

# 471 – 473 H Street NW BZA Case No. 21328

**Board of Zoning Adjustment Presentation  
September 24, 2025**

**Zachary G. Williams, Venable LLP**

**Mark Freeman, Aggregate Architecture**

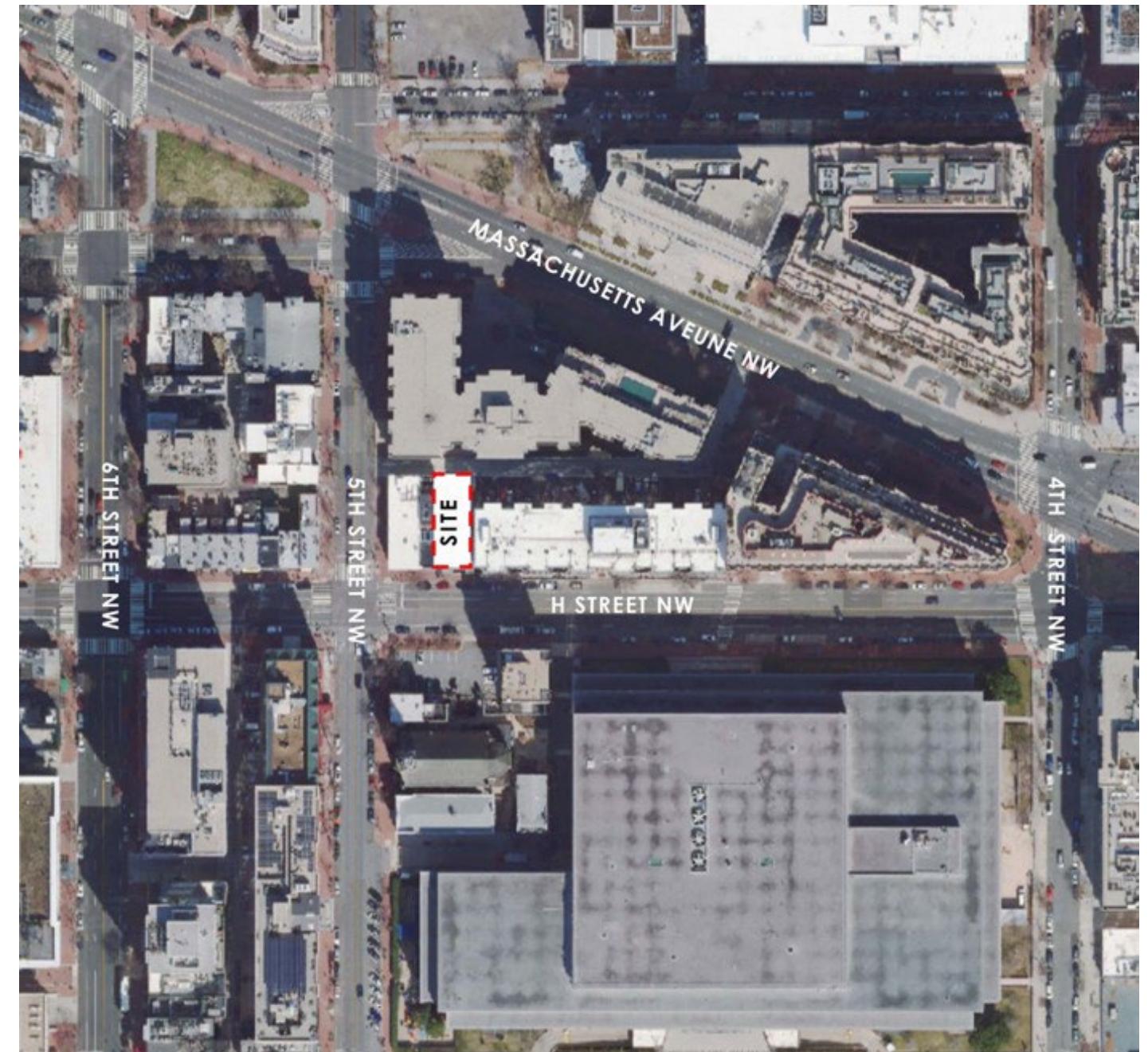
**Howard Bongam, Developer**

**VENABLE LLP**

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 21328  
EXHIBIT NO. 26

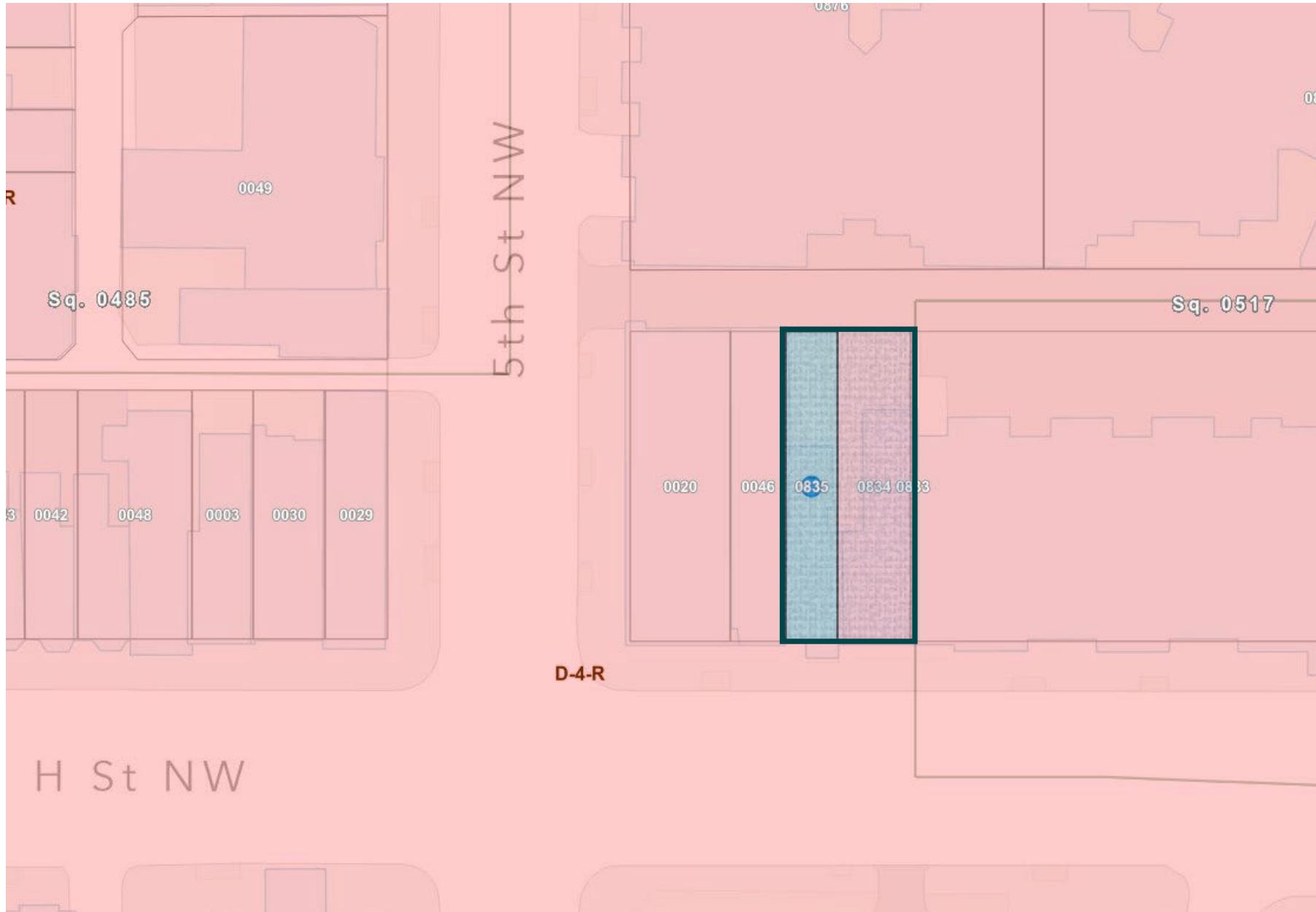
# Aerial View

**471-473 H Street NW  
(Sq. 0517, Lots 833,  
834 and 835)**



**VENABLE** LLP

# Zoning Map



# Proposed Development of 471 & 473 H Street, NW Washington, DC 20001



Existing Front Façades of 471, 473, 475 & 477 H Street NW



Existing Rear Facade



View to West from H Street sidewalk

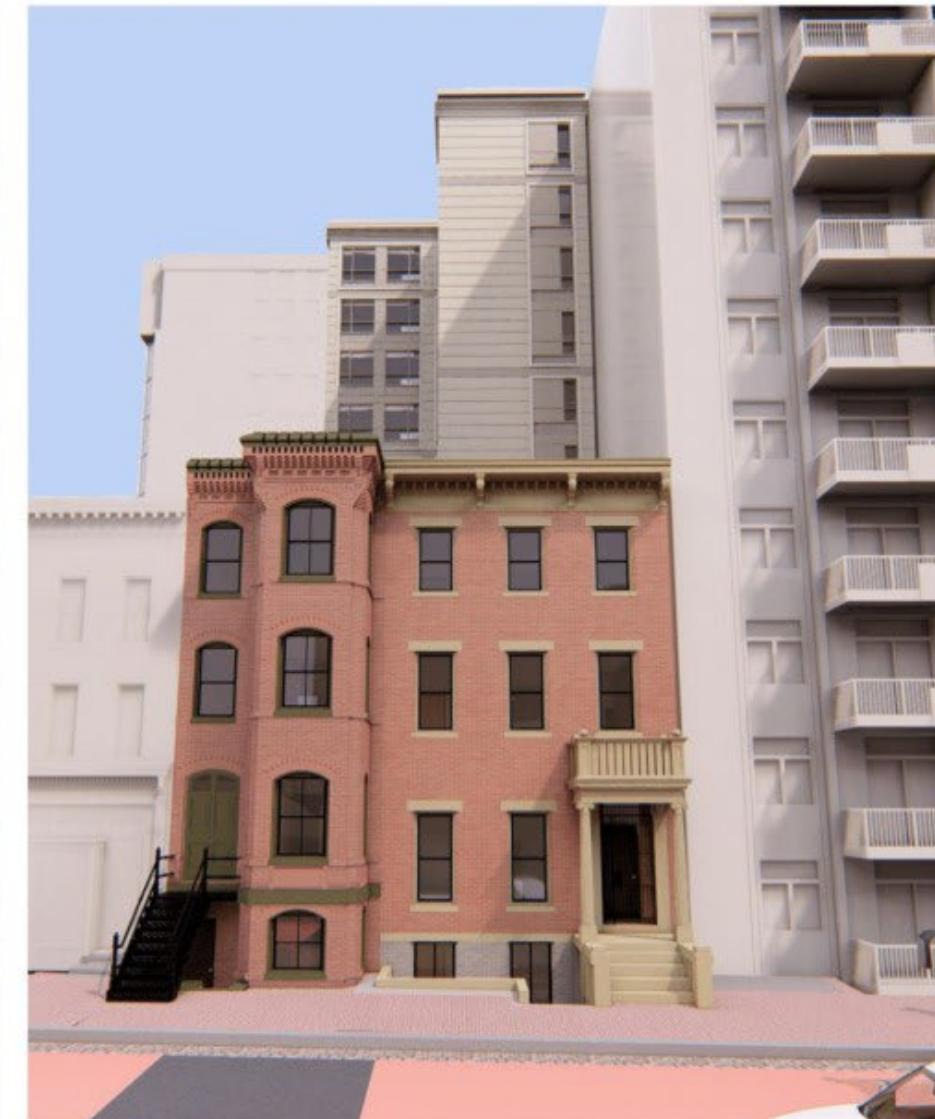


Northeast view from intersection of 5th & H Streets NW



View East down H Street NW

# Proposed Project Elevations



# Proposed Project Elevations



Bone White

Aluminum Sunshade



Granite

Aluminum Windows



Green Roof



Ribbed Panel System



Granite

Large Format Alum. Paneling



Sandstone



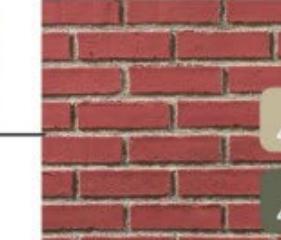
Granite

Sandstone



Granite

Natural Brick



471 complementary color

473 complementary color

# Proposed Project Elevations



# Proposed Project Elevations



① PROPOSED BUILDING VIEW 3



② PROPOSED BUILDING VIEW 4

# Proposed Project Summary

- Conversion of two historic buildings from office back to residential use.
- Construction of an 11-story residential apartment building in the rear of the property.
- 48 new affordable rental units.
- Variance and special exception relief requested from the Board of Zoning Adjustment.
- Commission of Fine Arts and Historic Preservation Review Board review and approval.

# BZA Relief Requested

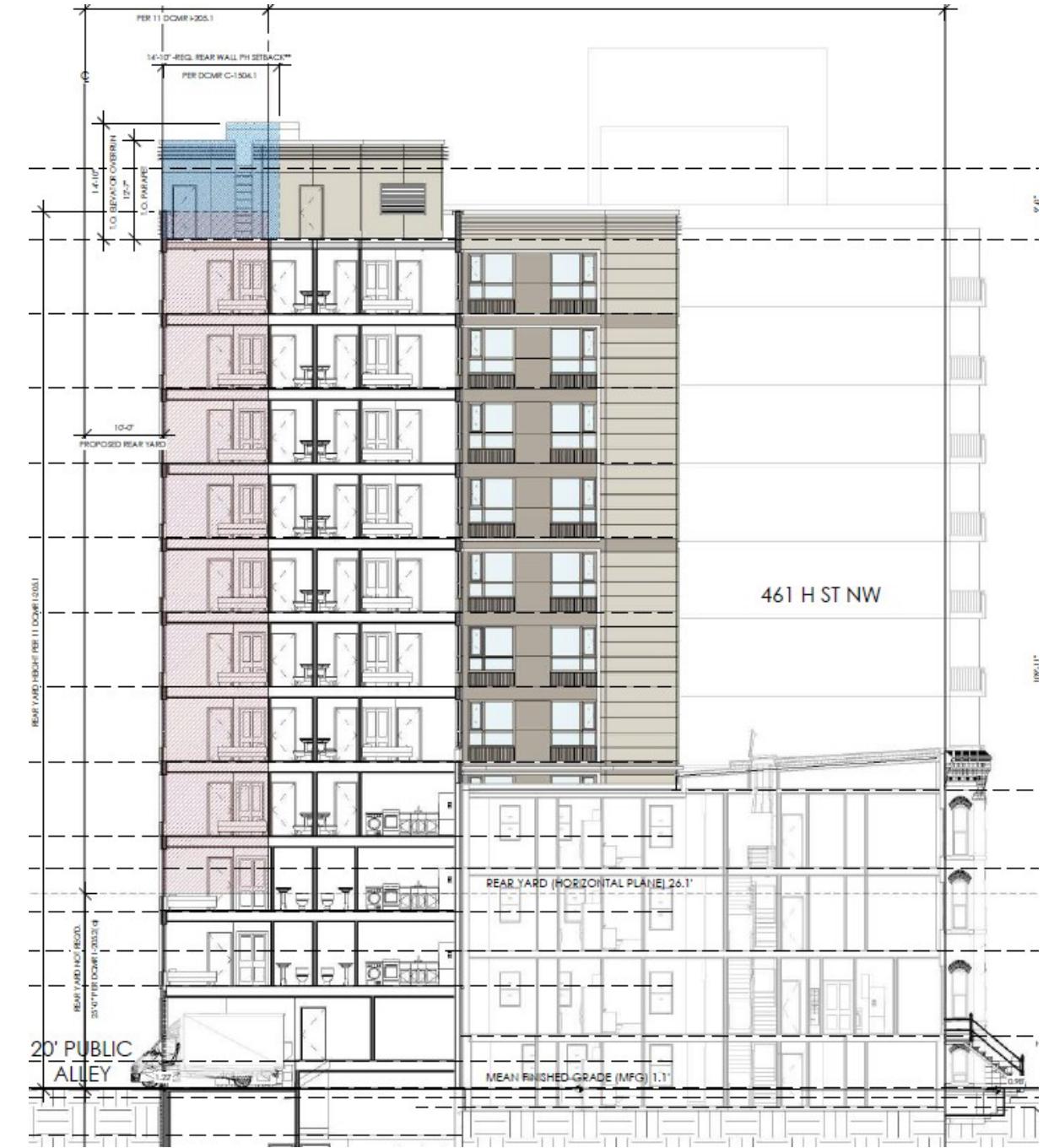
1. Special exception pursuant to 11 DCMR, Subtitle C, Section 1506 for relief from the penthouse setback requirements.
2. Area Variance from rear yard requirement pursuant to 11 DCMR, Subtitle I, Section 205.5.

## Penthouse Setback Relief - Special Exception Standards (11 DCMR Subtitle C, Section 1504; Subtitle X, Chapter 9)

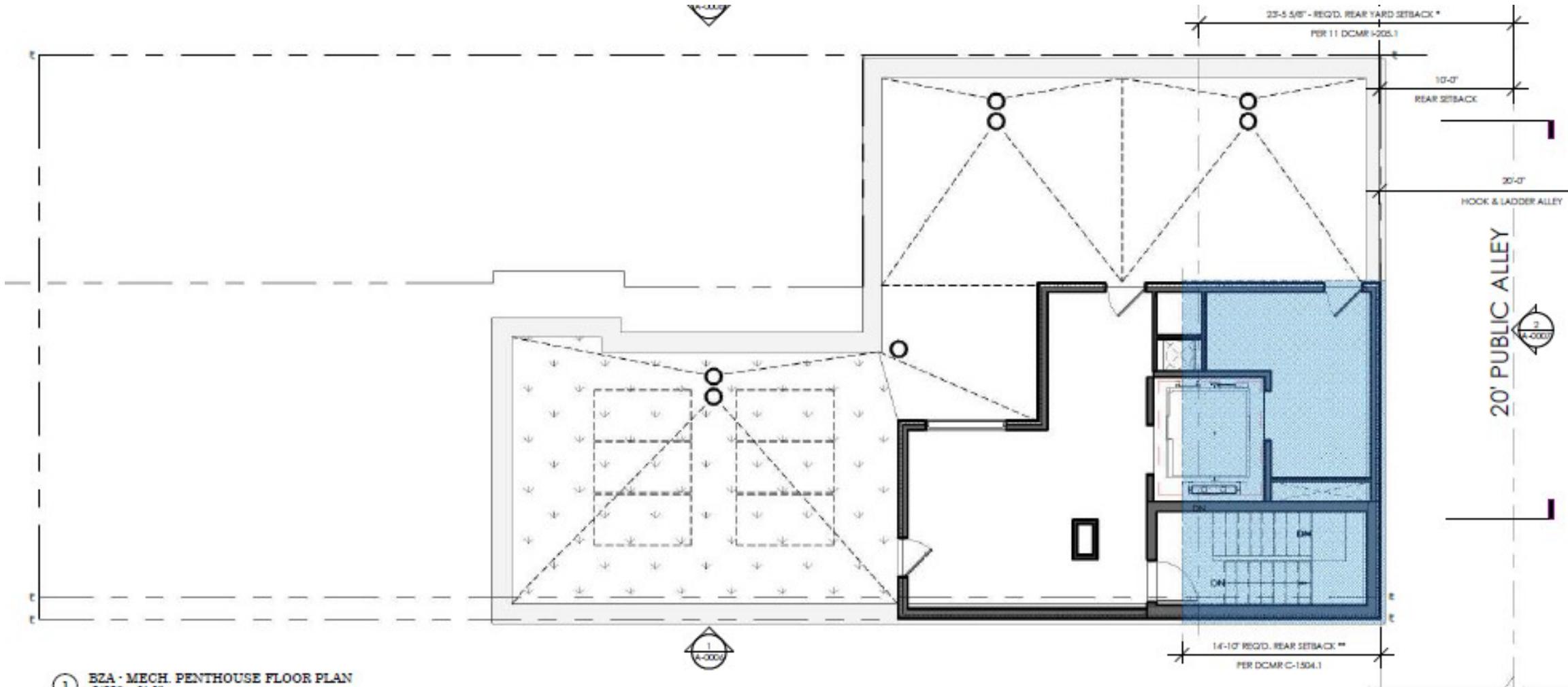
- Penthouse setback relief requested for rear penthouse setback on a portion of the new building.
- By-right density and height is constrained on this site due to historic footprint of the existing buildings.
- Providing the required setback relief would require a redesign of life safety elements of the building, thereby reducing the unit count by at least 18 out of a total of 48.

# Penthouse Setback Relief - Illustration

# VENABLE LLP



# Penthouse Setback Relief - Illustration



## Special Exception Standards (11 DCMR Subtitle C, Section 1504; Subtitle X, Chapter 9)

- **Must be in harmony with general purpose and intent of Zoning Regulations.**
  - The purpose of the D-4-R zone is to promote the development of high-density residential and mixed-use neighborhoods.
  - The proposed penthouse structure will not impair the intent of the D-4-R zone as it will facilitate the conversion of the historic rowhomes back to residential use and the development of a new residential tower dedicated to affordable housing.

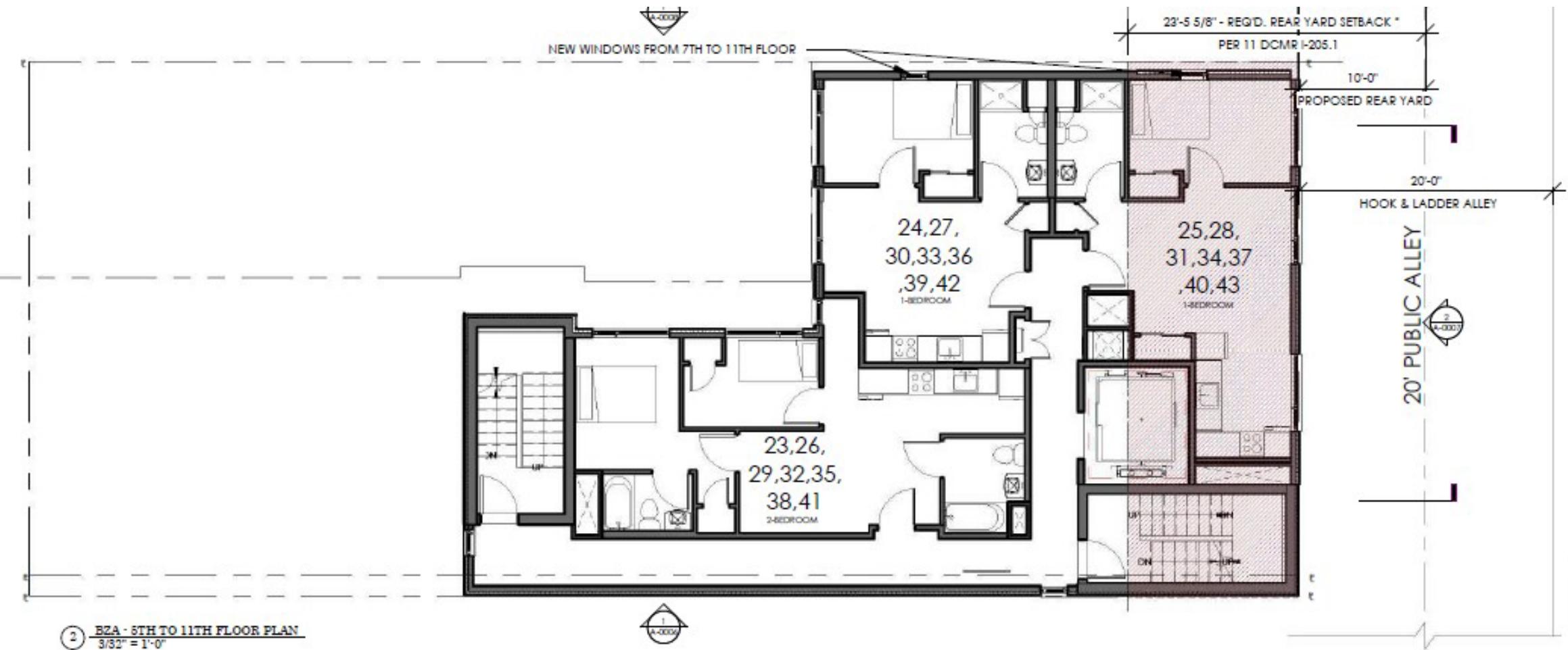
# Special Exception Standards (11 DCMR Subtitle C, Section 1504; Subtitle X, Chapter 9)

- **Will not adversely affect neighboring property (light, air, privacy).**
  - It is not expected that the proposed penthouse will have any impact on the light and air of the surrounding buildings.
  - The proposed penthouse will only be built on a portion of the new building and surrounding development includes apartment buildings that are far larger than that which is proposed as part of this Application.
  - Portion of penthouse subject to relief will not be visible from the street.

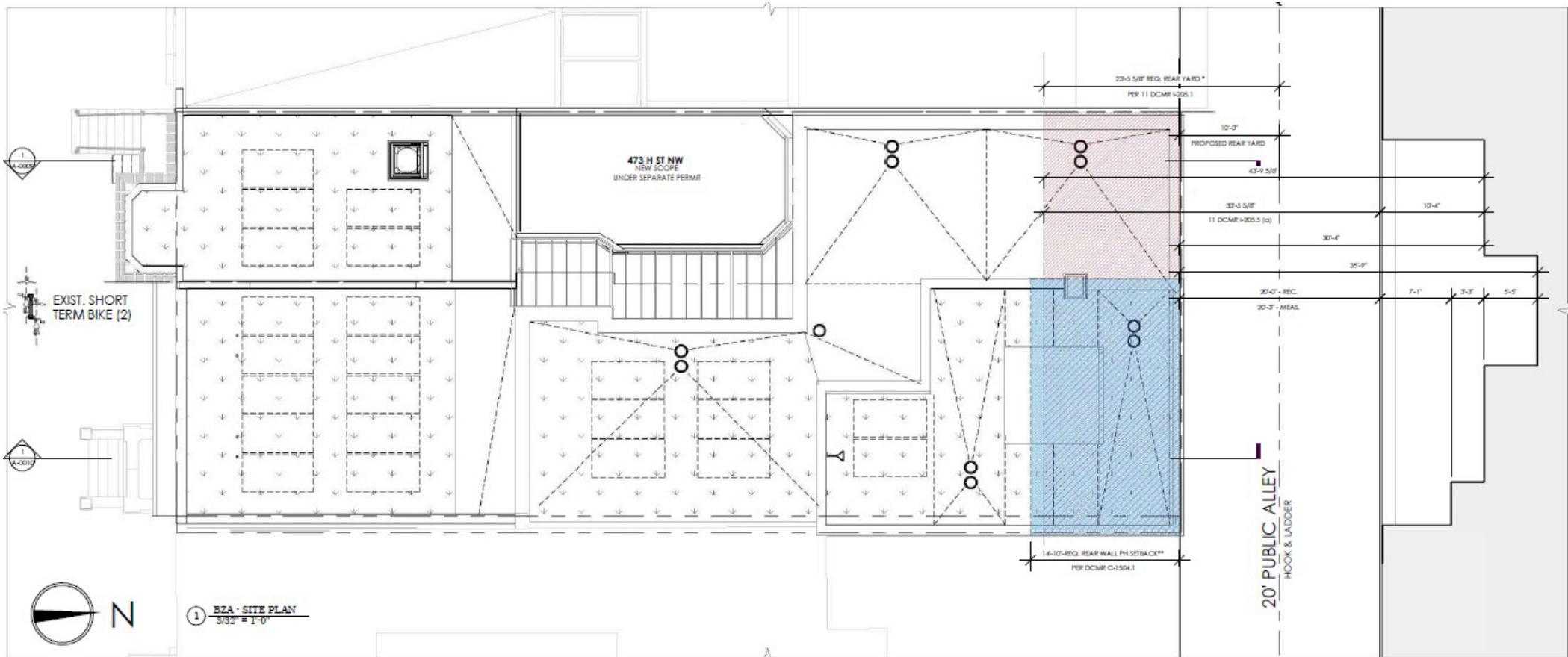
# Variance Standards (11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapter 10)

- **Because of a peculiar and exceptional condition on the property, the strict application of a zoning regulation would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties or exceptional and undue hardship to the owner of property.**
  - “Confluence of factors” leads to peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties.
  - Historic property and historic building footprints.
  - HPRB will not allow Applicant to build on top of existing buildings.
  - Very narrow parcels (combined 40 feet lot width).
  - Required setback would move the rear wall of the building back 15.5 feet, thereby making the project no longer financially viable.

