

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Zoning Adjustment for the District of Columbia

FROM: Philip Y. A. Isaiah Development Review Specialist
MBR
 Maxine Brown-Roberts, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: June 11, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA 21439 – To permit construction of a new apartment utilizing additional density provided by Voluntarily Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) at 1908 Irving St, NE in the RA-1 Zone

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Subtitle U § 421, New Residential Developments (all new residential development except for single household detached and semi-detached dwellings must be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Adjustment) pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.
- Subtitle F § 201.4, Voluntary Inclusionary Developments - IZ Bonus Density pursuant to Subtitle X § 901.2.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1908 Irving St, NE
Applicant	1908 Irving St, LLC represented by R Michael Cross LLC
Legal Description	Square 4207, Lot 5
Ward, ANC	Ward 5; ANC 5B
Zone	RA-1
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics	The 8,311 sq. ft. (50 ft. wide x 165 ft. deep) rectangular, interior lot was originally subdivided in 1902. A 15 foot wide public alley traverses along the rear lot line. It should be noted that the Irving Street right-of-way is 90 feet in width, meaning the lot's front lot line is set back approximately 30 feet from the edge of pavement.
Existing Development	The subject property is developed with a 2 story, vinyl-sided, single unit detached dwelling, which would be razed to build the apartment building proposed by this application.
Adjacent Properties	Two single-unit detached dwellings are located on the adjacent similarly-sized Lots 4 and 6, to the east and west and also zoned RA-1. To the north and across the alley are single-unit detached dwellings on smaller lots facing Jackson Street, NE, zoned R-1B. To the south across Irving Street, NE, the subject property faces the triangular Lot 28 zoned MU-4, which contains a gasoline service station.

Surrounding Neighborhood Character	A mix of housing types are located within the RA-1 and MU-4-zoned block, including single unit detached, single unit semi-detached, single unit attached, and multi-unit dwellings, all of which are developed at varying height, scale, and bulk on lots of varying sizes and shapes. It should be noted that the apartment building located on the nearby Lot 15 was approved by the BZA pursuant to application 19316 by the order dated September 25, 2017.
Proposed Development	The applicant proposes to raze the existing single unit detached dwelling and construct a three-story, multi-unit apartment building with 8 units with IZ at 1.08 FAR and 36% lot occupancy. All units would contain six bedrooms and would range from 1,187 sq. ft. to 1,313 sq. ft. in floor area and contain one IZ unit provided at 1,258 sq. ft. Four on-site parking spaces would be provided in the rear yard, adjacent to the alley, including one ADA-accessible space, exceeding the requirement of one space; bicycle parking would be provided with 4 long-term spaces inside the building and 2 short-term spaces on the lot outside the building. Trash will be stored in two, 12-yard dumpsters located in the rear yard adjacent to the rear parking spaces and would be collected by a private company via the access aisle.

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone: RA-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief
Apartment House U § 421	Permitted by sp. ex.	N/A	8 units	Special Exception Requested
Density, F § 201	FAR 0.9 max.; 1.08 max. with IZ.	N/A	1.08 (IZ unit incl.)	Special Exception Requested
Lot Width, F § 202	N/A	50	No Change	None Requested
Lot Area, F § 202	N/A	8,311 sq. ft.	No Change	None Requested
Height, F § 203	40 ft. max.; 3 stories	N/A	32 ft. 3 stories	None Requested
Rear Yard, F § 207	20 ft. min.	N/A	50 ft.	None Requested
Side Yard, F § 208.3	8 ft. min. or 3 in. per ft. of height, whichever is greater. (Thus, 8 ft.)	N/A	8 ft. (West) 10 ft. 5 ½ in. (East)	None Requested
Lot Occupancy, F § 210	40% max.	N/A	36%	None Requested
GAR, F § 211	0.4 min.	N/A	0.4	None Requested

Zone: RA-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief
Vehicular Parking, C § 701	No min. for first 4 units. Then, 1 space per 3 units (Thus, 1 space)	N/A	4 spaces	None Requested
Bicycle parking C § 802	1 long-term space per 3 units (Thus, 3 long-term spaces) 1 short-term space per 20 units (Thus, no short-term spaces required)	N/A	4 long-term spaces 2 short-term spaces	None Requested

¹As provided by the applicant

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

A. Subtitle U § 421, NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS (RA-1)

421.1 In any of the RA-1 zones, all new residential developments, except those comprising all one-family detached and semi-detached dwellings, shall be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as special exceptions pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 9, in accordance with the standards and requirements in this section.

The application proposes to construct an apartment building containing 8 units. This standard is applicable.

421.2 The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to the relevant District of Columbia agencies for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of the following:

(a) Existing and planned area schools to accommodate the numbers of students that can be expected to reside in the project; and

The application was referred to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for comment. While comments have not been filed to the record at this report's publication, DC Public Schools (DCPS) permanent capacity utilization rates, as published on the Deputy Mayor for Education's website¹ for Ward 5's in-boundary schools for school year 2025-2026 were 75% utilized with 41 facilities.³

(b) Public streets, recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents that can be expected to reside in the project.

¹ <https://edscape.dc.gov/page/facilities-utilization>

The application was referred to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) for comment and recommendation, for which a memorandum was provided as contained as Exhibit 24 of the record. DDOT found that the subject property appears to have 1 special tree, for which a permit must be obtained to remove.

The property is located approximately 150 feet from Rhode Island Avenue, NE, which is designated as a bus priority corridor according to the DDOT Bus Priority Plan². The corridor adjacent to the subject property is currently served by the High-Frequency P40 route, Medium-Frequency P1X and D32 routes, and low-frequency P-10 Route, all of which provide access to the nearest Rhode Island Ave. Metro Station, located about 1.2 miles away.

The application was referred to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for comment and recommendation. While comments have not been filed to the record, the site is located approximately 0.2 miles from the Langdon Park Recreation Center and its associated recreational facilities. The Chuck Brown Memorial Park and its associated playground are also located 0.2 miles from the subject property.

- 421.3 *The Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to the Office of Planning for comment and recommendation on the site plan, arrangement of buildings and structures, and provisions of light, air, parking, recreation, landscaping, and grading as they relate to the surrounding neighborhood, and the relationship of the proposed project to public plans and projects.*

Site Plan and Arrangement of Buildings and Provision of Light and Air

According to the applicant's submitted plans and burden of proof, the proposed apartment building would be 32 feet in width where the lot is 50 feet wide, and 109 feet in depth where the lot is 165 feet deep. Although the building is set back only about 9 feet from the front lot line, the 90-foot-wide Irving Street right-of-way creates a much deeper visual setback. As a result, the building will be located approximately 40 feet back from the edge of pavement. For comparison, this building will be slightly more set back to the existing apartment building located on Lot 15 at 1904 Irving St. previously approved by the Board.

Parking

The project provides four on-site vehicular parking spaces, including one ADA-accessible space, all located at the rear of the property and accessed from the 15-foot wide public alley. Bicycle parking also exceeds the required spaces, with 4 long-term and 2 short-term spaces provided on-site where the requirement is 3 long-term and zero short-term, respectively. The long-term spaces would be provided in an enclosed interior room on the first floor, and the short-term spaces would be provided by a bike rack near the front entrance.

² <https://buspriority.ddot.dc.gov/>

Recreation

The proposal does not include any dedicated external or internal recreation spaces. However, the site is located approximately 0.2 miles from the Langdon Park Recreation Center and its associated recreational facilities. The Chuck Brown Memorial Park and its associated playground are also located 0.2 miles from the subject property.

Landscaping, and Grading

As contained in the Updated Architectural Plans and Elevations (Exhibit 27C), the applicant proposes to remove 3 of the 4 trees located in the rear yard, one of which is subject to DDOT approval.

The Existing and proposed Site Plans are provided at Exhibit 27C, sheets BZA04 and BZA05, respectively. Grading adjustments are shown primarily where required to support the egress wells serving the new cellar units.

- 421.4 *In addition to other filing requirements, the developer shall submit to the Board of Zoning Adjustment with the application a site plan and set of typical floor plans and elevations, grading plan (existing and final), landscaping plan, and plans for all new rights-of-way and easements.*

The applicant has provided filings sufficient for the review of the proposal against the relevant criteria.

Subtitle X § 901 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW STANDARDS

- 901.2 *The Board of Zoning Adjustment is authorized under § 8 of the Zoning Act, D.C. Official Code § 6-641.07(g)(2), to grant special exceptions, as provided in this title, where, in the judgment of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the special exceptions:*

- (a) *Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps;*

The RA-1 zone permits moderate density development including low-rise apartments as well as additional density with the provision of IZ units through Special Exception. The proposal is consistent with the provisions of the Regulations, and the building would be within the development requirements of the zone even with the additional density requested under Voluntary IZ. The proposal would not be inconsistent with the intended use, building bulk or height of the zone. Therefore, the proposed apartment building and its proposed IZ unit harmonizes with the intent of the RA-1 zone requirements.

- (b) *Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and*

While the Voluntary IZ unit would add 0.18 FAR than otherwise permitted in the RA-1 zone, the proposed building meets all matter-of-right height, yard, and all other bulk regulations for the zone and the applicant has provided a solar study located in sheets BZA21 to BZA 27 of the plans in Exhibit 27C that compares the

shadows cast by the proposed building versus the full buildable envelope. The RA-1 zone expressly anticipates low-rise multifamily buildings as part of its intended character, and some incremental shadow is inherent in that transition. Given that the project fully conforms to the zone's bulk limits, maintains separation from adjacent dwellings, and introduces no atypical sources of obstruction, any resulting shadow on Lots 4 and 6 would not rise to the level of an undue adverse effect under this standard.

(c) Subject in specific cases to the special conditions specified in this title.

The proposal would meet the requirements of Subtitle U § 421, as provided above.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) report dated May 22, 2026 indicating no objection to the subject application is contained as Exhibit 24 of the record.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

No report from ANC 5B is supplied to the record at this report's publication.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Several letters from the community are in the record:

- Letters opposition are at Exhibits 25, 23, and 32;
- A letter of no objection at Exhibit 21; and
- Comments at Exhibit 28.

Location Map:

