District of Columbia
Office of Planning

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: November 6, 2026

SUBJECT: BZA Case 21533, Request for special exception relief to expand an existing penthouse at 1701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW.

I. RECOMMENDATION

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

- Penthouse Habitable Space, Subtitle C § 1501.1(e) (within a defined area near the White House, penthouse habitable space is only permitted by special exception; habitable penthouse proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Applicant	Goulston & Storrs, PC on behalf of 1701 Pennsylvania LLC
Legal Description	Square 166, Lot 32
Ward, ANC	Ward 2; ANC 2A
Zone	D-6
Historic District or Resource	N/A
Lot Characteristics	Irregular corner lot of approximately 20,755 square feet with a 175.92 ft. frontage on Pennsylvania Avenue and 161.08 feet on 17th Street, NW, with a 20 ft. alleyway at the northwest corner.
Existing Development	The property is improved with a 12-story office building.
Adjacent Properties	Office buildings with some apartment houses.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	High Density Commercial Core; Eisenhower Office Building and White House complex across the intersection to the southeast
Proposed Development	Construction which would expand an existing habitable penthouse of a 12-story office building with ground floor retail.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21533
EXHIBIT NO. 23
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III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone- D-6	Regulation	Existing	Proposed[1]	Relief
Density I § 200	10 FAR, except 6.0 FAR over historic portions	10.0 FAR	10.1 FAR (with credits)	None Requested
Height I § 201 & 532	130 ft. max. for right-of-way greater than or equal to 110 ft.	130 ft./12 stories	No change	None Requested
Penthouse Height I § 532 & C § 1502	20 ft. max; 1 habitable story plus mezzanine & 1 mechanical story	22 ft. 1 mechanical story	22 ft./ 1 habitable story plus mezzanine & 1 mechanical story	None Requested (See Exhibit #7)
Penthouse Front Setback C § 1504.1(a)	Distance equal to the height of the penthouse.	Assumed conforming.	1:1 setback compliance demonstrated through rendering shown at Exhibit # 4, Sheet G0208.	None Requested
Penthouse Rear Setback C § 1504.1(b)	Distance equal to the height of the penthouse.	Assumed conforming.	No Change	None Requested
Penthouse Side Setbacks C § 1504.1(c)	Distance equal to the height of the penthouse.	Assumed conforming.	1:1 setback compliance demonstrated through rendering shown at Exhibit # 4, Sheet G0208.	None Requested
Penthouse Habitable Space C § 1501.1(e)	**Penthouse habitable space is permitted only by special exception on any building within an area bound by I Street, NW to the north; Constitution Avenue, NW to the south; 19th Street, NW to the west; and 13th Street, NW to the east.**	**Penthouse related to office use.**	**Expanded Habitable penthouse related to office use.**	**Special Exception**

[1] Per the applicant.

IV. ANALYSIS

PENTHOUSE USES: Special Exception Relief from Subtitle C § 1501.1(e):

1501.1 A penthouse or rooftop structure may house mechanical equipment, or any use permitted within the zone, except that penthouse space shall be restricted as follows:

(a) . . .

(e) On any building within an area bound by I Street, N.W., to the north; Constitution Avenue, N.W., to the south; 19th Street, N.W., to the west, and 13th Street, N.W., to the east, penthouse habitable space or publicly accessible rooftop deck on the highest roof of the building, shall be permitted only if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as a special exception under Subtitle X, Chapter 9, after consultation with the US Secret Service to determine whether security concerns exist.

The subject building is located within the boundary described above and the US Secret Service has determined that the existing penthouse and additions would not pose security concerns (Exhibit 2).

The existing building currently has a mechanical penthouse with interior space that houses an elevator lobby and mechanical space. The reminder of the roof is currently unoccupied. The existing penthouse has a legally noncompliant height of approximately 22 feet and the penthouse expansion will meet the required 1:1 setback from the south, and east building walls. The setback from the west building wall is not required.

The proposal would introduce a rooftop experience for the anchor office tenants by renovating the space to include habitable space and rooftop terrace wrapping around the southern and eastern walls of the penthouse. Additionally, the proposed penthouse would trigger a requirement to contribute funds to the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF). The exact contribution amount will be calculated at the time of Permitting.

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 proposed introduction of habitable penthouse would be consistent with the intent and purpose of the D-6 zone in both intensity and use. The penthouse itself would meet all the development requirements of the Zoning Regulations and only seeks relief tied to the review requirement of C § 1501.1(e).

(b) Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance

with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps; and

As the proposed penthouse structure will adhere to the development requirements, the expanded use should not adversely affect neighboring properties. There would be no impacts to light, air or privacy available to nearby properties, and OP does not anticipate significant noise or light impacts from a penthouse used as amenity space for an office building.

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

As discussed above, the relief sought will meet all special exception criteria associated with the requested relief. Additionally, Exhibit #2 includes a letter of support from the United States Secret Service.

V. OTHER AGENCIES

The project received concept approval from the Commission of Fine Arts, in Application SL 26-039.

VI. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT has requested that OP inform the BZA that they have no objection to this application.

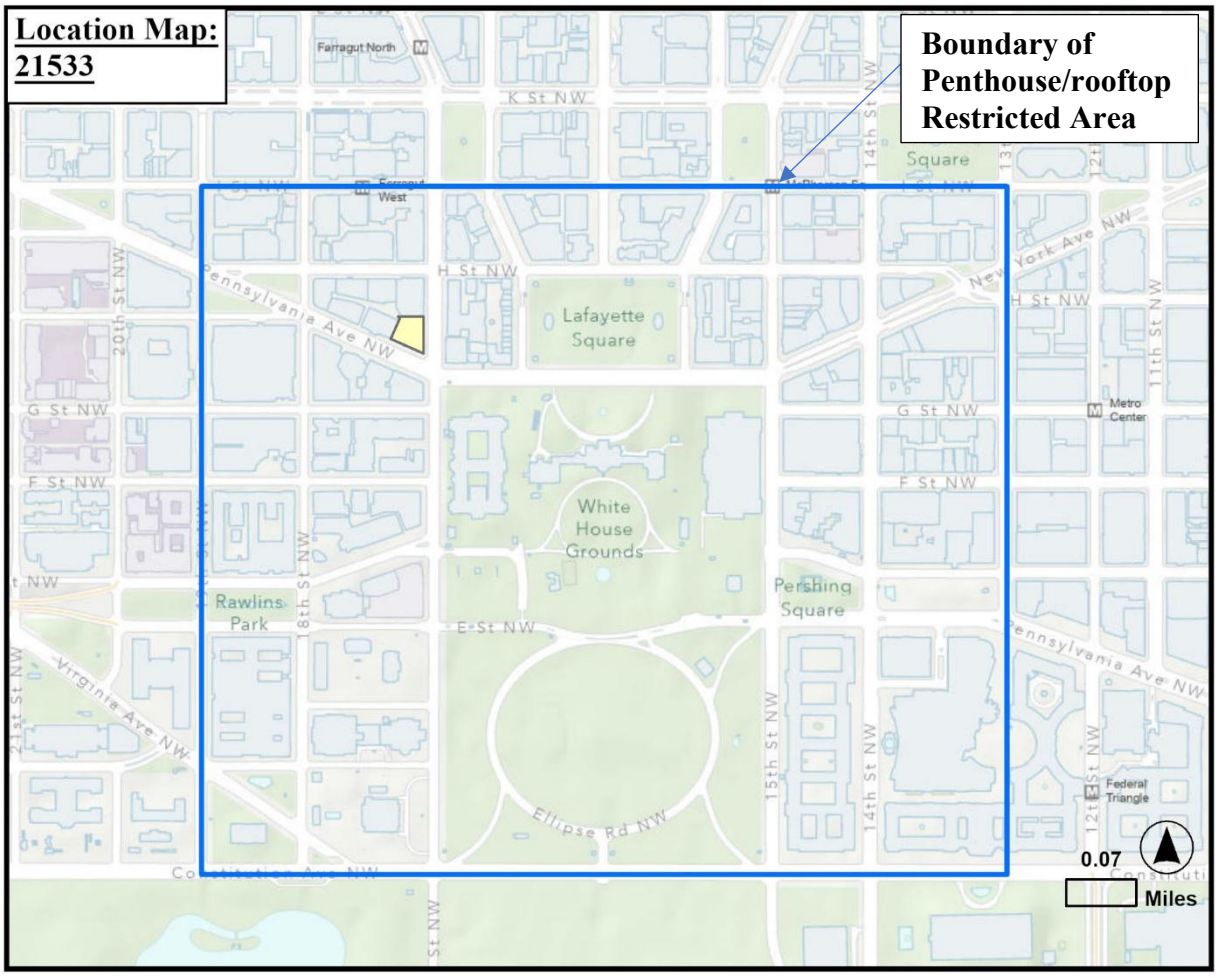
VII. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

At Exhibit # 21, ANC 2A has provided a report in support of the application.

VIII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

As of the writing of this report, there are no other public comments in the record.

Location Map


Location Map:
21533
Boundary of Penthouse/rooftop Restricted Area
Farragut North
Farragut West
K St NW
H St NW
Lafayette Square
Pennsylvania Ave NW
20th St NW
G St NW
F St NW
White House Grounds
Rawlins Park
18th St NW
E St NW
Pershing Square
15th St NW
14th St NW
Ellipse Rd NW
Virginia Ave NW
Square
New York Ave NW
11th St NW
Metro Center
Federal Triangle
12th St NW
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