



**KGRW & Associates, LLC**

Development Services | Planning | Architecture | Interiors

## **Statement of Explanation:**

- 1. Existing and Intended Use of the Structure**
- 2. Basis for Granting Special Exception**

Emmert Residence  
16 Quincy Pl, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Zone District: RF-1

## **Existing and Intended Use**

The Owner would like to have a covered outdoor space that is accessed from the main living level, which is one floor above the rear yard. From the covered space would be a small open deck area, and stairs down to the rear garden. Currently, there is a small deck outside the rear of the main level, with no covered area. The proposed Covered Porch will provide this outdoor space, with additional architectural elements to provide privacy/buffer to surrounding properties. This includes architectural screening to buffer the views from the proposed mid-rise building that will be built to the south of the property and have views directly towards the Owner's rear outdoor space. The proposed architectural screening will allow for filtered natural light and breezes while providing a degree of privacy. The combination of covered porch and open deck will provide shading from the sun when desired while having some area where the warmth of the sun when desired. The proposed spiral stair allows for a compact way to move from the main level outdoor space to the landscaped garden area below.

## **Special Exception Sought:**

**For Relief from Subtitle E, Section 306.1: seeking relief from a minimum rear yard of twenty feet (20') to be reduced to seventeen feet (17').**

## **Basis for Granting Special Exception**

**Subtitle E, Section 306.1** specifies that the minimum rear yard of twenty feet (20') shall be provided in the RF-1 zone. The proposed deck and covered porch would decrease the rear yard by only 3' to 17'. The spiral stair would not count against the rear yard setback because it is an uncovered stair that connects to the existing main level.



**Subtitle E, Section 5201** addresses certain required development standards for which Special Exception Relief may be sought. Per Section 5201.1(b), “Yards, including alley centerline setback” is one category of the allowable development standards for which special exception relief may be sought. In this case, special exception relief is sought for minimum rear yard requirements.

Per Section 5201.4, certain criteria must be demonstrated in support of the special exception sought. This case addresses each of the criteria:

- (a) Light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected:
  - a. The subject property is in an infill property where the rear of the house and the neighboring houses face south, so the rear yards get a prolonged amount of direct sunlight.
  - b. The proposed addition of the Covered Porch will not block a significant amount of light for the neighbor to the east. The Applicant/Owner has contacted this neighbor and provided images of the proposed project. He has not received any feedback except for an acknowledgement of receiving the information. The neighbors also do not currently live there. See attached Neighbor Notification Summary and back up information.
  - c. The proposed addition will minimally block any light to the neighbor to the west, as the addition on that side of the property is a small increase from the existing house. The applicant/Owner has contacted this neighbor and provided images of the proposed project. The response from the neighbor has been positive, and the Applicant/Owner altered the design to incorporate a suggestion of the neighbor. See attached Neighbor Notification Summary and back up information.
  - d. The proposed Covered Porch will have negligible impact to the flow of air to adjacent properties as the porch/deck is a combination of open deck and slatted screen walls that allow for air flow.
- (b) The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised:
  - a. The proposed Covered Porch has a slatted screen wall to the east and the west to provide some measure of privacy between the subject property and adjacent yards. In fact, there would be more privacy between the neighbor to the east than exists now with the current existing deck that is open to the neighbor’s yard. Per paragraph b and c above and accompanying attachments cited, the neighbors to both sides have been contacted. The addition of the slatted wall to the west side was in response to the neighbor’s suggestion.
  - b. The property adjoins an abandoned alley that adjoins an open space/parcel to the south (which is slated to be developed in the future as a mid-rise building), so the proposed porch and slatted screen walls seeks to create some privacy from those future residents, and no current residents to the south are present and therefore not adversely affected, either.
- (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:

- a. There is currently an abandoned alley/parcel to the south, and the proposed project being on the rear yard side will not be visible from the street.
  - b. The new Covered Porch / Deck would be in character, scale and pattern of houses and their accessory structures along the alley. The scale of the project is intimate in the space and size created, and it will be an attractive enhancement to the character of the rear yards.
- (d) In demonstrating compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), of this subsection, the applicant shall use graphical representations, such as plan, photographs, or elevation and sections drawings sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed addition or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways:
- a. Please see package of drawings and photo images that show the appropriate scale and architecture of the screened porch and steps and its relationship to surrounding neighbors, alley, and street.

**Subtitle X, Chapter 9** provides the general criteria for approval of Special Exceptions. The criteria is listed in Section 901.2. The proposed Special Exception sought meets these criteria:

- (a) Will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulation and Maps:
  - a. The subject property is within a zone district that is surrounded by similar RF-1 zoned properties.
  - b. Many of these residences have porches or elevated decks that are accessed from their main living levels. The enjoyment of outdoor space, including covered and open outdoor spaces, is common to residents within this zone.
  - c. The proposed structure, as noted above under the Subtitle D Section 5201 discussion, is in scale and character with the scale of the surrounding houses within the zone.
- (b) Will not tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property in accordance with the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps:
  - a. Per Section 5201 discussion above, the Proposed structure will not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of neighboring properties.
- (c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title:
  - a. We believe the design of the proposed structure does not require any further special conditions as it is compatible in scale and character within the community.

## Conclusion

For the above reasons, we believe that Special Exception sought for reducing the rear yard from 20' to 17' meets all the criteria set forth in the Zoning Regulations. We would request for this Special Exception application to be granted.

