

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Philip Bradford, AICP, Development Review Specialist
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: May 7, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21300: Request for special exception relief to allow a rear porch addition to an existing detached principal dwelling.

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:

- Rear Yard, D § 207.1 (25 ft. required, 22.96 ft. existing; 4.6 ft. proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	4250 Fordham Road NW
Applicants	Sullivan & Barros LLP on behalf of Joseph Catlett and John Jenkins Trustees
Legal Description	Square 1476, Lot 0898
Ward, ANC	Ward 3; ANC 3D
Zone	R-1A
Lot Characteristics	Irregular shaped lot roughly 126 ft. wide by 86 ft. long with frontage on Fordham Road NW and 49 th Street NW.
Existing Development	Two story with basement principal dwelling unit.
Adjacent Properties	Single family dwellings and Spring Valley Shopping Center
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Primarily low density residential in character with the adjacent shopping center zoned MU-4.
Proposed Development	A new one story porch addition over an existing enclosed patio at the rear of the dwelling.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED.

R Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width D § 202 (302)	75 ft. min.	111.41 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Area D § 202	7,500 sq.ft. min.	8,627 sq.ft.	No change	None required

Board of Zoning Adjustment

District of Columbia

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R Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height D § 203	40 ft. max.	29 ft.	No change	None required
Front Setback D § 206	Within range of existing adjacent buildings	Within range.	No change	None required
Rear Yard D § 207	25 ft. min.	22.96 ft.	4.6 ft.	Special Exception Relief Requested
Side Yard D § 207	8 ft. min.	Right: 27.69 Left: 10.1 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Occupancy D § 210	40 % max. by right 50 % max by sp.ex.	25 %.	30 %	None required
Parking C § 701	1 min.	1	No change	None required

IV. OP ANALYSIS

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.

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 proposed screened porch is a single story 408 square foot addition that remains within the height and lot occupancy limits of the zone. The proposed location is the same as the existing patio and the proposed height and general aesthetic is similar to the existing privacy trellises that line the existing open patio. The open nature of the structure should not result in undue obstruction of light and air available to adjacent properties.

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

The proposed screened porch is located at the rear of the primary structure in the rear yard area where this type of structure is common. There are existing fences and mature landscaping that provides visual separation between properties. As such, undue impacts are not anticipated in terms of privacy and use of enjoyment of 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 proposed addition would be at the rear of the principal building and would not be visible from the street frontage at Fordham Road NW or 49th Street NW. Its scale and design do not visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street.

(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 plans, photographs, and elevations sufficient to represent the proposed addition and its relationship to the adjacent buildings and public ways.

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.

The applicant is requesting special exception relief to reduce the required rear yard as allowed by special exception.

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;*

Granting the requested special exception will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps. The property is located in the R-1A zone which is intended to provide for detached houses on large lots. The property will remain a single unit dwelling, and the proposed rear yard relief is within that is permitted by special exception.

- (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 or adversely impact the use of neighboring properties.

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

The form of relief is within the allowed criteria of D § 5201, provided above.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

At the writing of this report, no comments from any District agencies have been submitted to the record.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

At the writing of this report, no comments from ANC 3D have been submitted to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At [Exhibit 17](#), is a letter in support of the application.

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map:

