


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Karen Thomas, Development Review Specialist
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: September 25, 2025

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21349: Request for Special Exception relief to construct a new, detached, two-story accessory structure without a garage, in the RF-1 zone:

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **Approval** of the following special exceptions pursuant to Subtitle X § 901:

- U § 301.1(e), Accessory Building pre-Jan.1 2013: **Existing**-None **Proposed** - New structure
- C § 703.2, Parking : No parking provided Proposed: None proposed.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	628 15 th Street NE
Applicant:	Ileana Schinder on behalf of Ed Fendley
Legal Description:	Square 1051; Lot 0113
Ward / ANC:	Ward 6; ANC 6A
Zone:	RF-1, which permits one or two principal dwellings on a property by right.
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics:	Rectangular interior lot measuring 16 ft. x 100 ft. with a 15 ft. wide alleyway to the rear.
Existing Development:	Single-Family Rowhouse
Adjacent Properties:	Residential Rowhouses
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	Moderate-Density Residential Neighborhood.
Proposed Development:	Single Family Rowhouse with a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief:
Density E § 201	2 principal units max.; accessory units prohibited.	1 principal unit	2 principal units (1 within principal structure and 1 in an accessory structure.)	None Requested
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min.	16 ft.	No Change	Existing Non- conformance.
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,600 sq. ft.	No Change	Existing Non- conformance.
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	54 feet 7 ins ft.	No Change	None requested
Side Yard E § 208	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	N/A	N/A	None requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max.	40%	58%	None requested
Acc. Building Height E § 5002	22 ft. and two stories maximum.	N/A	20 ft. and two stories.	None requested
Acc. Building Area E § 5003	450 sq. ft. or 30% of the required rear yard, whichever is greater.	N/A	244 sq. ft.	None requested
Acc. Building Setback E § 5004	7.5 ft. from the centerline of any alley.	N/A	Not provided	None requested
Acc. Building Use E § 5006	1 principal dwelling unit and/or private vehicular garage.	N/A	1 dwelling unit and no garage.	Relief Requested for no parking
Parking C § 701	1 space per 2 dwelling units	1 space	No space	Relief requested
Accessory Building U § 301.1 (e)	New dwelling unit allowed in an accessory building constructed pre-Jan. 1, 2013 ²	n/a	New unit proposed in a new accessory building	Relief requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

ACCESSORY STRUCTURE: Subtitle U Section 301 MATTER OF RIGHT USES (RF)

301.1(e) An accessory building constructed as a matter-of-right after January 1, 2013, and that is located within a required setback shall not be used as, or converted to, a dwelling unit for a period of five (5) years after the approval of the building permit for the accessory

¹ Provided by the applicant.

² An amendment to the zoning regulations to eliminate this specific accessory building timing requirement has been filed with the Zoning Commission, and is scheduled as part of Omnibus Text Amendment Case 25-12 for a public hearing October 30, 2025.

building, unless approved as a special exception.

Requested relief from the 5-year time-period prohibition of a principal unit in an accessory structure may be sought through a special exception. The Applicant has stated that all other requirements under this section would be satisfied.

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 accessory structure would conform with the development standards for accessory buildings in the RF zones. The use of an accessory building for a second principal dwelling unit is otherwise permitted in the RF-1 zone. This would now constitute a flat on the property. Therefore, the proposal would be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.

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

The proposed unit would be accessible from the rear alleyway. The northern elevation, built to the property line shared with 630 15th Street, would not have windows and the southern elevation is set back from the property line approximately 3 feet. The other elevations with windows should not create views to neighboring properties that could not be achieved by-right. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the proposal should not unduly affect adversely the use of neighboring properties.

- (c) *Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.*

The Applicant stated that the proposed accessory building would conform to all other zoning regulations and requirements, except parking as discussed hereafter. [See Plans at Exhibit 19 Sheet 0001](#)

PARKING: Subtitle X Section 901 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW STANDARDS

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- (a) *Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;*

The relief would be in harmony with the intent of the parking regulations which include supporting public transportation options available in transit-rich neighborhoods, and to reduce reliance on private vehicle ownership in such neighborhoods.

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

The property does not now provide on-site parking according to the Applicant. The anticipated addition of the small rental unit without a vehicle parking space should not adversely impact the on-street parking supply.

- (c) *Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.*

Per Subtitle C § 703.2 the Board may grant a full or partial reduction in the number of required parking spaces pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 9, and subject to the applicant's demonstration to the Board's satisfaction of at least one (1) of the criteria of [C § 703.2 \(a\) through \(j\)](#). The Applicant's statement noted that the request satisfies criteria (b) and (c).

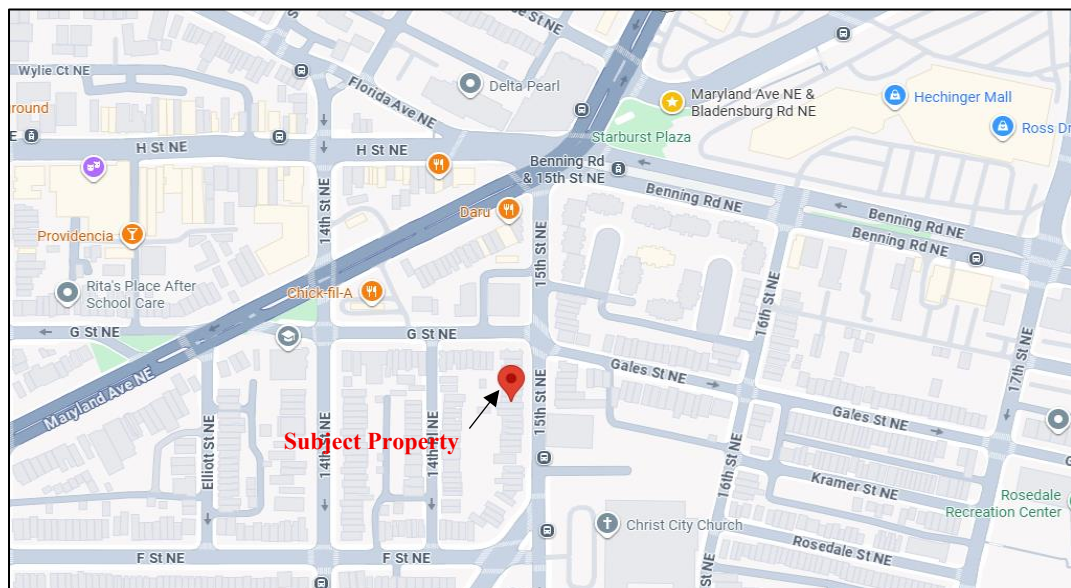
Other criteria including (a) and (d) through (j) were not applicable to this project.

C§ 703.2 (b) The use or structure is particularly well served by mass transit, shared vehicle, or bicycle facilities.

The property is located within a block of the Starburst Intersection of Maryland Avenue, Benning Road, NE and H Street NE. This location is served by several bus stops serving crosstown bus routes recently introduced by WMATA (C41, C43), as well as the H Street/Benning Road tram stops. It is well served by Capital Bike Share at the Starburst Plaza and other commercial transportation options at the Plaza.

C § 703.2 (c) Land use or transportation characteristics of the neighborhood minimize the need for required parking spaces.

The location is within walking distance of the well-used H Street and Benning Road commercial corridors. The Rosedale Recreation Center is within two blocks walking distance to the east of the property, and shopping as well as neighborhood services are located along H Street, and at the Hechinger Mall north of Benning Road, which is within walking and biking distances as can be seen in the map below.



OP supports the parking relief as requested. The proposed unit would only be 244 square feet, which is a small unit and would not comfortably support more than two residents. The property as it exists does not accommodate a parking space. Therefore, the need for a vehicle is not anticipated.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

There are no comments from other District agencies in the record at the writing of this report.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

At the writing of this report, ANC 6A had not filed a report to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Comments of the neighbor at 1441 G Street NE are noted at [Exhibit 32](#) of the record. A neighbor's letter in support is noted at [Exhibit 24](#).

Figure 1: Location Map

