



BZA Application

Application # B2504028 BZATmp6604 BZA21349A	Re: BZA Precedents
To: Board of Zoning Adjustment	Project location: 628 15 th Street NE Washington DC SSL 1051 0113
From: Ileana Schinder, Architect ile@ileanaschinder.com 202-381-7463	Date: April 2, 2026

PRECEDENTS

As the variance requested for **Subtitle U § 301.1(c)(4)** requires that an accessory building like the one proposed in the address listed above to be used as residential must have permanent access via an alley at least **15 feet wide** from the building to a public street.

As shown the supporting documentation the existing lot, as in many other properties within the In the **RF-1 (Residential Flat)** zone, the rowhouse lots is narrow and the existing alley predates modern standards. The existing alley is only 10'-0" wide.

Existing structures and fences in adjoining properties illustrate the age of this non-conforming alley where walls, fences, structures and gates different planes of the alley in relation to the center line of the alley.

Because the alley width in this particular location presents the following characteristics:

- Uniqueness: the width of the alley precedes modern zoning code implementations
- Hardship: reduces the potential to develop modern accessory structures facing the alley to those property owners adjoining the narrow alley
- Public good: the implementation of structures, like the one proposed, does not impose a negative impact to the safety of neighboring structures. The lot is located within 300 feet of the mouth of the alley towards a public street, will receive automatic sprinklers and the occupancy will be a maximum of 3 people. These factors reduce the potential need to access the property for emergency vehicles from the alley while reducing the danger of fire spreading to neighboring properties. Moreover, the proposed residential use incorporates outdoor lighting features and windows to allow an increase in safety currently lacking.

In order to support the approval of the application, below you will find precedents cases (2019-2024) that were approved under similar conditions.



Case #	Address	Summary of Relief	Outcome
20120	439 Q St NW	Variance from the 15-ft alley width requirement to convert a two-story accessory building into a dwelling unit. The alley was only ~10 feet wide	Approved
19666	1209 Park Road NW	Variance for alley width (15 ft required, 10 ft existing at the street entrance). The applicant provided evidence of emergency access feasibility.	Approved
20857	639 Lexington Pl NE	Requested relief from Subtitle U § 301.1 to allow a dwelling unit in an accessory building where the alley width was insufficient.	Approved
20344	1311 S Street NW	Variance from alley width requirements to permit a residential conversion of a carriage house.	Approved