


## MEMORANDUM

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

**FROM:** Shepard Beamon, Development Review Specialist  
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

**DATE:** March 7, 2025

**SUBJECT:** BZA Case 21268: Expedited Review Request for special exception relief to install an awning above the rear yard deck of an existing rowhouse at 305 Rock Creek Church Road NW.

### I. RECOMMENDATION

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

- E § 210.1 Lot Occupancy (60% required, 49% existing; 63% proposed)

### II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	305 Rock Creek Road Church NW
Applicant:	Sarah Makonnen
Legal Description:	Square 3314, Lot 42
Ward / ANC:	4C
Zone:	RF-1, low to moderated density residential
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics:	Trapezoidal-shaped parcel measuring 1,073 sq.ft. in area
Existing Development:	Two-story rowhouse
Adjacent Properties:	Attached and semi-detached two-story dwellings
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The surrounding neighborhood consists of attached and semi-detached dwellings and the Armed Forces Retirement Home across the street.
Proposed Development:	To construct a 10x16 foot motorized retractable awning over the existing rear deck/patio measuring 13 feet above the ground.

### III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed <sup>1</sup>	Relief:
Density E § 201	2 principal units max.	1 dwelling	No change	None requested
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min.	20 ft.	No change	None requested
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,073 sq. ft.	No change	None requested
Height E § 203	35 ft. max.	Not provided	No change	None requested
Front Yard E § 206	Block average	15 ft.	No change	None requested
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	17.6 ft.	No change	None requested
Side Yard E § 208	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	0 ft.	No change	None requested
Court E § 209	2.5 in./1 ft. height min. = ft.	N/A	N/A	None requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max. 70% spec. exception	49%	63%	<b>Relief requested</b>
Parking C § 701	1 per dwelling	N/A	N/A	None requested

### IV. OP ANALYSIS

#### Subtitle E Chapter 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

*5201.1 For an addition to a principal residential building 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 up to a maximum of seventy percent (70%) for all new and existing structures on the lot;*
- (b) Yards, including alley centerline setback;*
- (c) Courts; and*
- (d) Pervious surface.*

The applicant is requesting a special exception for lot occupancy of up to 63% to allow an awning over an existing deck.

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*5201.2 & 5201.3 not relevant to this application*

*5201.4 An applicant for special exception under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new building, or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:*

*(a) The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected;*

The existing dwelling is recessed further from the rear walls of the neighboring dwellings and the proposed awning would occupy this space. The property to the south has a side window facing the rear yard of the subject property; however, any impact should be minimal, and neighbors have expressed no opposition to the proposed awning which would be retractable. Therefore, the proposed awning should not unduly impact light and air for the neighboring properties.

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

The proposed awning over the existing deck is intended to provide additional screening and privacy for the subject property and could somewhat limit views to and from surrounding properties. The adjacent neighbors have submitted letters in support and have expressed no privacy concerns. Therefore, the proposed awning should have no impact on the use and enjoyment of the neighboring properties.

*(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 proposal would not be visible from Rock Creek Church Road. The awning would be visible from the rear alley, but is clearly ancillary to the building, is retractable, and serves a more functional purpose; therefore, the color and material of the awning should not negatively impact the character, scale, and pattern of houses in the surrounding area.

*(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 application materials include site survey, plans and elevation drawings of the proposed awning and photos of the existing conditions at Exhibits [2](#), [4](#) and [5](#).

*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.*

No special treatment is recommended.

*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.*

Granting the requested lot occupancy is within that which is allowed by special exception in the RF-1 zone and would not allow the introduction of a nonconforming use as the

property would continue to be for residential use.

## **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 proposal would be consistent with the purpose and intent of the RF-1 zone as the requested relief would be consistent with all other requirements found in Subtitle E, Chapter 2, and the lot occupancy would be within that which is allowed by special exception. It would not result in a building use or form that would be beyond what is anticipated for this zone.

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

As noted above, the requested relief should not unduly impact the use of neighboring properties as it relates to light, air, and privacy of view from adjacent streets. As the applicant proposes a motorized retractable awning, the awning may not always be fully extended. The applicant has received support for the proposed awning from both adjacent properties.

- (c) Subject in specific cases to the special conditions specified in this title.*

OP does not recommend special conditions.

## **V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES**

DDOT has informed OP that they have no objection to the requested relief.

## **VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION**

ANC 4C has not provided comments to the record as of the date of this report.

## **VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

There are three letters of support from the properties on either side of the property filed to the record.



## LOCATION MAP

