

STAFF REPORT

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Crystal Myers, Case Manager
JS for
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: April 19, 2019

SUBJECT: BZA #19985 – 419 57th ST NE – Variance relief to construct a single-family detached residential dwelling.

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends approval for the following variance relief:

- Subtitle D § 206.2 (formerly D§ 307.1) Side Yard, pursuant to Subtitle X § 1000. (8’ required, 3’ proposed)

The applicant also filed for variance relief from the lot width requirements but since this is an existing record lot, this relief not required pursuant to Subtitle C § 301.1.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Applicant	District Properties
Address	419 57 th ST NE
Legal Description	Square 5228, Lot 0014
Ward / ANC	Ward 7; ANC 7C
Zone	R-2
Historic District or Resource	None
Lot Characteristics	Rectangular-shaped lot with an unimproved public alley in the rear.
Existing Development	Vacant lot
Adjacent Properties	Semidetached house to the south and single-family detached house to the north.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The surrounding neighborhood is predominantly a mix of semidetached and attached houses and low-density apartment buildings.
Proposed Development	This proposal is for a new single-family detached residential building.

III. LOCATION MAP



IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND RELIEF REQUESTED

R-2 Zone	Regulation	Existing¹	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width D § 302	40 ft	25 ft.	25 ft.	Existing Non-Conforming
Lot Area D § 302	4,000	3,500 sq.ft	3,500 sq.ft.	Existing Non-Conforming
Height D§ 303	40’ max.	Vacant	28’	Conforming
Lot Occupancy D§304	40% max.	Vacant	22.5%	Conforming
Rear Yard D § 306	20 ft.	Vacant	84 ft.	Conforming
Side Yard D § 206	8 ft. min	Vacant	3 ft.	Area Variance Requested
Pervious Surface D § 308	30% min.	Vacant	74%	Conforming
Vehicular Parking C § 702	0 (unimproved alley)	0	0	Conforming

V. ANALYSIS

¹ “Existing” and “Proposed” information provided by the applicant.

Subtitle X § 1000, Variance Relief for Side Yard (R-2)

Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty:

The requested variance relief would allow reduced side yards on a substandard lot with a 25-ft lot width, which is significantly less than the required 40 ft. If the required 8 ft were provided on both sides, it would result in a 9-ft-wide house, which would be impractical. At 3 ft, the side yards would allow for a 19-ft-wide house, which is a more practical size house. The applicant is unable to acquire additional adjacent land because both adjacent properties are developed.

A matter-of-right semi-detached residential building could be developed on the site with one 8-ft side yard and a 17-ft-wide house. However, this option is not as practical because there is no opportunity to attach to a neighboring building. Both adjacent properties have their side yards along the property line so a semi-detached building on this site would mean creating an at-risk wall. This would be challenging to maintain because it would require accessing the neighbor's property.

No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good:

The proposal should not result in substantial detriment to the public good. The proposed 3-ft side yards combined with the neighbors existing side yards should be sufficient to prevent potential impacts. Windows along the side walls of the proposed building would be not align with those on adjacent buildings to minimize potential privacy conflicts with the adjacent neighbors.

No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations:

There should be no substantial harm to the zoning regulations. The proposed 3-ft side yards would provide adequate separation for maintenance and adequate light and air flow, as anticipated in this zone. The zone is also intended to provide for dwellings appropriate for family life. The proposal would allow for the development of a currently vacant lot with a single-family detached residential building that would be compatible in form and scale with similar neighboring buildings and with the intent of the zone.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

DDOT submitted a report stating no objection to the requested relief, (Exhibit 35).

As of the writing of this report, no other District Agency comments have been submitted to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

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

As of the writing of this report, no report from ANC 7C has been submitted to the record.