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March 23, 2026

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
c/o Office of Zoning  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200-S  
Washington, DC 20001

**STATEMENT OF USE AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION  
JUSTIFICATION**

**BZA Case No. FY-25-9-Z (REVISED)**

3207 6th Street NW, Washington, DC | Square 3046, Lot 0808 | RF-1 Zone  
DOB Permit No. B2508573

*Pursuant to the BZA Referral Memorandum dated March 4, 2026*

**I. EXISTING USE AND PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

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The subject property located at 3207 6th Street NW, Washington, DC 20010 (Square 3046, Lot 0808) is a **vacant alley tax lot** with no frontage on a public street. The lot contains approximately **3,664 square feet** of gross area and is accessed exclusively from a public alley with an existing improved width of approximately **ten (10) feet**, which is less than the minimum twenty-four (24) feet required by the D.C. Zoning Regulations for alley record lot subdivision as a matter of right. The property is located within the **RF-1 (Residential Flat)** zoning district and has been vacant and undeveloped for an extended period.

The lot is situated in the interior of Square 3046 in the Petworth/Park View neighborhood of Northwest Washington. The block is bounded to the west by 6th Street NW, to the south by Lamont Street NW, and internally by the alley network. The surrounding uses are primarily low-density residential, consistent with the RF-1 zone designation. Alley-oriented accessory structures, garages, and alley dwellings are present in the block interior, reflecting the block's established pattern of mixed primary and alley-fronting development.

**II. PROPOSED USE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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The applicant proposes to convert the existing alley tax lot into **two separate record alley lots**, each to be improved with a **row dwelling**. The proposed development will proceed in accordance with the architectural plans filed under DOB Permit No. B2508573 and as reflected

in the February 27, 2026 Notes and Computations sheets reviewed by DOB Reviewer Ramon Washington.

**North Lot (Lot 0808 — north of plat)**

The north lot will contain approximately 1,850 square feet of lot area with a width of 19 feet. The proposed row dwelling will have a building footprint of approximately 1,048 square feet, a lot occupancy of 62%, and a height of two stories plus cellar (19.91 feet). The lot will provide one vehicle parking space and maintain 30% pervious surface. The dwelling will front on the alley with 20 feet of alley frontage and will maintain a 33-foot rear yard from the alley centerline. The proposed use is a single-family row dwelling — one principal dwelling unit.

**South Lot (Lot 0808 — south of plat)**

The south lot will contain approximately 1,813 square feet of lot area with a width of 24 feet. The proposed row dwelling will have a building footprint of approximately 1,320 square feet, a lot occupancy of 72.8%, and a height of two stories plus cellar (19.91 feet). The lot will provide one vehicle parking space and maintain 45% pervious surface. The dwelling will front on the alley with 23 feet of alley frontage and will maintain a 14.5-foot rear yard from the alley centerline. The proposed use is a single-family row dwelling — one principal dwelling unit.

Both proposed lots exceed the 1,800 square foot minimum lot area required in the RF-1 zone for alley record lots. Both proposed structures comply with all applicable height, lot occupancy, alley frontage, rear yard, pervious surface, and parking standards. The only zoning relief required is: (1) an area variance for the pre-existing alley width; (2) a special exception for the north lot's side yard condition; and (3) a special exception for residential use on an alley not meeting the minimum width. These relief items are fully addressed in the accompanying Statement of Compliance with Burden of Proof.

**III. CONSISTENCY WITH THE RF-1 ZONE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT**

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The proposed use — two row dwellings on alley record lots — is fully consistent with the character, purpose, and intent of the RF-1 (Residential Flat) zone. The RF-1 zone is a low-density residential district that expressly contemplates row dwelling development. Row dwellings are a traditional Washington building type that have defined the character of neighborhoods like Petworth and Park View for over a century. The proposed alley-fronting row dwellings continue this tradition by activating an underutilized interior block lot with appropriately scaled residential infill.

The proposed dwellings are oriented toward the alley, consistent with alley-oriented residential development patterns established throughout the District. They are designed at a scale — two stories plus cellar — that is subordinate to the principal street-facing structures on the block and compatible with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood. The buildings will not be visible from 6th Street NW or Lamont Street NW and will have no impact on the street-facing character of the neighborhood.

The block interior of Square 3046 has an established tradition of residential use oriented to the alley network. The Zoning Administrator's 2014 determination letter for 524-526 Lamont Street NW (Square 3046) confirmed that establishing primary residential entry off the public alleyway was permissible and appropriate in this very block. The proposed row dwellings are consistent with and complementary to that established pattern.

#### **IV. SPECIAL EXCEPTION JUSTIFICATION — SIDE YARD (E § 5100.1(D), E § 5201.3(A); X § 901.2)**

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The following justification is provided for the special exception relief required for the north lot's side yard condition. Relief under E § 5100.1(d) and E § 5201.3(a) is governed by the general special exception standards of Subtitle X § 901.2.

##### **A. The Proposed Use Is in Harmony with the Zoning Regulations**

Row dwellings are a building type expressly contemplated in the RF-1 zone. By definition, row dwellings share party walls and typically occupy lot lines — this is the architectural essence of the row dwelling form. A side yard requirement designed for detached single-family houses does not translate naturally to row dwelling construction. The proposed zero side yard on the north lot is not a deviation from the row dwelling typology; it is an expression of it.

The pending ZC Case No. 25-06 text amendment proposed revised yard requirements for alley lots in the RF zone that would substantially reduce the side yard requirement relative to the current standard, recognizing that alley lot development warrants different yard treatment than street-facing lots. The relief requested here is consistent with the direction in which the Zoning Regulations are being updated and with the stated intent to facilitate alley lot residential development.

##### **B. The Proposed Use Will Not Adversely Affect Neighboring Properties**

The side yard special exception for the north lot will not adversely affect the abutting non-alley lot or any other neighboring property. The relevant considerations are:

- The proposed row dwelling uses party wall construction, which provides equivalent or superior fire separation compared to an open side yard of five feet between independently-framed structures. The fire safety purpose of the side yard requirement is fully satisfied by party wall construction.
- The building height of 19.91 feet is modest and will not cast disproportionate shadows or block light to the abutting property. The neighboring street-facing lot has its own building envelope and setbacks that provide light and air on its portion of the lot.
- The north lot row dwelling has a building footprint of only 1,048 square feet and a lot occupancy of 62% — well below the 90% maximum. Despite the zero side yard, the building is not overmassing the lot.
- The north lot provides 30% pervious surface and a 33-foot rear yard from the alley centerline, ensuring generous open space relative to the lot size.
- No noise, odor, traffic, or other operational impacts associated with a residential row dwelling would adversely affect the neighboring property.

## V. SPECIAL EXCEPTION JUSTIFICATION — RESIDENTIAL USE ON SUBSTANDARD ALLEY (U § 600.1(F)(4), U § 601.1(F); X § 901.2)

The following justification is provided for the special exception relief required for residential use of both proposed alley lots under Subtitle U § 601.1(f). This relief is governed by the general special exception standards of Subtitle X § 901.2.

### **A. The Proposed Use Is in Harmony with the Zoning Regulations**

Residential use is the matter-of-right use for alley lots in the RF-1 zone, conditioned only on meeting the alley width standard. The proposed use is entirely consistent with the purpose of the RF-1 zone. The special exception process under U § 601.1(f) is the Zoning Regulations' own prescribed mechanism for allowing this exactly appropriate use when the alley width standard cannot be met due to pre-existing physical constraints.

The Zoning Administrator has already determined — in the same Square 3046 — that residential primary access off this alley network is permissible. That prior official determination constitutes compelling precedent that the proposed residential use is in harmony with the Zoning Regulations as applied to this specific alley network.

The pending ZC Case No. 25-06 amendment further confirms that residential alley lot development is affirmatively encouraged by the District's land use policies and that the Zoning Commission intends to make the special exception pathway for residential use on substandard alleys clearer, simpler, and more accessible. Granting special exception relief here is consistent with that policy direction.

### **B. The Proposed Use Will Not Adversely Affect Neighboring Properties**

The residential use of both proposed alley lots will not adversely affect neighboring properties. Residential use is the least intensive, most neighborhood-compatible use that could be proposed for this property. The specific facts further confirm the absence of adverse impact:

- **Minimal traffic:** Two single-family row dwellings will generate negligible additional traffic on the alley. DDOT has confirmed that alley lot residential development in walkable, transit-rich DC neighborhoods has minimal transportation network impact. The Petworth/Park View neighborhood is well-served by Metrorail and bus service.
- **No commercial or institutional impacts:** The proposed use is purely residential. No commercial operations, loading, or institutional activity will occur on the lots. The character of the alley interior will remain quietly residential.
- **Consistent with established block context:** The proposed use is consistent with the residential character of the block and with the Zoning Administrator's 2014 finding that residential primary access off this alley is appropriate. Adding two modestly-scaled row dwellings to an interior lot that has been vacant for years will improve, not harm, the block's residential environment.
- **Adequate emergency access:** FEMS has committed to evaluating specific alleys on a case-by-case basis. The applicant supports and welcomes that case-specific evaluation.

The fact that the Zoning Administrator previously confirmed residential use off this alley network for six apartment units is highly relevant to that evaluation.

- **Generous open space:** The two proposed lots together provide an average pervious surface coverage of approximately 37.5%, far exceeding the minimum. The open, landscaped areas will contribute positively to the block's environmental quality.

## VI. SUMMARY

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The applicant proposes to convert a long-vacant alley tax lot at 3207 6th Street NW into two modest, code-compliant row dwellings — one on each of two subdivided alley record lots. The proposed use is residential, consistent with the RF-1 zone, compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, and represents a beneficial infill use of a property that has been unable to be developed solely because of the pre-existing width of the existing public alley.

Both proposed lots meet all applicable RF-1 alley lot development standards except for the pre-existing alley width (applicable to both lots) and the north lot side yard. The requested special exceptions are narrowly tailored, well-supported by the facts and the applicable legal standards, consistent with the Zoning Administrator's prior determinations for the same square, and aligned with the affirmative policy direction of the Zoning Commission in ZC Case No. 25-06.

The applicant respectfully requests that the Board grant the requested special exceptions and area variance, enabling the beneficial residential development of this long-underutilized property.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sola Pyne*

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