


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: May 7, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21282 - request for special exception relief pursuant to allow an addition to an accessory structure

I. RECOMMENDATION

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

- Subtitle E § 210 Lot Occupancy (60% max permitted, 64.4% existing; 64.4% proposed)
- Subtitle U § 301.1(g) Expansion of an accessory building for residential use – (garage existing; garage and residential use proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	917 Constitution Avenue NE
Applicant:	Pat and Cheri DeQuattro
Legal Description:	Square 940, Lot 0017
Ward / ANC:	Ward 6 / ANC 6A
Zone:	RF-1 Zone – row dwellings.
Historic Districts	Capitol Hill HD
Lot Characteristics:	The lot is long and narrow, abutting an 8-feet wide rear alley at an angle at the property line.
Existing Development:	The property is developed with a brick row dwelling and a one-story garage structure at the rear.
Adjacent Properties:	The subject property abuts similarly developed properties to the east and west.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The surrounding neighborhood is within the Capitol Hill Historic District, with row dwellings and institutional uses and some federal properties.
Proposed Development:	The Applicant has proposed a second story to the garage, which is proposed for use by the residents of the home or principal structure.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief:
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min.	21.4 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	2,539 sq. ft.	No change	None required
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max.	64.4 %	Existing non-conformity	S.E. required
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	41.1 ft.	No change	None required
Side Yard E § 307	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	0 ft.	No change	None required
Parking C § 701	1 per dwelling unit	1 space	No change	None required
Accessory Building Height E § 5002	22 ft. max.; 2 stories	10 ft. 1 story	18.6 ft. 2 stories	None required
Use: U § 301.1 (g)	Expansion of accessory building for residential use	One-story garage	2 -story accessory building with garage and residential use above garage.	S.E required

IV. ANALYSIS

Subtitle E Chapter 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 Not relevant to this application.

5201.2 *For a new or enlarged accessory structure to a residential building 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** under Subtitle E § 5003 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 existing and proposed structure would have a total lot occupancy of 64.4%.

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;*

Light and air to neighboring properties should not be unduly affected, since shadows would be minimal on the abutting garages, and would be primarily on the roof of the adjacent garages as shown in the Sun Study at [Exhibit 9](#). The accessory building is between two others at the rear of the lot, and a large rear yard would be retained.

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

Privacy should not be significantly impacted, as the rear of the subject property has windows that already provide some visibility into rear yards of abutting homes and vice versa. The upper-floor addition has windows but they would also face into the subject rear yard.

- (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 addition would not be visually different from the similar two-story garage structure at #919 Constitution Ave to the east of the property, or other such structures along the alley.

- (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.*

This information was provided in [Exhibits 2, 5, 24, 8, and 9](#) of the record.

- 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 suggest additional treatment to the addition to mitigate any impacts.

- 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 addition does not exceed any bulk or area requirements for residential use in the zone and the addition is not intended to introduce any use beyond what is permitted.

Subtitle X Section 901 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW STANDARDS

Pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 and Subtitle U §301.1(g)

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 proposed accessory building addition satisfies the intent of the Regulations and would maintain the character of the RF-1 district including the density and use standards in the zone. The addition would not increase the existing lot occupancy, height or yard requirements beyond what currently exists or permitted. The Applicant has stated that with the addition, the use would continue to be accessory to the principal dwelling.

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

As discussed, the proposed addition would not adversely impact abutting or neighboring properties due to noise, a reduction in light and air, or privacy. The record includes immediate neighbor support for the addition at Exhibits 10 and 11. To date, there are no objections to the addition in the record.

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

Specific criteria under Subtitle E § 5201 have been addressed and satisfied.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

There are no reports from other District agencies in the record at the writing of this report.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

At regularly scheduled meeting of ANC 6A on April 10, 2025, the ANC voted in support of the proposed second story addition to the garage structure.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Letters in support at Exhibits [10](#) and [11](#) from abutting neighbors at #919 and #915 respectively.

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map