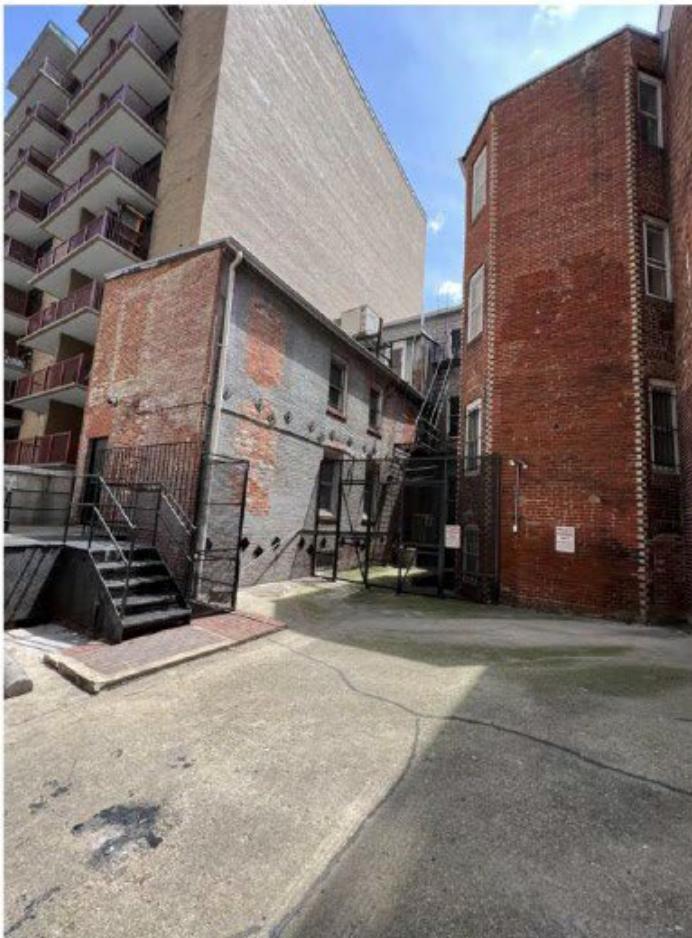
# Illustration of Variance Request



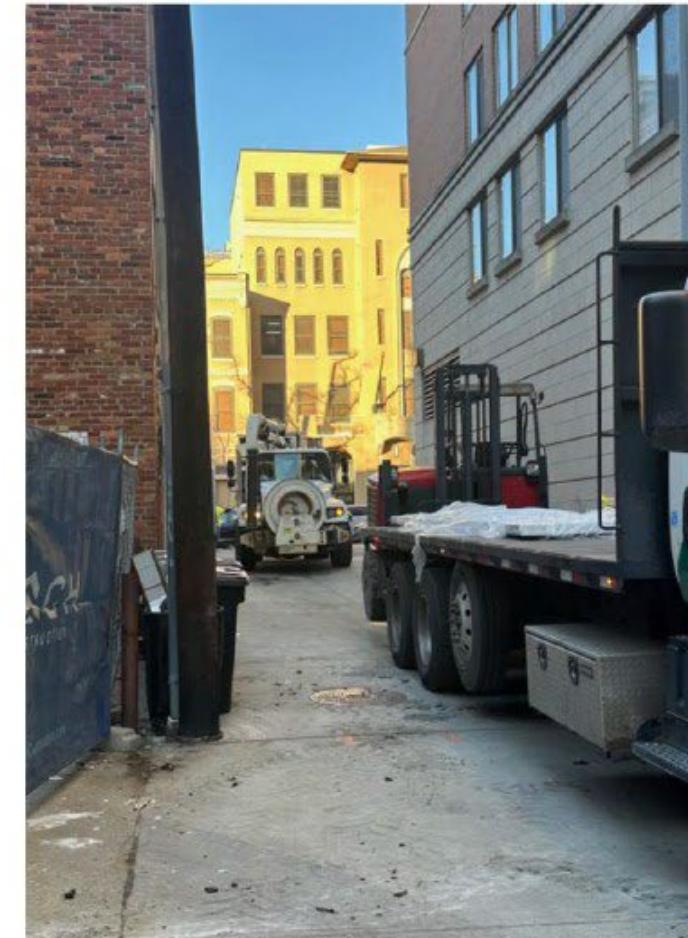
# Illustration of Variance Request



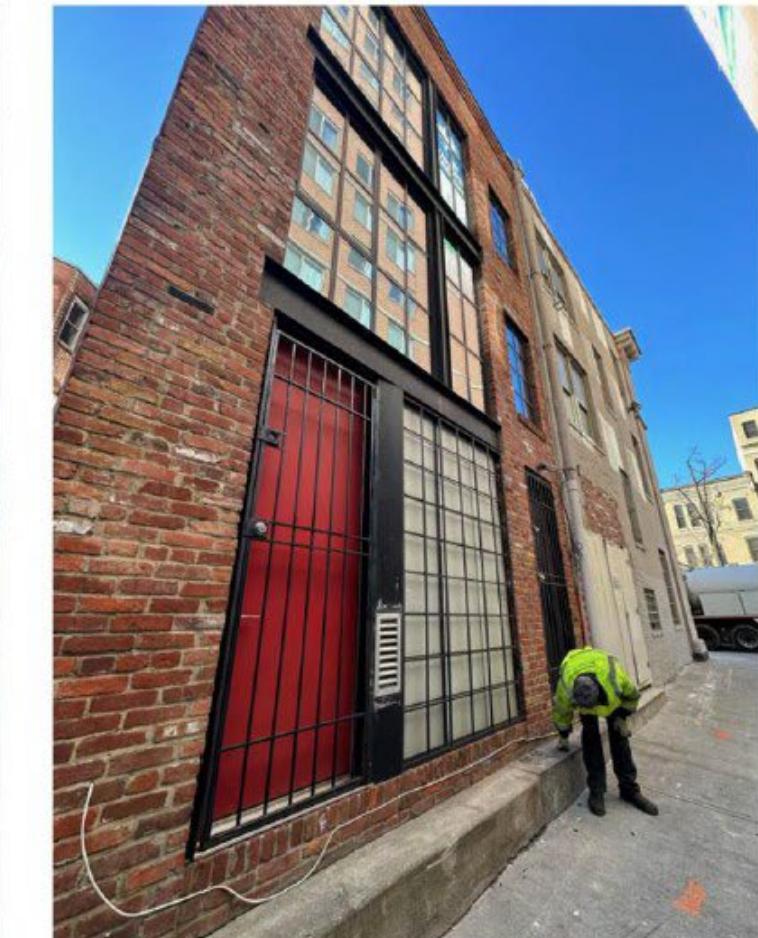
# Alley View



1 EXISTING REAR VIEW  
GATE IS OPEN

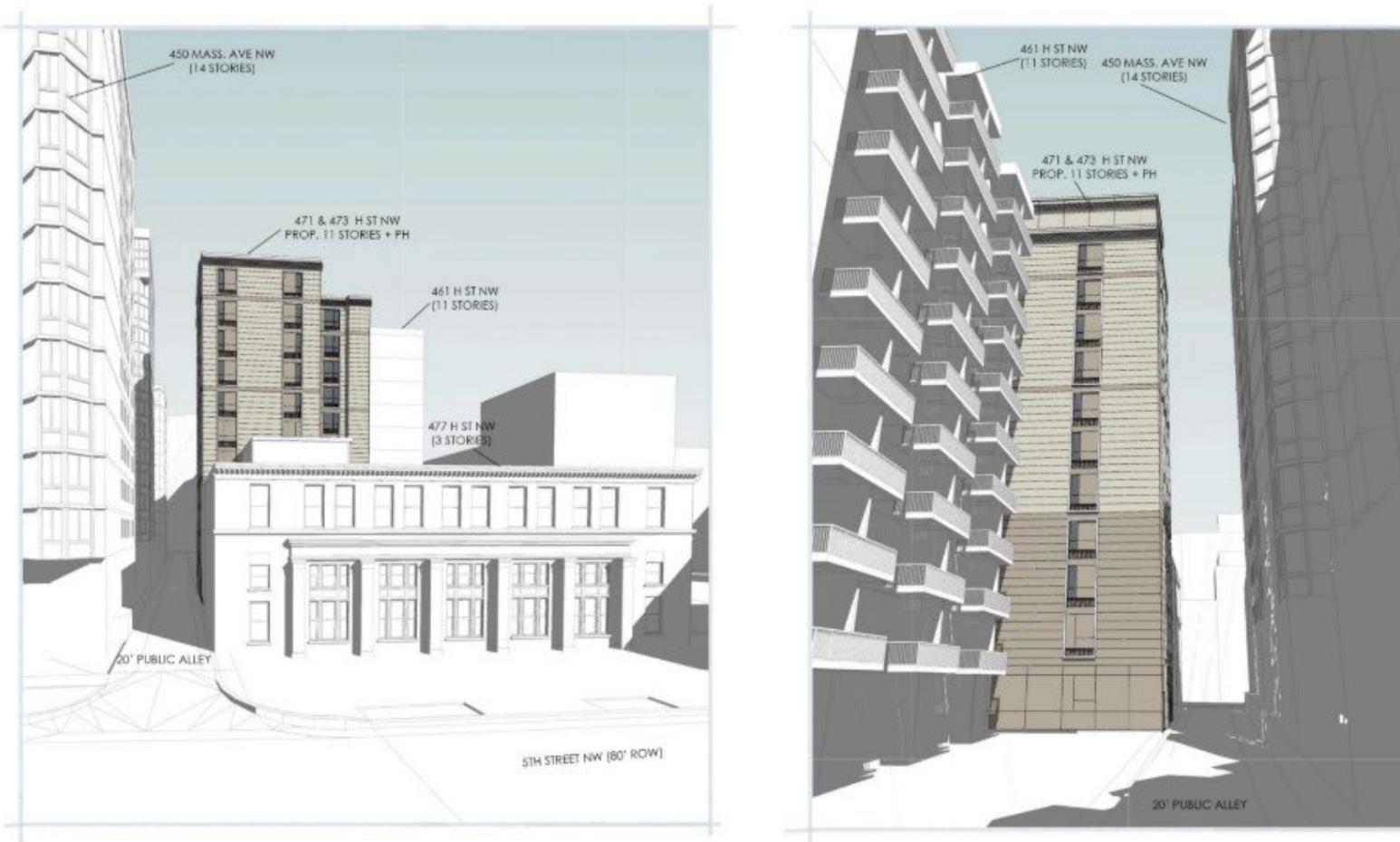


2 EXISTING PUBLIC ALLEY VIEW  
GATE IS OPEN



3 EXISTING ADJACENT VIEW  
GATE IS OPEN

# Proposed Alley View



# Variance Standards (11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapter 10)

- **The relief sought can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent, purpose, and integrity of the zone plan as embodied in the Zoning Regulations and Map**
  - The requested relief is not expected to affect adversely the use of neighboring properties.
  - Multiple other buildings on this same block (including the neighboring properties at 475 and 477 H Street NW as well as Lots 875 and 876) have no rear yard setback from this alley.
  - The majority of parcels on Square 517 are improved with large apartment buildings of similar height to the building proposed herein.
  - The Board has recently approved several other requests for rear yard relief in the vicinity of the Property for similar reasons related to historic structures and challenges related to lot width and depth. (See BZA Case Nos. 20974 and 20763).

# ANC, OP, and DDOT Support

- The Applicant presented to ANC 6E on three separate occasions. ANC 6E voted to support the Application.
- Office of Planning recommends approval of the relief sought.
- DDOT has no objection to the Application.
  - The Applicant agreed to add spaces for cargo and e-bikes in the garage.

# Questions?

