


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: March 20, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21262: Request for special exception relief to allow construction of a two-story rear addition, to an existing, attached, two-story with basement, principal dwelling unit in the R-3/GT zone.at 2728 O Street, NW.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Subtitle D § 207.1, rear yard requirements (20 ft. required, 9.3 ft. existing; 9.3 ft. proposed); and
- Subtitle D § 210.1, lot occupancy requirements (60% max., 64.6% existing; 68.3% proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	2728 O Street, NW
Applicants	Ian Packman and Ellen Carlson [Martin Sullivan, rep]
Legal Description	Square 1239, Lot 854
Ward, ANC	Ward 2; ANC 2E
Zone	R-3/GT
Historic Districts	Georgetown Historic District
Lot Characteristics	A regular lot with 771 sq. ft. of area, 25 ft. front and rear lot lines and 30 ft. side lot lines. This lot is one of three particularly small adjacent lots on this block, which has a wide variety of lot sizes.
Existing Development	The property is improved with a 2-story with basement, attached, single-family rowhome.
Adjacent Properties	The property abuts O Street NW to the north, an attached single-family rowhome at 2726 O St. NW to the east, a semi-attached single-family rowhome at 1359 28TH ST NW to the south, and an attached, multi-family rowhome at 1363 28 th St. NW/2730 O St. NW to the west.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The neighborhood is characterized predominantly by attached and semi-attached single-family homes.

Proposed Development	Two-story rear addition to an existing 2-story with basement, attached, single-family rowhome
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III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width D § 202	40 ft. min.	26 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Area D § 202	4,000 sq.ft. min.	771 sq. ft.	No Change	None Requested
Height D § 1101	35 ft. max.	23 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Front Setback D § 1103	In-line with neighboring properties	Complies	No Change	None Requested
Rear Yard D § 207	20 ft. min.	9.3 ft.	No Change	Sp. Ex. Relief Requested
Side Yard D § 1104	0 for attached buildings	0 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Occupancy D § 210	60% max. by right 70% max by sp. ex.	64.6%.	68.3%	Sp. Ex. Relief Requested
Parking C § 701	1 min.	0	No Change	None Requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

The applicant is proposing a two-story addition that would align the rear wall with an existing small projection on the eastern wall of the principal structure. The current rear yard measures 9.3 ft., which is more than 10 ft. below the rear yard requirements. The proposed construction would not reduce this distance. The proposed addition would also increase the lot occupancy from 64.6% to 68.3%.

Subtitle D § 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 For an addition to a principal residential building with one (1) principal dwelling unit on a non-alley lot or for a new principal residential building on a substandard non-alley record lot as described by Subtitle C § 301.1, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards of this subtitle 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 subject to the following table:***

TABLE D § 5201.1(a): MAXIMUM PERMITTED LOT OCCUPANCY BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION

Zones	Type of Structure	Maximum Percentage of Lot Occupancy (%)
All R-3 zones except R-3/GT	All Structures	70
R-3/GT	Row	
R-3/GT	Detached Semi-detached	50
All other R zones	All Structures	

(b) *Yards, including alley centerline setback; and*

(c) *Pervious surface.*

The proposed lot occupancy is consistent with what may be granted by special exception under this section. The maximum allowable matter-of-right lot occupancy in the R-3/GT zone is 60%. The principal structure is a row-dwelling which allows up to 70% lot occupancy by special exception. The principal structure has an existing nonconforming lot occupancy of 64.6%. The proposed addition would increase this nonconformity to 68.3%.

The proposed rear yard is also consistent with what may be granted by special exception under this section. The minimum rear yard for matter-of-right approval is 20 ft. The existing rear yard is 9.3 ft., and this is what is proposed for the addition.

5201.2 & 5201.3 not relevant to this application

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 requested special exception relief would not unduly affect the light and air available to neighboring properties. The western party wall of the principal structure has an at-risk window that belongs to the adjacent property to the west. While this will affect the light and air available to this specific window, at-risk windows on a neighbor's property have not typically not been a deciding factor in case such as this, particularly if the window is not the primary or only window into a main room of that house. Even so, the applicant is encouraged to continue discussions with the owner of the next door property to discuss and address this issue. There should not be undue impacts on other neighboring properties.

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

The requested special exception relief would not unduly compromise the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties. The new addition would include windows parallel to a neighboring property to the south, situated along the rear lot line of the subject property. The view from the new addition would look onto the north-facing side wall of that property. However, these

views do not appear to be significantly more intrusive than current conditions. The subject property has existing views from both the 3-season sunroom on the ground level and an existing window on the second floor. The ground floor would continue to be used as a sunroom, representing neither a change in use nor creating any new views. The second level would be used as an office.

- (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 requested special exception relief would not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage. The addition would not be visible from the street and does not abut a public alleyway.

- (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 sufficient graphical representations to meet the conditions of this section.

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 specific special treatment or screening.

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 requested special exception relief would not introduce nor expand of a nonconforming use, lot occupancy beyond what is authorized in this section, height, or number of stories.

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;*

The requested special exception relief would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the R-3/GT. The purpose and intent of the R zones is to provide for the orderly development and use of land and structures in areas predominantly characterized by low- to moderate-density residential development and the R-3 zones specifically envision rowhouse development. The existing structure is a rowhouse and the proposed addition would not affect that use.

In addition, the proposed rear addition would be consistent with the intent of the R-3/GT zone. The proposed addition would have no discernable impact on the historic character, buildings, and open

space of the R-3/GT zone. The plans were reviewed by State Historic Preservation, who cited no concerns. The proposed rear addition would also not exceed lot coverage beyond what is allowed by special exception under the regulations and would likely have no discernable impact on the quiet residential character of the neighborhood.

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

The use of neighboring property would not appear to be unduly affected. As noted above, the applicant is encouraged to continue discussions with the neighbor to the west regarding the at-risk window on the adjoining wall.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No other District agencies submitted comments to the record at this time.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 2E submitted a resolution at [Ex. 23](#) in opposition to the requested special exception relief.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At Exhibit 25 is a request for party status in opposition.

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map:

