District of Columbia
Office of Planning

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Karen Thomas, Case Manager
MBR
Maxine Brown Roberts, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: October 23, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21511: Request for special exception relief to allow construction of a two-story accessory structure at 311 F Street, N.E.

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201, Subtitle E § 403, and Subtitle X § 901:

- E § 210.1 Lot Occupancy (60% max: 52.5% existing: 69.9% proposed)

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	311 F Street, N.E.
Applicant:	Thomas and Emily Beline represented by Fowler Architecture
Legal Description:	Square 779, Lot 0073
Ward / ANC:	Ward 6; ANC 6C
Zone:	RF-1/CAP: the zone is intended to promote and protect the *". . . general welfare of the U.S. Capitol precinct and the area adjacent to this jurisdiction, in a manner consistent with the goals and mandates of the . . . Master Plan for Future Development of the Capitol Grounds and Related Areas, approved July 25, 1975 (Pub. L. No. 94-59, 89 Stat. 288)".*
Historic Districts	Capitol Hill Historic District
Lot Characteristics:	The rectangular lot is an interior lot, with some slight variation in elevation at the rear to the alley. See Site Plan section at Plans and Elevations Sheet C-5 – Exhibit 3
Existing Development:	The property is developed with a three-story flat.
Adjacent Properties:	Adjacent properties are developed with two-and three-story row dwellings and flats like the subject property with some accessory structures in the rear yards.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The neighborhood is developed with two-story, row dwellings and some small apartment buildings characteristic of the surrounding Capitol Hill Historic District.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.21511
EXHIBIT NO.31

Proposed Development:	The Applicant proposes to construct a two-story, 288.4 square feet accessory garage structure at the rear of the lot, with a single space parking area on the first level and living space on the second level.

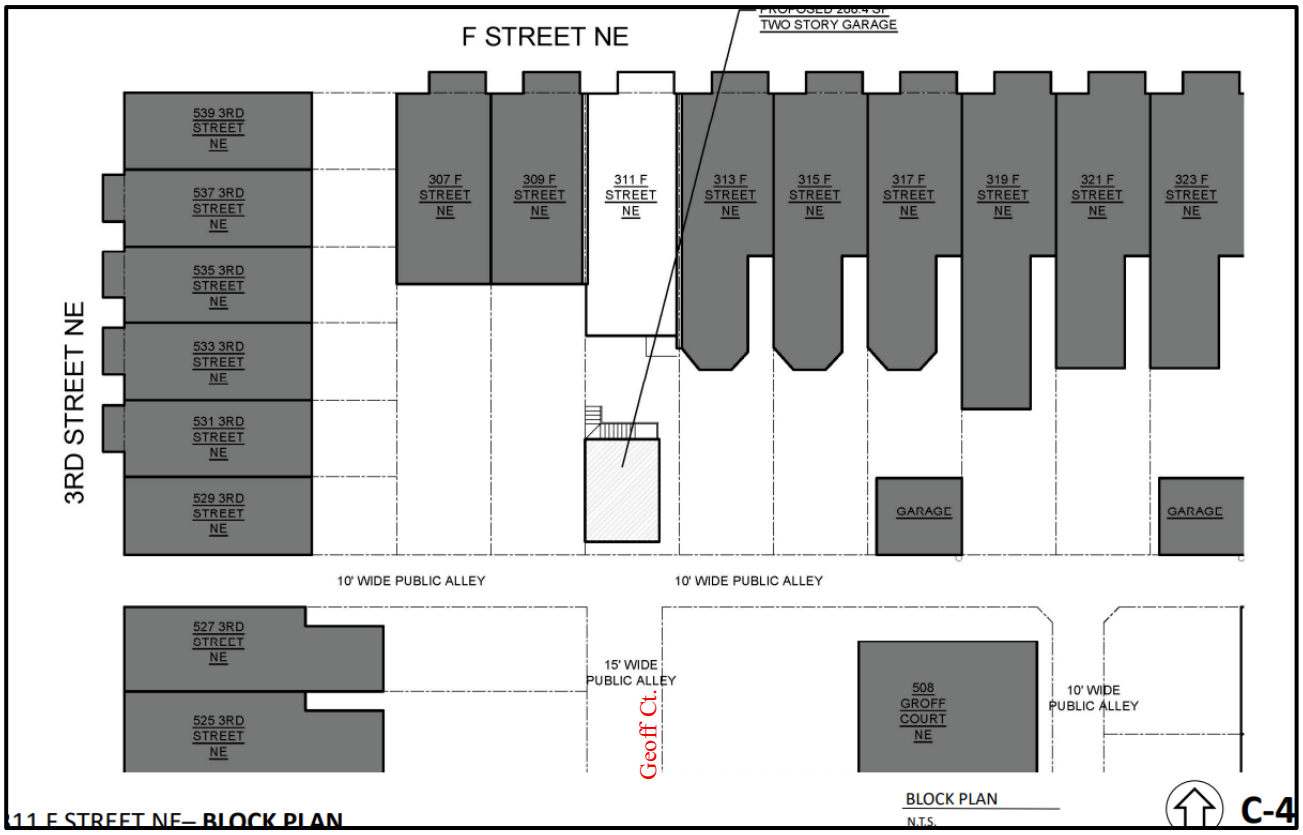
III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

RF-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed [1]	Relief:
Density, E § 201	2 principal units max.	1 principal unit	No Change	None required
Lot Width, E § 202	18 ft. min.	18.33 ft.	No Change	None required
Lot Area, E § 202	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,649 sf.	No Change	None required
Height, E § 203	35 ft. max.	30 ft.	No Change	None required
Height (Acc. Structure) E § 5002	22 feet/2 stories	N/A	22 feet/2 stories	None required
Rear Yard, E § 207	20 ft. min.	42.75 ft.	No change	None required
Side Yard, E § 208	None required, but 5 ft. min. if provided	N/A	3.91 ft.	None required
Lot Occupancy E § 210	**60% max. (M-O-R) 70% by SE**	**52.5 %**	**69.9 %**	**Relief requested**
Max. Bldg. Area E § 5003	greater of thirty percent (30%) of req'd. rear yard or 550 sf	N/A	288.4 sf	None required
Parking C § 701	1 space required	Not provided	No Change	None required

IV. OP ANALYSIS

The Applicant requests relief from the lot occupancy requirement of E § 210 pursuant to E § 5201 to construct a two-story garage structure in the rear yard as shown on pages C-4 and C-5 of the Architectural Plans and Elevations at Exhibit 3. The existing parking pad and patio area would be redeveloped into a two-story structure with a lower-level garage and upper-level flexible living space to be used by the residents. The project would increase the lot occupancy from the existing 52% to approximately 70%. Therefore, relief is requested. All other development parameters of the zone are satisfied. Since the property is within the RF-1/CAP zone, OP also provided its review pursuant to E § 403- Special Exception Review Criteria as required.

[1] Information provided by applicant.



Subtitle E Chapter 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;*

The lot occupancy of the property would increase from 52.5% to 69.9%.

(b) Yards, including front setback and alley centerline setback;

(c) Courts; and

(d) Pervious surface.

5201.2 ***For a new*** *or enlarged* ***accessory structure*** *to a residential building on a non-alley lot, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards 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;

The garage would increase the property's lot occupancy from 52.5% to 69.9%.

(b) *Maximum building area of an accessory building;* - Complies
(c) *Yards, including front setback and alley centerline setback;* - Complies
(d) *Courts; and* - N/A
(e) Pervious surface. N/A

5201.3 This criteria is 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 garage would be set back approximately 14 feet from the rear façade of the abutting property to the east, 313 F Street N.E., and at least 30 feet from the rear façade of the abutting property to the west, 309 F Street N.E**.** While the second-story addition would cast some shadow into portions of the adjoining rear yards during the spring, summer, and fall months, the resulting shadowing would not cast any shadows into the living area of the adjacent houses. Therefore, the shadows would not be undue and should not adversely affect light and air available to the neighboring properties.

In addition, because the subject property is located at the terminus of a T-shaped alley system that ranges from 10 to 15 feet in width, any shadow impacts would be limited. As a result, the proposed second story should not adversely affect the rear yards of properties fronting 3rd Street, N.E**.** or the yard areas of the properties directly across the alley at 508 Groff Court, N.E and 527 3rd Street, NE.

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

The proposed addition should not adversely affect the privacy of neighboring properties. A review of the plans indicates that the fenestration has been carefully designed and located to minimize views into adjoining yards and residences. The east elevation, which faces the property line, would contain no windows. Along the west elevation, the proposed 2-foot-high clerestory windows would be positioned approximately five feet above the second-floor level, allowing natural light into the space while preventing direct views into the neighboring property at 313 F Street, N.E. (Exhibit 3, Sheet 4 and 5).

The remaining windows would face the alley and the subject property's rear yard, a typical design feature for accessory structures. As such, the proposal would not create meaningful new viewing opportunities beyond those that already exist from the rear-facing windows of the principal dwelling. Furthermore, because the second-floor space would serve as accessory living area for the applicant's residence and is relatively small in size, it is not expected to be continuously occupied.

The immediate abutting property owner at 309 F Street, N.E. submitted a letter in support of the application (Exhibit 22), further indicating that the proposal is not expected to create adverse privacy impacts on neighboring properties.

(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 structure would not be viewed from F Street, NE but may be viewed from 3rd Street, NE and from the alleys. However, the design and materials of the accessory building would be consistent with the materials and development pattern of the square as viewed from the rear.

(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 record includes the required documents including the Surveyor's Plat (Exhibit 7); Color Photos (Exhibit 2); and Architectural Plans (Exhibit 3) which are sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views 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.

OP does not recommend any additional treatment.

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.

The existing residential use would continue with the proposed addition, as the accessory structure would be subordinate to the primary residential use.

Subtitle X Section 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 RF-1 zone regulations are intended to maintain the established residential character, preserve the pattern of rear-yard open space, and accommodate typical accessory structures along alleys. In addition to those purposes, the RF-1/CAP zone regulations are to "*reflect the importance of and provide sufficient controls for the area adjacent to the U.S. Capitol…*"(E § 400.2(b))

The Applicant's proposal to construct an accessory structure is not inconsistent with these purposes. The addition mimics the existing pattern of residences on adjacent properties while maintaining the property's massing within the prescribed maximum limits of lot occupancy.

Since the project is typical of rear-yard development pattern in the RF-1 zone and remains compatible with the anticipated scale for the residential uses, it is not inconsistent with the RF-1/CAP purposes and intent and is in harmony with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps.

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

The accessory structure would not adversely affect the use of neighboring property, with respect to its impacts to light and air available to the neighbors, which would be minimal and as discussed prior in this report.

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

As demonstrated above, the proposal meets the specified requirements of E §5201.

CAPITOL INTEREST RESIDENTIAL FLAT ZONE – RF-1/CAP

403 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW CRITERIA

403.1 In reviewing an application for a special exception in the RF-1/CAP zone, in addition to the applicable criteria of this subtitle and of Subtitle X, Chapter 9, the Board of Zoning Adjustment shall consider whether the proposed development is:

(a) Compatible with the present and proposed development of the neighborhood;

As discussed under Subtitle X § 901.2 and based on the analysis of the criteria under E § 5201, the proposal is compatible with development in the neighborhood particularly as viewed from the rear.

(b) Consistent with the goals and mandates of the United States Congress in title V of the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act, 1976 (Master Plan for Future Development of the Capitol Grounds and Related Areas), approved July 25, 1975 (Pub. L. No. 94-59, 89 Stat. 288); and

The major goal of the Master Plan is to preserve the Capitol's historic character, enhancing public access, and guiding sustainable, coordinated development of the grounds and related areas. This property is not within the Capitol precinct. However, the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) is granted authority to review proposals within areas adjacent to the precinct.

(c) In accordance with the plan promulgated under the Act.

This requirement is not applicable as the property is not on U.S. Capitol grounds.

403.2 Upon receipt of the application, the Board of Zoning Adjustment shall refer the application to:

(a) The Architect of the Capitol for review and report; and

The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) has not provided its report to date.

(b) The Office of Planning for review, report, and impact assessment along with coordination of reviews in writing of all relevant District departments and agencies including:

(1) The District Department of Transportation;

(2) The Department of Housing and Community Development; and

(3) The Historic Preservation Office if the application involves a historic district or historic landmark.

In an email to OP on 10/19/2026, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) requested that OP convey to the BZA that DDOT has no objection to the application. The Historic Preservation Office had no comments at this time, and stated that the application will be reviewed at permitting. The Capitol Hill Restoration Society submitted a letter in support to the record at Exhibit 30.

403.3 The Board may require special treatment and impose reasonable conditions as it deems necessary to mitigate any adverse impacts identified in the consideration of the application.

OP does not envision any adverse impacts and therefore does not suggest additional screening or other special treatment.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The DDOT submitted no objection to the application as stated prior, and at the writing of this report there were no other District agencies' comments.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) submitted its recommendation in support of the application at Exhibit 30.

The Architect of the Capitol (AOC) comments were not included in the record at the writing of this report.

VII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

The property is within ANC 6C. At the time of this report, there were no comments in the record.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

There are several letters in support of the application at Exhibits 17-29.

Attachment: Location Map

LOCATION MAP

