

BZA Case No. 21318

Burroughs Modular Campus

**1820 Monroe St. NE
(Square 4203, Lot 1)**

New Address of Modernization: 1825 Newton St. NE

Hearing Date: July 2, 2025

Presenter: Meridith Moldenhauer of Cozen O'Connor

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia



Members of the Team Present for Todays Hearing

Kristina Jardis

Architect at Quinn Evans



Patrick Moloney

Senior Project Manager at DGS

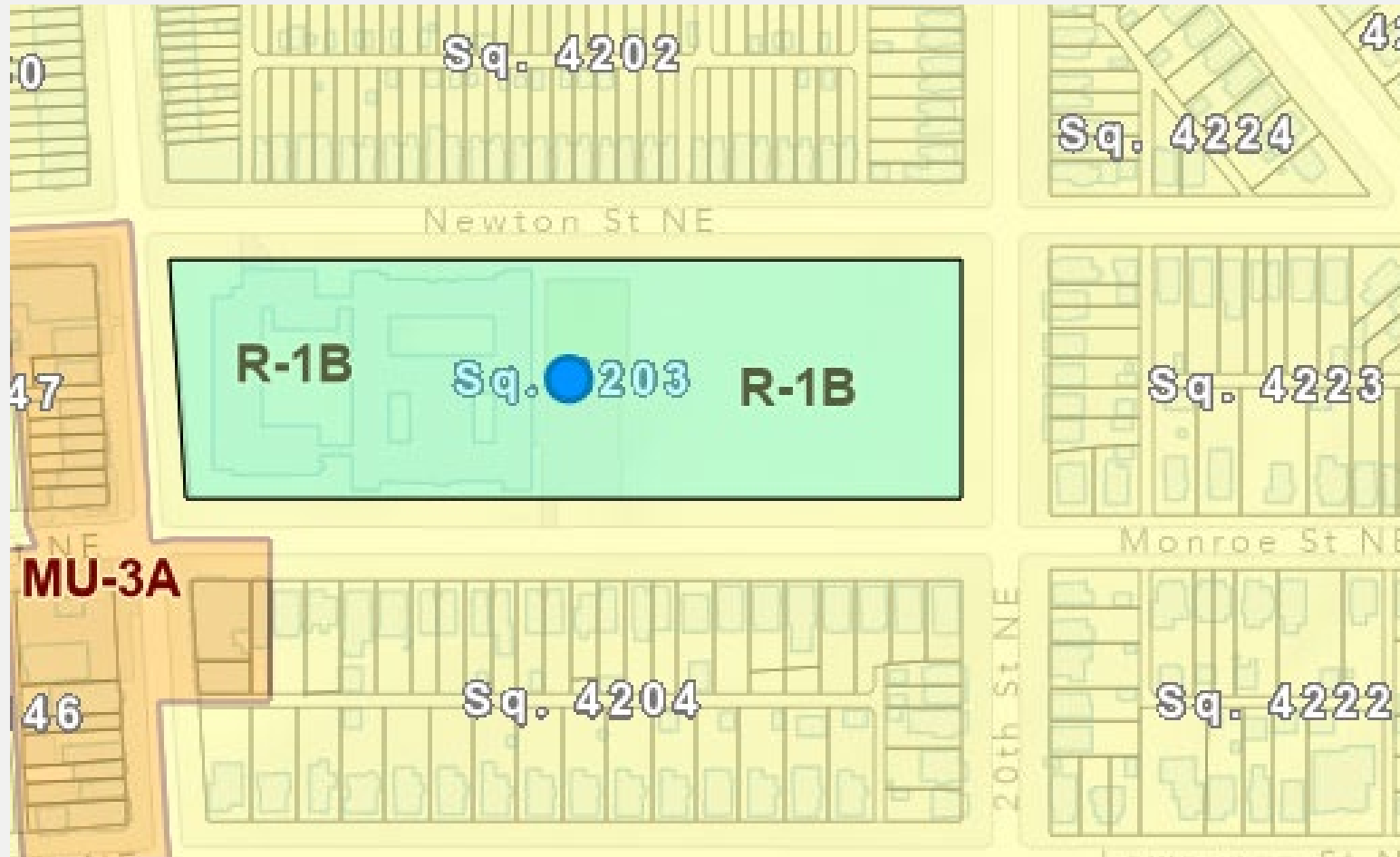


Melissa Pegram

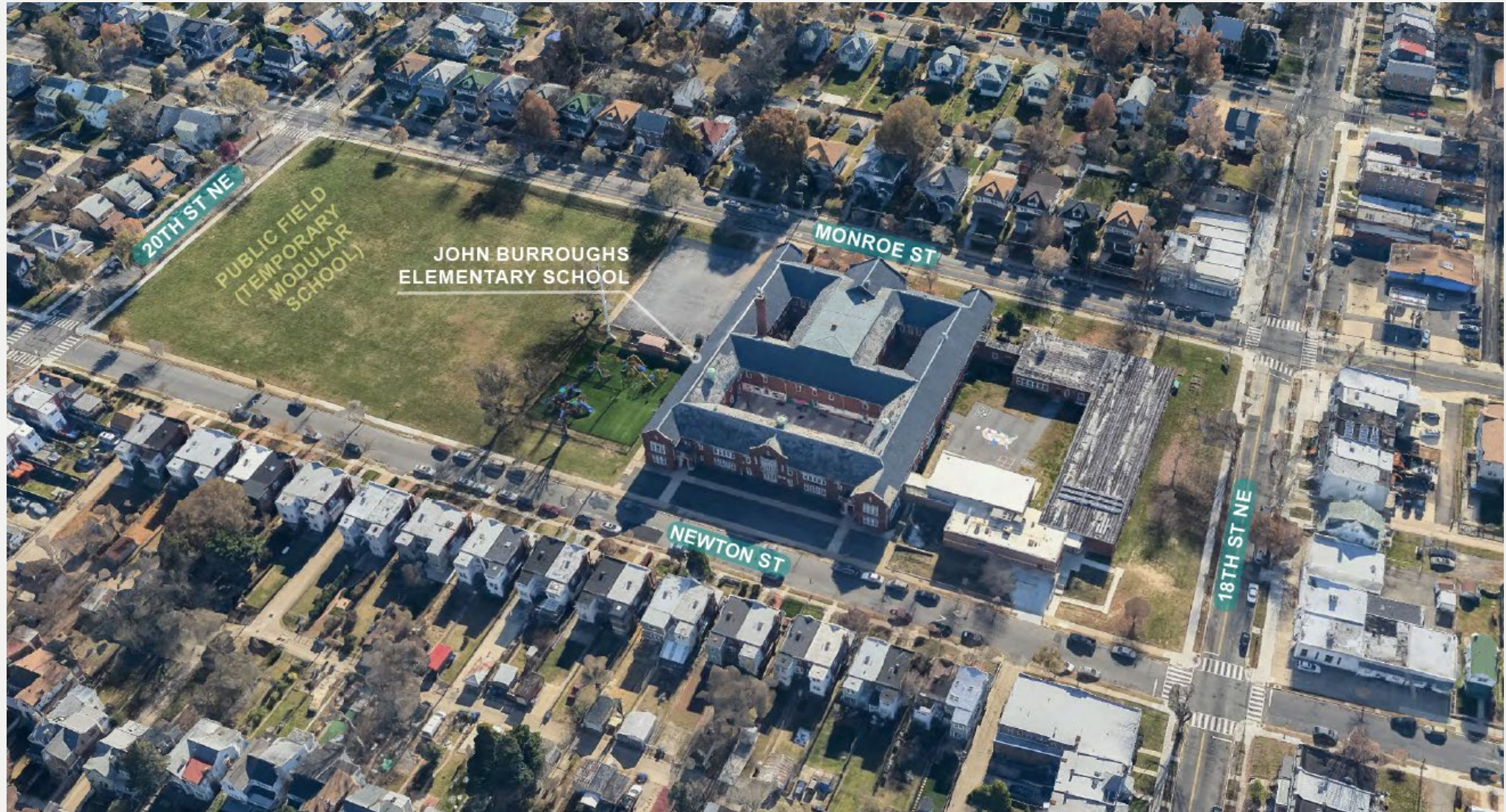
Project Specialist at DCPS



Zoning Map – R-1B Zone – Square 4203, Lot 1

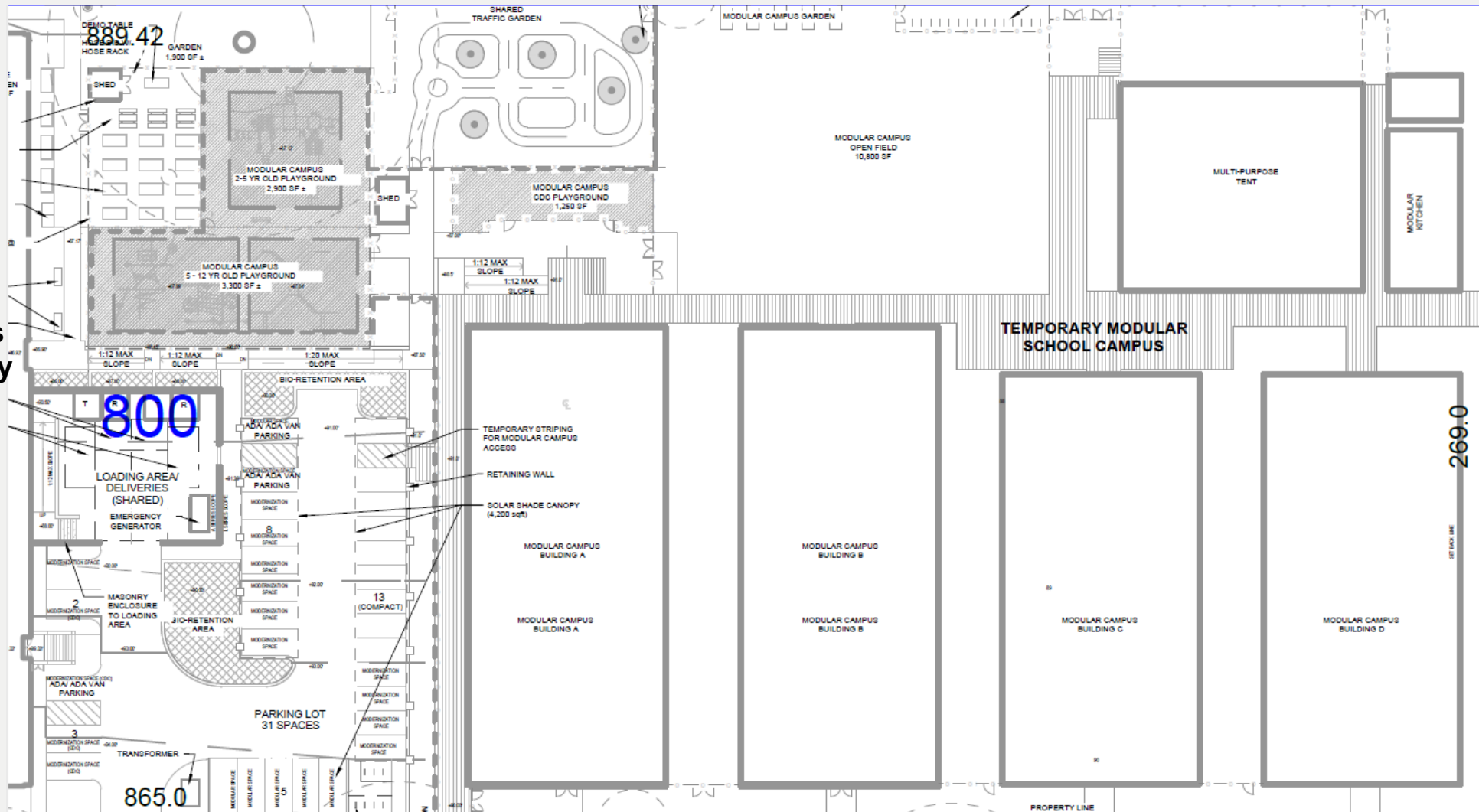


Existing Conditions



Modular Campus Site Plan (Newton St. NE)

Burroughs Elementary



(20th St. NE)

(Monroe St. NE)

Community Outreach

DGS and DCPS have conducted ongoing engagement with families, staff, and neighbors throughout the design and zoning process:

- ☐ The current site was selected in response to community feedback. An alternative location, approximately three miles away, was considered but raised significant concerns about commuting challenges for families.
- ☐ Since January 2024, the project team has held or attended over 10 community meetings, including six School Improvement Team (SIT) sessions.
- ☐ The Project was presented to ANC 5B twice. First in November 2024, and again on June 18, 2025, the ANC voted to support the relief requested, subject to the condition that the modular campus be used for the lesser of six years or by no more than three schools.

Relief Requested

The Applicant requests area variance relief from 11-C DCMR § 302.2, which prohibits more than one principal structure on a single record lot in residential zones.

- ☐ The Property is improved with John Burroughs Elementary School and will temporarily include a modular swing space composed of multiple detached buildings.
- ☐ The Modular Campus is necessary to house students during the school modernization and will consist of five classroom trailers, one kitchen trailer, and a multipurpose “bubble” structure.
- ☐ Each modular trailer qualifies as a separate primary building, triggering the need for relief.

BZA Relief Requested-Variance Standard

Pursuant to 11-X DCMR § 1002.1 the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant area variance relief where the applicant demonstrates that:

- ☐ The property is affected by an extraordinary or exceptional situation or condition;
- ☐ The strict application of the Zoning Regulations would result in a practical difficulty to the applicant; and
- ☐ The relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent, purpose, and integrity of the Zoning Regulations and Map.

BZA Relief Requested-Exceptional Condition

The property is affected by a confluence of conditions that qualify as exceptional:

- ☐ The Project requires modular construction due to cost, speed, and reversibility. Modular trailers are limited in width and must remain detached to comply with fire separation and transport limits.
- ☐ The Modular Campus must remain physically separated from the school building due to active construction, which renders connection unsafe and unworkable.
- ☐ Preservation constraints apply. While Burroughs Elementary is not yet landmarked, the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) has identified it for future designation. Any physical attachment to the building's eastern façade would likely compromise its eligibility.
- ☐ The Modular Campus site is bounded by existing playgrounds and parking, further limiting the ability to consolidate or connect structures.

BZA Relief Requested-Practical Difficulty

Strict compliance with the regulations requirements would result in multiple independent hardships:

- ☐ Constructing a single consolidated structure is infeasible. Prefabricated units must remain within transportable dimensions, and combining them would eliminate natural light, increase costs, and violate code.
- ☐ Subdividing the Property is not a viable solution. Even if subdivided into two Lots, each trailer would remain a principal structure and require relief under C § 302.2.
- ☐ Connecting the Modular Campus to the existing school building would compromise the integrity of the building's historic façade.
- ☐ Connecting the Modular Campus to the existing school building would also raise safety concerns given the students' proximity to an active construction site. Keeping the swing space separate ensures students remain safely distanced from construction activity.

BZA Relief Requested-No Harm

The variance relief will not cause substantial detriment to the public good or Zoning Regulations

- ☐ The site will continue to operate as a public elementary school, a matter-of-right use in the R-1-B zone.
- ☐ The swing space is not permanent.
- ☐ All zoning standards for height, lot occupancy, FAR, parking, and bicycle parking are met.
- ☐ The Project preserves open space, playgrounds, and neighborhood character.



Questions?