

September 14, 2026

Via JZIS

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, N.W.
Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Plan Update Summary - BZA Case No. 21430 – 710 Taylor Street, NW

Dear Members of the Board:

As requested, the Applicant is submitting revised plans addressing concerns from the Board and neighbors. Below is a summary of the changes.

Reduction of Rear Addition

In direct response to the Board's feedback, the Applicant retained a new architect to reexamine the rear addition with the specific goal of minimizing impacts on the adjacent property. The depth of the addition has been reduced from 29 feet to 22 feet past the neighboring property line, a substantial reduction achieved through iterative design revisions. While this is a special exception and not a variance, the Applicant would like to note that this 22-foot depth represents the minimum footprint necessary to preserve market rate unit sizing (2BR units) on the upper floors; any further reduction would push those units below the square footage threshold for 2BR configuration, converting them to 1BR units and undermining the project's economic viability. At the cellar level, a slight forward encroachment beyond the 22-foot line was retained where necessary to preserve usable living space, though this area is largely buried and not visually perceptible from the adjoining property. The Applicant considered a further reduced alternative extending only 10 feet past the line, but determined that this would eliminate necessary living space, particularly on the upper floors, without a commensurate benefit given the already reduced massing achieved at 22 feet.

The Applicant also notes that the 22-foot differential reflects a (likely) temporary condition on the adjoining property at 708 Taylor. That adjoining property's own rear addition appears to have been demolished and has not yet been rebuilt, leaving its rear wall in a truncated, interim

state pending reconstruction. This may explain the boarded windows at its rear. Comparable rear additions exist on other properties throughout the block, and even the subject property has a similar small addition (that is being removed as part of the proposal). If the adjoining property's addition is restored to a depth consistent with those on the block, the effective differential between the two rear walls would be reduced to approximately 12 feet.

Deck and Railing Modifications

The design has also been revised to reduce the visual and physical mass of the rear deck. Solid deck walls, which were part of the original design, have been eliminated and replaced with glass railings at the lower level, improving sightlines and reducing the sense of enclosure for the adjacent property. At the upper portion, the design now incorporates a movable glass wall in place of a fixed solid wall, allowing for greater transparency and flexibility. Collectively, these changes represent a meaningful improvement over the previous solid wall configuration, reducing the perceived bulk of the rear addition as experienced from the neighboring property. The glass panels above the railing are also designed to fold and retract, and the elevations include dimensions for the glass railing heights and the depths of the additions, giving the Board and neighboring parties a clearer basis for evaluating the massing and transparency of the design.

Shadow Study and Light, Air, and Privacy Impacts

The Applicant's shadow study includes the decks as proposed. Although the glass railings may cast some limited shadow onto the adjoining property and the deck ceiling below, the transparent nature of the railing system allows indirect natural daylight to continue reaching those areas. For this reason, together with the reduced massing described above, the addition satisfies the standard for special exception relief under Subtitle E § 5201.3 of the Zoning Regulations: it will not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of the adjacent property, nor the privacy, and the light and air available to the neighboring property will not be unduly affected. The rear yards on both properties are relatively deep, so that any shadow cast by the addition represents a comparatively small percentage of the light available across the yard as a whole. In addition, photographs of the adjacent property submitted into the record show its rear façade and indicate that few, if any, functioning window openings on that elevation currently rely on light or air from the shared yard area.

Mansard and Dormer Revisions

The mansard and dormer design have been revised to be more proportional and more

consistent with the character of the adjacent building. The dormer has been reduced in overall size and now features two windows rather than the previous configuration, creating a more harmonious window pattern with the neighboring structure. The roof slope has been adjusted to match the neighbor's existing slope, since the previously proposed slope did not align with the adjacent roofline. The overall height of the dormer has also been reduced. Together, these revisions reduce the visual prominence of the addition from the street and rear yards and better integrate the new construction with the existing streetscape. Accordingly, the proposed changes do not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of the surrounding houses.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alexandra Wilson

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on September 14, 2026, an electronic copy of this submission was served to the following:

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Respectfully Submitted,

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