

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Crystal Myers, Development Review Specialist
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: July 2, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21316: Special Exception Request to allow a rear addition at 515 21st St. NE.

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 § 207.4, rear wall extension (10 ft. permitted, 15 ft. proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	515 21 st St. NE
Applicant:	Anthony M. Rachal, III on behalf of Saturday S. Nnam
Legal Description:	Square 4516, Lot 203
Ward / ANC:	7D
Zone:	RF-1
Historic Districts	Kingman Park
Lot Characteristics:	90 ft. x 18 ft. rectangular-shaped lot with a 16-ft. alley in the rear
Existing Development:	Single-household row dwelling
Adjacent Properties:	Both adjacent properties are single-dwelling rowhouses
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The area is a rowhouse neighborhood and the former RFK stadium is within one mile of the property.
Proposed Development:	The Applicant built a rear addition with a rear wall that extends beyond 10-ft past neighboring properties.

III. LOCATION



IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief:
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min.	18 ft.	No Change	None Required
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,620 sq. ft.	No Change	None Required
Height E § 203	35 ft. max.	22 ft.	No Change	None Required
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	36 ft.	22 ft.	None Required
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max.	43%	55%	None Required
Rear Wall Extension E § 207.4	10 ft. max	Not provided	15 ft.	Requested

V. OP ANALYSIS

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 not result in a form, height, or intensity of use that would be inconsistent with the intent of this zone. It would allow for additional living space in a single dwelling rowhouse that is zoned for rowhouse development.

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

Approval of the requested relief should not tend to adversely affect the use of neighboring property. The addition is not visible from the street, and it should not visibly disrupt the character or view from the alleyway. The addition complies with the criteria under Subtitle E§ 5201 and all other development standards of the zone, so it should not unduly impact the adjacent neighbors.

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 have a rear wall extension in the rear yard that exceeds 10ft beyond the adjacent properties.

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;

Relief would not unduly affect the light and air of the neighboring properties. According to the Applicant's [updated shadow study](#) when compared to the permitted version of the addition, there is very little increase in shadow cast by the addition.

The adjacent properties have open rear yards, and the size of the addition is not large enough to have a significant impact on the air flow to these properties.

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

The addition should not significantly affect the enjoyment of neighboring properties. There are no windows facing the adjacent properties on either side. The owner of the adjacent property at 513 21st St. NE submitted a letter in 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 addition with the original building does not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage. The addition is only visible from the alley. It has a standard residential design that is not out of character for an addition in this area. Historic Preservation Staff reviewed the plans and have no objection to the proposal.

(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 would not result in the expansion of a nonconforming use, lot occupancy beyond what is authorized in this section, height, or number of stories.

OP does not recommend any special conditions.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Historic Preservation Staff reviewed the plans and photos and has no objection to the addition.

VII. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

In an email to OP, DDOT stated they have no objection to the approval. No other District Agencies have submitted comments to the record as of this date.

VIII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

Currently there is no report in the record from ANC 7D.

IX. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The adjacent neighbor at 513 21st Street NE, submitted a letter of support to the record ([Exhibit 10](#)).