

MEMO

Date: 3.23.26

To: Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 200-S
Washington, DC 20001

Project: Cotton-Hartman Residence - Porch
20 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Burden of Proof – Special Exception Application

Sender: Bill Putnam, RA, NCARB

To Whom It May Concern,

Jordan Cotton and Caitlin Hartman, owners of 20 R Street, NW (Sq 3101 Lot 811), hereby apply for a special exception pursuant to Subtitle E, Chapter 2, to build a 1 story screen porch in their rear yard. The following aspects fall outside the current zoning regulation:

Special exception relief is requested from Subtitle E §210.1 for lot occupancy.

Summary

20 R Street, NW, is an attached house in the RF-1 zone. The two story house with a cellar sits on a non-conforming lot (1,500 SF), typical of the lots on the Unit block of R Street, NW. The proposed scope of work is to construct a 1-story porch in the rear yard. The existing rear yard has a deck at the first floor and parking pad. The existing lot occupancy is 65.5%. The proposed work, results in a lot occupancy of 68%.

Qualification of Lot Occupancy Special Exception

This special exception qualifies under ZR-16 Subtitle X, Chapter 901.2, because the proposed screen porch will be in harmony with the general purpose of the Zoning Regulations, will not adversely affect neighboring properties, and ...

Subtitle X, 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 screen porch will be compatible with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning maps. Many of the properties on Unit block of R Street and Quincy Street have decks or porches of similar size, or larger to what is proposed. The proposed screen porch will not deviate in size or use from those already present and from what is allowed by right by the Zoning Regulations and the Zoning Map.

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

While increasing the lot occupancy to 68%, the addition of the proposed screen porch contributes to a lot occupancy that is less than that of its adjacent neighbors, which have decks that extend further than the rear wall of proposed porch. The decks at 18 and 22 R Street extend approximately 13.75' and 1.66', respectfully, beyond the south wall of the proposed porch. The proposed porch shall not adversely affect adjacent properties in any worse way than those existing decks presently do.

E-5201.4(a) *The light and air available to neighboring properties shall not be unduly affected.*

The proposed work will minimally impact the adjacent neighbor's light and air, casting shadows onto the rear yard early in the morning or late in the evening. The light and air of neighboring properties will not be adversely affected by these shadows though and will not impact their use.

E-5201.4(b) *The privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties shall not be unduly compromised.*

The privacy of use and enjoyment of the neighboring properties will not be compromised because of the proposed work. The views from the proposed porch will be no different than the existing deck on the property. There shall be no change to the privacy and use of neighboring properties.

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E-5201.4(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 scope of work will improve the visual character of the alley. The use of similar materials, primarily pressure treated wood, will match that of the surrounding decks and porches in the alley, allowing the porch to blend into the other designed elements of the alley.

(c) Will meet such special conditions as may be specified in this title.

E-5201.4(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, new building, or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

Refer to exhibits as part of this application for photographs and drawings.

Enclosed with this application are photographs, drawings of the proposed work, including a site plan depicting its relationship to adjacent properties, and a plat from the DC Office of the Surveyor. If you should need further clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Putnam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bill" and last name "Putnam" clearly distinguishable.

Bill Putnam, RA, NCARB
Agent