



**BZA Application**

<b>Application # B2504028</b> <b>BZATmp6604</b> <b>BZA21349A</b>	<b>Re: BZA Precedents</b>
<b>To: Board of Zoning Adjustment</b>	<b>Project location:</b> 628 15 <sup>th</sup> Street NE Washington DC SSL 1051 0113
<b>From:</b> <b>Ileana Schinder, Architect</b> <a href="mailto:ile@ileanaschinder.com">ile@ileanaschinder.com</a> 202-381-7463	<b>Date:</b> April 8, 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
20177	2017 Rear St NW (SSL 3564 810)	area variance from the minimum alley width requirements of Subtitle C § 303.3(a)	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
18787	143 Rear W St	Variances from subsection 2507.1, which permits a one-family dwelling as the only type of dwelling on an alley lot, and subsection 2507.2, which does not allow construction of a dwelling on an alley lot unless the alley lot abuts an alley 30 feet	Approved
18511 C	1018 Irving St NW	[...] Variance relief under the RF use requirements of Subtitle U § 600.1(b)	Approved
20594	3007 Albemarle St NW	Hernandez V BZA (Case No 23-AA-0929) While focused on lot width rather than alley width specifically, this recent 2026 appellate decision clarifies that the BZA can grant a special exception to waive certain development standards even if a related variance is denied, provided the applicant satisfies the "purpose and intent" of the regulation	Approved