

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: *MRJ* Matt Jesick, Case Manager

DATE: January 16, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA #21401 – 1378 C Street, NE – Request for relief to construct an addition to an existing dwelling

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following requested special exception:

- E § 204.1, pursuant to E § 204.4 and X § 900 – Upper Floor Architectural Elements (Must preserve upper floor architectural elements; certain elements proposed for alteration).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Applicant	Eric Konopka, owner
Address	1378 C Street, NE
Legal Description	Square 1032, Lot 41
Ward / ANC	Ward 6, ANC 6A
Zone	RF-1 – Moderate density rowhouses and flats;
Historic District / Resource	None
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	Rectangular lot: 12.24' x 62.5'; At the corner of C Street and 14 th Street, NE; 8 feet of private property in front of the façade of the building; 10' alley at the rear; Existing 2-story single family rowhouse, with no bay projections; Existing strong cornice line at the roof level.
Adjacent Properties and Neighborhood Character	Rowhouses to the west appear to be nearly identical rowhouses; Rowhouses also across the alley to the rear; Surrounding neighborhood is almost exclusively rowhouses; Church diagonally across the intersection from the property.
Proposal	Add bay projections to the home, removing but replacing the existing cornice; Bays would project into public space on the east side of the home, and into the front setback on the south; Existing cornice would be replicated and installed on the new bays.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND RELIEF REQUESTED

Standard	Requirement	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width E 202	18' min.	12.24'	No change	Existing Non-Conforming
Lot Depth n/a	n/a	62.5'	No change	Conforming
Lot Area E 202	1,800 sf min.	765 sf	No change	Existing Non-Conforming
Height E 203	35' max.	25'	No change	Conforming
Upper Floor Architectural Elements E 204	Must preserve upper floor architectural elements	Cornice at the roof level	Remove cornice at location of new bump outs; Install identical replacement cornice on bump outs.	Requested
Rear Yard E 207	20' min.	22.5'	No change	Conforming
Lot Occupancy E 210	60%	51.1%	54.7%	Conforming

IV. ANALYSIS

Special Exception from Upper Floor Architectural Elements – Subtitle E § 204.1, pursuant to E § 204.4

204.1 Except for properties subject to review by the Historic Preservation Review Board or their designee, or the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, a roof top architectural element original to a principal building such as cornices, porch roofs, a turret, tower, or dormers, shall not be removed or significantly altered, including shifting its location, changing its shape, or increasing its height, elevation, or size; provided that:

- (a) For interior lots, not including through lots, the roof top architectural elements shall not include identified roof top architectural elements facing the structure's rear lot line; and*
- (b) For all other lots, the roof top architectural elements shall include identified roof top architectural elements on all sides of the structure.*

The proposed design would alter the existing cornice at the roof level. The applicant proposes new bay extensions which would necessitate removal of portions of the cornice. The design, however, calls for a new cornice on the bays that exactly matches the original cornice. Relief to remove or alter architectural elements can be granted pursuant to E § 204.4.

204.4 The Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the requirements of Subtitle E § 204.1 as a special exception pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 9, and subject to the following conditions:

- (a) *The proposed construction shall not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:*
 - (1) *The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected;*
 - (2) *The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised; and*
 - (3) *The proposed construction, as viewed from the street, alley, and other public way, shall not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along the street or alley frontage;*

Removal and replacement of the cornice detail would have no impact on the light, air or privacy available to neighboring properties. The proposed design would be sympathetic to the existing character of the street through replacement of the cornice with a new one of the exact same design. The new bays with the replicated cornice would match the architecture of the buildings to the west. The proposed construction, therefore, would not substantially visually intrude upon the character of the block. Any minor change to the character of the street would not be to a degree that would have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property (§ 204.4(a)).

- (b) *In demonstrating compliance with paragraph (a), the applicant shall use graphical representations such as plans, photographs, or elevation and section drawings sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed construction to adjacent buildings and views from public ways; and*

The application materials include plans, elevations, photos, and site plans.

- (c) *The Board of Zoning Adjustment may require special treatment in the way of design, screening, exterior or interior lighting, building materials, or other features for the protection of adjacent or nearby properties, or to maintain the general character of a block.*

OP recommends no special treatments.

General Special Exception Criteria – Subtitle X § 901.2

- 901.2 (a) *[Granting the special exception] Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;*

Granting the requested relief should not impair the intent of the Regulations. Regulations regarding architectural elements are intended to maintain character-defining features in RF-1-zoned areas. In this case, the design would change the original cornice element, but maintain the overall character of the block through use of a replacement cornice.

901.2(b) *[Granting the special exception] Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;*

As addressed in the above analysis, the requested special exceptions should not unduly affect the use of neighboring property. There should be no undue impacts regarding factors such as light, air or privacy. The overall character of the street and alley should not be adversely impacted.

V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of this writing there are no comments from other District agencies in the record.

VI. ANC COMMENTS

Exhibit 26 is an ANC memo in support of the application.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Exhibits 14, 19, 21 and 22 are letters in support of the application, including one from the adjacent neighbor.

VIII. VICINITY MAP

