air to the adjacent properties.

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

The existing one-story garage on the north-western portion of the property would continue to not unduly affect the privacy of the residents of the property to the west due to its small size, and the presence of vegetation and the fencing. The property to the north has a garage that faces the alley, so the privacy and use of that property should not be unduly affected. The garage is at a lower elevation than the property to the east and since its size and location would not change it should continue to have no impact on the privacy of the property to the east. The rear addition to the house, which results in the garage being partially within the rear yard, likewise should not unduly impact privacy. Although the proposed addition would have new windows on the side walls, and both adjacent neighbors also have windows on their side walls, this is standard for properties in this area, and side yards on all properties and some screening would limit potential impacts. The adjacent property owners are in support of the proposal.

- (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 addition would not be highly visible from Yuma Street but would be visible from the rear alley. The addition would be designed to complement the house, and it would be well back from the alley with the accessory garage and rear yard in between. The Applicant also proposes to upgrade the garage structure to improve its appearance. Therefore, the proposal should not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of buildings.

- (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 graphical representations including plans, photographs, and elevations sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed garage to adjacent buildings and views from the street and alley (Exhibits 2, 4, 7, and 11).

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 in the way of design, screening, lighting, building materials, or other features.

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 existing house is used as a principle dwelling unit, which is permitted in the R-1-B zone. The proposed addition and the accessory garage would be within the permitted height and number of stories allowed under zoning.

General Special Exception requirements of Subtitle X, Chapter 901.2

- i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?*

The R-1-B zone allows detached residences and detached accessory buildings. The property would remain with the use, building height, and bulk anticipated by the zone. To allow for the reduction in the rear yard, the applicant has demonstrated that the requirements of Subtitle D § 5201 would be met, as demonstrated above. The proposal would therefore be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Map.

- ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?*

As addressed and demonstrated above, light and air or privacy of the adjacent properties should not be unduly impacted by this proposal.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) submitted its recommendation at Exhibit 20.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

The property is within ANC-3E. As of the date of this report, the ANC had not filed comments to the record, but the Applicant states that the ANC voted to support the proposal at its March 13, 2025 meeting.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

At Exhibit 6 are indications from adjacent neighbors of support, filed by the applicant.