District of Columbia
Office of Planning

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Philip Bradford, AICP, Development Review Specialist
MBR Maxine Brown Roberts, Associate Director, Development Review

DATE: November 24, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21522: Request for special exception relief to expand the second floor of a semi-detached dwelling unit at 5073 Sheriff Road, NE in the R-2 zone.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

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

- Front Setback Requirements, D § 206.3 (Within range of existing required, 20.43 ft. existing; 12.26 proposed on second floor) pursuant to Subtitle D § 5201 and Subtitle X § 901; and
- Rear Addition Requirements, D § 207.5 (10 ft. max. required, 0 ft. existing; 21.33 ft. proposed on second floor) pursuant to Subtitle X § 901

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	5073 Sheriff Road, NE
Applicants:	Sullivan and Barros LLP on behalf of Stephen and Kiearra Shorter
Legal Description:	Square 5176, Lot 211
Ward / ANC:	Ward 7 / ANC 7C
Zone:	R-2
Historic Districts:	None
Lot Characteristics:	Irregular lot with a 22.5 ft. width and a depth varying from 98.2 ft. to 107.3 ft. with a public alley at the rear varying from 16 ft. to 36 ft. in width.
Existing Development:	Two story with cellar semi-detached principal dwelling unit.
Adjacent Properties:	Semi-detached dwellings and multi-family housing.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	Single unit detached, semi-detached, and small apartment buildings.
Proposed Development:	The applicant proposes to expand the second floor of the building with front and rear additions to provide additional living space.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21522
EXHIBIT NO. 33

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

R Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width D § 202 (302)	30 ft. min.	22.52 ft.	No change	None requested
Lot Area D § 202	3,000 sq. ft. min.	2,375 sq. ft.	No change	None requested
Height D § 203	40 ft. max.	26 ft.	No change	None requested
Front Setback D § 206	Within range of existing adjacent buildings	Within range of existing (20.43 ft.)	12.26 ft.	**Special Exception Requested**
Rear Yard D § 207	20 ft. min.	49 ft. 10 in.	28.54 ft.	None requested
Rear Extension D § 207.5	10 ft. max. beyond adjacent buildings	0 ft.	21.33 ft.	**Special Exception Requested**
Side Yard D § 207	7.5 ft. min.	7.5 ft.	No change	None requested
Lot Occupancy D § 210	40% max. by right50% max. by sp. ex.	17%.	35.6%	None requested
Parking C § 701	1 min.	0 spaces	No change	None requested

IV. OP ANALYSIS

Front Addition

Subtitle D § 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 For an addition to a principal residential building with one (1) principal dwelling unit 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 subject to the following table:

TABLE D § 5201.1(a): MAXIMUM PERMITTED LOT OCCUPANCY BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION

Zones	Type of Structure	Maximum Percentage of Lot Occupancy (%)
All R-3 zones except R-3/GT	All Structures	70
R-3/GT	Row	
R-3/GT	Detached Semi-detached	50

Zones	Type of Structure	Maximum Percentage of Lot Occupancy (%)
All other R zones	All Structures	

(b) Yards, including alley centerline setback; and

(c) Pervious surface.

The applicant is requesting special exception relief for front yard setback as permitted by this section.

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

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

The applicant proposes a small second-floor addition to their property at the front of the existing structure. Exhibit 21A contains a shadow study that illustrates the impacts of the proposed addition on neighboring properties. Exhibit 5 shows photos and aerial imagery of the property and surrounding area. In this exhibit there are several large trees that provide shade and mitigate the impact and visibility of the proposed addition from neighboring properties. The small second story addition should not unduly affect light and air available to either neighboring property.

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

The architectural plans and elevations in Exhibit 6 show windows on the second-floor addition facing the front yard of the adjacent property to the east and facing Sargent Road NE. It is not uncommon to have windows facing adjacent properties on semi-detached dwellings and there are existing windows facing the property to the west on the second floor. The front addition is not anticipated to reduce privacy and enjoyment of use of the adjacent properties as the only impacts are to the side yard or front yard, which is inherently public facing and tend not to have 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

While the proposed addition is unique in that it may be the first in the area to include an upper story addition at the front of the principal building, other buildings nearby have similarly sized enclosed front porch additions as shown in Exhibit 21D. While the front portion of the addition may be different than those around it, Sherrif Road does not have a prevailing character, scale or pattern along this portion of the road as there are detached, semi-detached, multi-family and religious institutions contributing to an overall inconsistent pattern of buildings. The front addition matches the same distance as other front porch enclosures along the street to maintain some consistency. While the addition does deviate from the existing pattern established by the semi-detached structures, OP does not believe the design would result in a substantial visual

intrusion on the street frontage.

(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 has provided plans, photographs, elevations, and section drawings and a shadow study to represent the relationship of the proposed addition to adjacent buildings and views from public ways such as Sherrif Road and the public alley at the rear.

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 by OP.

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 applicant is requesting special exception relief for front yard The proposal would not introduce a nonconforming use, increase the lot occupancy beyond what is authorized, and the height or number of stories is within the 40 feet allowed in the R-2 zone.

Subtitle X § 901 SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW STANDARDS

Rear (Subtitle D § 207.5) and Front Addition

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;

Front Setback: The proposed addition to the front of the principal building is in keeping with the R-2 purpose and intent as it maintains the single unit semi-detached dwelling while allowing the property owner to have additional living space. Subtitle D §101.2(b) states that:

*(b) Recognize and reinforce the importance of neighborhood character, walkable neighborhoods, housing affordability, **aging in place**, preservation of housing stock, improvements to the overall environment, and low- and moderate-density housing to the overall housing mix and health of the city;*

Allowing the requested relief would also be in harmony with the general purpose of the regulations as it would allow the applicant to have additional living space and age in place as their family grows.

Rear Extension: The applicant proposes a second story addition that will extend beyond the maximum permitted 10 feet beyond the adjoining property. Relief is permitted by special exception and while the applicant proposes a 21.33-foot extension, the addition still leaves

plenty of rear yard area and has no windows facing the adjoining dwelling which limits any privacy impacts.

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

Front Setback: As outlined above, it is not anticipated that the front addition should affect adversely the use of either neighboring property and is within the scope of what is allowed by special exception.

Rear Extension: The rear addition would extend 21.33 ft. beyond the adjoining building and face the adjacent semi-detached building. OP does not anticipate the proposed extension would affect adversely the use of either neighboring property.

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

Front Setback: The application meets the specific criteria of D § 5201.

Rear Addition: The is no specific criteria regarding the rear addition.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The Department of Transportation (DDOT) has asked OP to convey to the BZA that, "DDOT has no objection to the approval of the application." No other District agencies have submitted comments to the record.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the writing of this report, ANC 7C has not submitted comment to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At Exhibit 18 is a letter in support of the application. At Exhibit 19 is a letter in opposition.

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map:

