

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Michael Jurkovic, AICP, Development Review Specialist
MBR
 Maxine Brown-Roberts, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: July 10, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21465: Request for side yard special exception relief to allow the conversion of a semi-detached building at 1724 Potomac Avenue, SE, to an attached building in the RF-1 zone.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception relief, pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201 and X § 901.2:

- **Subtitle E § 208.5 Side Yard** (Nonconforming side yard to not be reduced or eliminated and extension to buildings require at least a 3 ft. side yard; 4.5 ft. existing; 0 ft. proposed)

The application currently requests relief from Subtitle E § 208.4 for the elimination of a conforming side yard. However, after reviewing the record and having a discussion with the applicant, it was agreed that the correct relief should be from Subtitle E § 208.5, non-conforming side yard requirement cited above. OP believes that the underlying merits of the request remain unchanged and understand the applicant will amend the application prior to the public hearing.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1724 Potomac Avenue, SE
Applicants	Sullivan & Barros, LLP on behalf of Jesse and Kristen Connell
Legal Description	Square 1102; Lot 92
Ward, ANC	Ward 7; ANC 7D and across from ANC 6B
Zone	RF-1
Historic Districts	N/A
Lot Characteristics	Irregular interior lot with 19.36 ft. frontage along Potomac Ave., 19.42 ft. frontage along E Street SE, 170 ft. of depth and 16.23 ft. to the rear which abuts a 30 ft. public alleyway.
Existing Development	Semi-detached, single family dwelling
Adjacent Properties	Single family, attached dwellings
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Low density, residential neighborhood with predominantly attached dwellings.

Proposed Development	Rear and side additions to the principal single family dwelling converting the structure into an attached building, and a new accessory building to the rear.
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III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Density E § 201	2 principal dwelling units max.	1 principal dwelling unit	2 dwelling units	None requested
Lot Width E § 202	18 ft. min.	16.23 ft.	No change	None requested
Lot Area E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	3,261 sq. ft.	No change	None requested
Height E § 203	35 ft. max.	28.99 ft.	No change	None requested
Front Yard E § 206	Consistent with block face	Consistent with block face	No change	None requested
Rear Yard E § 207	20 ft. min.	110 ft.	102 ft.	None requested
Rear Extension E § 207.5	10 ft. max. beyond neighboring houses	0 ft. beyond neighboring houses	7.66 ft.	None requested
Side Yard E § 208	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	4.5 ft.	0 ft. (Removal of non-conforming side yard)	Special Exception requested
Lot Occupancy E § 210	60% max.	22.95%	56.06%	None requested
Parking C § 701	1 space/2 dwelling units min.	1 space	3 spaces	None requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

Subtitle E § 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 For an addition to a principal residential building on a non-alley lot or for a new principal residential building on a substandard non-alley record lot as described by Subtitle C § 301.1, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards of this subtitle as a special exception, subject to the provisions of this section and the general special exception criteria at Subtitle X, Chapter 9:

- (a) *Lot occupancy up to a maximum of seventy percent (70%) for all new and existing structures on the lot;*

- (b) *Yards, including alley centerline setback;*
- (c) *Courts; and*
- (d) *Pervious surface.*

Through the construction of an addition to the primary structure, the proposal requires relief from the required side yard to convert the exiting semi-detached principal dwelling into a attached (row) building.

5201.2 & 5201.3 not relevant to this application

5201.4 An applicant for special exception under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new building, or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:

- (a) *The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected;*

The proposed addition would serve to convert the property into an attached form and maintains the considerable rear yard. The adjacent property to the west, where the side yard will be removed, already exists as an attached building without any windows on the adjoining façade. Therefore, the addition which would be below the maximum height should not have a significant impact on the availability of light or flow of air to the neighboring properties.

- (b) *The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised;*

The proposed addition should not unduly compromise the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties. Either side elevation of the proposed which would face the adjacent property will not feature windows. Therefore, it should not have an undue impact on the neighbors' privacy.

- (c) *The proposed addition or accessory structure, together with the original building, or the new principal building, 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; and*

The proposed addition should not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along Potomac Avenue or E Street and the visibility of the addition from the alley would be limited by the otherwise permissible accessory structure proposed. Further, the Applicant's intent to fill a portion of the area currently dedicated to the side yard would further cement the nearby established building form. Therefore, the proposal should not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale, and pattern of houses along Potomac Avenue and E Street.

- (d) *In demonstrating compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this subsection, the applicant shall use graphical representations such as plans, photographs, or elevation and section drawings sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed addition or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

The Applicant provided plans, photographs, and elevations to sufficiently represent the

relationship of the proposed building from public ways.

5201.5 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 and nearby properties.

No special treatment is recommended.

5201.6 This section shall not be used to permit the introduction or expansion of a nonconforming use, lot occupancy beyond what is authorized in this section, height, or number of stories, as a special exception.

If relief is granted, the proposed addition would comply with the RF-1 development standards.

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 proposed addition would be consistent with the intent of the RF-1 zone requirements. Specifically, the requested relief would be allowed by special exception, and the applicant has successfully met the review criteria.

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

The proposed addition should not intensify any impact to the use of neighboring properties, as the proposal would maintain a considerable amount of rear yard and would otherwise be in conformance with all other development standards of the RF-1 zone.

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

As demonstrated above, the application meets the requirements of Subtitle E § 5201.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT has informed OP that they have no objection to the relief requested and will not be filing a report.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the writing of this report there are no comments from ANC 7D or 6B in the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of the writing of this report there are letters in support from both adjacent property owners and the Capital Hill Restoration Society.

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map:

