


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: April 17, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21277: Third-floor addition and a three-story rear addition to an existing row dwelling at 1513 D Street SE.

I. RECOMMENDATION

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

- Lot Occupancy E § 210.1 (60% required, 51.8% existing; 69.4% proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	1513 D Street SE
Applicant:	Jennifer Fowler on behalf of Erica Spencer
Legal Description:	Square 1075, Lot 76 (Tax Lot)
Ward / ANC:	7D
Zone:	RF-1
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular, interior lot measuring 1,223 sq. ft. in area with rear alley access
Existing Development:	Two-story single-family row dwelling
Adjacent Properties:	Two-story single-family row dwellings on either side.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The surrounding neighborhood consists of two- to three-story row dwellings.
Proposed Development:	Construct a third-floor addition over the existing house and a three-story dog-leg infill and rear addition to an existing row dwelling.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief:
Density E § 201	2 principal units max.	1 dwelling unit	No change	None requested
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min. (Row dwelling)	14.92 ft.	No change	None requested

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief:
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min. (Row dwelling)	1,223 sq. ft.	No change	None requested
Front Yard E § 206	Within the range of existing front setbacks	N/A	No change	None requested
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	28.5 ft.	20.08 ft.	None requested
Side Yard E § 208	N/A	N/A	N/A	None requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max. 70% sp. ex.	51.8%	69.4%	Relief requested
Parking C § 701	1 per principal dwelling	1 space	No change	None requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

Subtitle E Chapter 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY BUILDING

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 under Subtitle E § 5003 up to a maximum of seventy percent (70%) for all new and existing structures on the lot;*

The applicant proposes a new third floor and rear addition on a tax lot, which would not result in the property exceeding the maximum lot occupancy allowed by 70%. The applicant proposes to expand the living space for the existing single-family dwelling.

- (b) Yards, including alley centerline setback;*
(c) Courts; and
(d) Pervious surface.

5201.2-3 Not applicable.

5201.4 An applicant for special exception under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new building, or accessory building 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 requested relief should not result in a building that would have an undue impact on neighboring properties. The proposed additions should not significantly interfere with airflow and light for adjacent properties, as the new construction would not exceed the maximum building height and would meet the required rear yard. The requested relief for the proposed rear addition and third floor may result in some

additional shadow on the rear yard of the properties based on the building orientation, but this should not result in an undue impact on quality light and air, and neighboring resident to the west has provided a letter in support to the record.

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

The proposed rear addition is designed to have no windows on either side so should not result in significant direct views into the adjacent rear yards. The proposed third floor would have windows on the east-facing façade, but they would be recessed 3.5 feet from the side lot line. The property east of the subject property does not have a third floor, therefore, the proposed third floor would not have views directly into the neighboring dwelling windows. The proposal would meet the 20-foot rear yard and is located on a 30-foot rear alley, which provides sufficient distance from other rear properties and reduces views. Therefore, the proposed additions should not unduly impact the privacy of use and enjoyment of the neighboring properties.

- (c) *The proposed addition or accessory building, 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;*

The third-floor addition would be visible from D Street SE. Most dwellings on the street are two stories and are similar in architectural character. With the new third floor, the building would retain the existing architectural features including the brick facade, windows and cornice. Although the new floor proposes differing building material, attempting to match or mimic the existing architecture could result in a final product that visually conflicts more with the surrounding character.

When viewed from the rear alley, the rear addition would be visible. There currently does not appear to be a distinctive development pattern along the alley, therefore, so it is not anticipated that the addition would visually intrude upon the character, pattern or scale when compared to other homes.

- (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 building to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

The applicant has provided sufficient graphical representation, including plans, photographs, elevations, and renderings.

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 as it relates to the requested lot occupancy.

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 applicant does not propose the introduction or expansion of a use or development standards beyond what is authorized in this section.

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 relief would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations as it would not exceed the maximum building height, minimum rear yard and the maximum occupancy allowed by special exception. The rear addition would not result in the loss of on-site parking. Since this is a tax lot, the applicant will need to convert lot to a lot of record before a building permit can be issued.

- (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 proposed building and use should not unduly adversely impact the neighboring properties.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT has informed OP that they have no objection to the approval of the application.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the date of this report, ANC 7D had not filed comments to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

There are three letters of support filed to the record at Exhibits 13, 14, and 15.

LOCATION MAP

