

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Crystal Myers, Case Manager
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: May 24, 2018

SUBJECT: BZA Case 19741 - request for special exception relief to remove a rooftop element at 223 Adams St., N.E.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

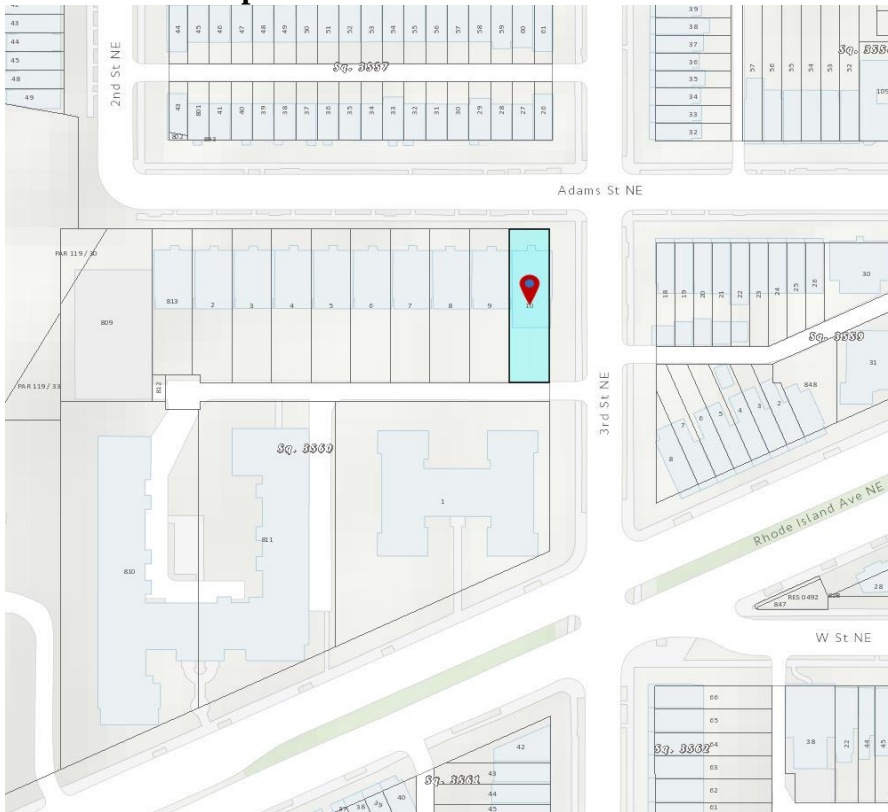
The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **denial** of the following special exception relief pursuant to E §5203.3:

- **Subtitle E § 206.1** – removal of a rooftop architectural element original to the house

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	223 Adams ST, N.E.
Legal Description	Square 3560, Lot 10
Ward/ANC	5/5E
Lot Characteristics	The subject property is 132' x 52'7" rectangular corner lot fronting on Adams ST. NE and 3 rd ST NE to the east with a 16' public alley in the rear
Zoning	RF-1
Existing Development	4-unit attached residential building
Historic District	N/A
Adjacent Properties	Attached residential building
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The adjacent properties are attached residential buildings
Proposal	Proposal would replace an existing rooftop with a 3 rd story addition to expand an existing 4-unit building into a 5-unit building.

III. Location Map



IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS

RF-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot area	4,500 sq. ft. minimum for 5 units	4,554 sq. ft.	4,554 sq. ft	None required
Dwelling Units	5 units maximum	4	5	None required
Height	35' maximum	25'	35'	None required
Lot occupancy	60% maximum	47%	48%	None required

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Special Exception Relief from Subtitle E § 206.1, pursuant to E §5203.3

Subtitle E Section 206 - Roof Top or Upper Floor Additions

206.1 In an RF zone district, the following provisions shall apply:

(a) A roof top architectural element original to the building such as cornices, porch roofs, a turret, tower, or dormers, shall not be removed or significantly altered, including shifting its location, changing its shape or increasing its height, elevation, or size. For interior lots, not including through lots, the roof top architectural elements shall not include identified roof top architectural elements facing the structure's rear lot line. For all other lots, the roof top architectural elements shall include identified rooftop architectural elements on all sides of the structure;

206.2 In an RF zone district, relief from the design requirements of Subtitle E § 206.1 may be approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as a special exception under Subtitle X Chapter 9, subject to the conditions of Subtitle E § 5203.3.

5203.3 A special exception to the requirements of Subtitle E § 206 shall be subject to the conditions of Subtitle E § 5203.1(b), (c), and (d). ...

5203.1 The Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant as a special exception a maximum building height for a principal residential building and any additions thereto of forty feet (40 ft.) subject to the following conditions:

(b) Any addition, including a roof structure or penthouse, shall not block or impede the functioning of a chimney or other external vent on an adjacent property required by any municipal code;

The proposal would not appear to impact the adjacent building's chimney.

(c) Any addition, including a roof structure or penthouse, shall not interfere with the operation of an existing or permitted solar energy system on an adjacent property, as evidenced through a shadow, shade, or other reputable study acceptable to the Zoning Administrator;

The adjacent building does not appear to have a solar energy system.

(d) A roof top architectural element original to the house such as a turret, tower, or dormers shall not be removed or significantly altered, including changing its shape or increasing its height, elevation, or size;

As part of the building's expansion and redesign, the proposal includes removing the building's black mansard roof. The proposed redesigned building would be out of character with the rest of the row because many of the elements that make the building compatible would be removed. Along with the roof removal, the proposal would also remove the building's double hung windows and relocate its main entrance from Adams ST NE to third ST. NE. The new windows would make the building have more of an industrial apartment building style than a single-family residential style. This would be significantly different from the single family residential style all of the other buildings in the row have been maintaining on Adams ST NE. The new design would detract from the Adams ST NE streetscape.

Page 12 of the updated plans (Exhibit 31) shows a depiction of the building with additions redesigned within the matter of right requirements. The matter of right design would retain the mansard roof and set the third floor addition back from the front façade. To a greater degree, it would maintain a single family residential appearance on Adams ST NE which would maintain greater compatibility with the row, and improve the building scale as viewed from the side street, 3rd Street NE.

OP recommends denial of the proposal to remove the mansard roof, but if its removal is permitted, OP recommends that the building incorporate the other elements that help it maintain compatibility with the streetscape character. The entrance should remain on Adams

ST NE and the windows facing Adams ST NE should be double hung and provide a more residential character.

Special Exception under Subtitle X Chapter 9

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 proposal would not be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations. Removal of the mansard roof and the additions and building alterations as proposed would negatively impact the visual character of the row along Adams ST NE, and provide an out of character elevation along 3rd Street NE. This would harm the character of the neighborhood, which would be contrary to the intent the RF zone and these specific provisions.

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

Although the removal of the mansard roof on the subject property would negatively impact the streetscape, it would likely not prevent the neighbor from full use of their property. The adjacent property's light, air, and privacy should not be unduly impacted by the addition.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT filed a report stating they have no objection to the requested relief (Exhibit 27). At the time of the staff report, no other District agency had submitted comments.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

As of the writing of this report, no community comments have been submitted.