

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Shepard Beamon, Development Review Specialist

JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: June 5, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21315: Expedited request, special exception relief to construct a one-story rear porch addition to a semi-detached dwelling.

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 § 207.1, rear yard (20 ft. required, 28 ft. 1.75 in. existing; 18 ft. 7.75 in. proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	750 18 th Street NE
Applicant:	Jennifer Fowler for Chelsey Simonovich and Benjamin Brockschmidt
Legal Description:	Square 4507, Lot 118
Ward / ANC:	5D
Zone:	RF-4
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics:	Irregular lot measuring 1,449 sq. ft. that narrows toward the rear, and with rear and south side alley access.
Existing Development:	A two-story, semi-detached single-family dwelling.
Adjacent Properties:	The subject property abuts a two-story, attached dwelling to the north and is separated from attached, three-story dwellings to the south by a 16 ft. alleyway.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The neighborhood is characterized by a variety of housing ranging from two to four-story attached and semi-detached buildings.
Proposed Development:	To construct a one-story rear porch.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief:
Density E § 201	2 principal units max.	1 unit	No Change	None Requested

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RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief:
Lot Width E § 202	17 ft. min.	27.22 ft. to 4.31 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,449 sq. ft.	No Change	None Requested
Height E § 203	35 ft. max.	19.5 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Front Yard E § 206	Range of existing	N/A	No Change	None Requested
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	28 ft. 1.75 in.	18 ft. 7.75 in.	Sp. Ex. Relief Requested
Side Yard E § 208	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	0 ft.	No Change	None Requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max.	39.3%	48.7%	None requested
Parking C § 701	1 Space	N/A	N/A	None Requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

The applicant proposes to construct a one-story rear porch to an existing two-story semi-detached dwelling. The proposed porch would extend one foot 4.25 inches into the 20-foot required rear yard, therefore, the applicant requests special exception relief.

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 requests special exception relief to reduce the rear yard from 28 ft. 1.75 in. to 18 ft. 7.75 in. to construct a rear porch.

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 proposed relief would be unlikely to unduly affect light and air for neighboring properties. The proposed porch would be one-story and should not significantly reduce the neighboring property to north access to adequate sunlight and airflow.

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

The proposed addition should not significantly affect the enjoyment of neighboring properties, as it is only one story in height with the door and most windows facing their own back yard. Windows on the north, adjoining wall are piano windows set 5 feet above the floor level, which should limit any potential impact on privacy for the adjacent property, and that neighbor has submitted a letter of support.

(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 not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage. These changes will not be visible from the street and would be minimally visible when viewed from the alleyway, as it is one story and located behind a privacy fence.

(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 provided sufficient graphical representations to satisfy this requirement.

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.*

The Office of Planning does not recommend any special treatment.

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 should not result in the expansion 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 proposed addition would be designed to maintain the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage. This would not result in a form or height of development or intensity of use on this site that would be inconsistent with the intent of 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, approval of the requested special exception should not tend to adversely affect the use of neighboring property. The proposed porch would not be visible from the street, and would not visibly disrupt the character or view from the alleyway. The proposed reduced rear yard should still provide adequate separation from nearby properties, as there is also an abutting 16-foot alley.

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

OP does not recommend any special conditions.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT reviewed the application and stated no objection to approval. No other District Agencies have submitted comments to the record as of this date.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

ANC 5D has not submitted a letter to the record as of the date of this report.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The abutting neighbor to the north, 752 18th Street NE, has submitted a letter of support to the record.

Location Map

