

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Brandice Elliott, Development Review Specialist
JL Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: March 11, 2021
SUBJECT: BZA Case 20422 - request for special exception relief pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201.1 to allow a one-story rear addition to an existing, attached, two-story principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone.

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following special exception pursuant to Subtitle E § 5201:

- E § 304.1, Lot Occupancy (60% maximum; 53.4% existing; 66.7% proposed).

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	610 South Carolina Avenue, S.E.
Applicant:	Fowler Architects for Michael Hsu and Seema Gajwani
Legal Description:	Square 875, Lot 37
Ward / ANC:	Ward 6, ANC 6B
Zone:	The <u>RF-1</u> zone provides for areas predominantly developed with row houses on small lots within which no more than two dwelling units are permitted.
Lot Characteristics:	The irregular-shaped lot has 1,530 square feet of area and 18-feet of frontage along South Carolina Avenue. The rear of the lot also has 18-feet of frontage along a 10-foot-wide public alley.
Existing Development:	The property is currently developed with a two-story row building consisting of one dwelling unit.
Adjacent Properties:	Adjacent properties to the north and west are developed with row buildings. An apartment house is located to the east of the subject property. To the south, across South Carolina Avenue, are additional row buildings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The surrounding neighborhood is moderate density residential, consisting of predominantly row buildings and some apartment houses.

Proposed Development:	The applicant proposes to construct a single-story rear screened porch addition having approximately 140-square feet. The porch would have a ceiling height of nine-feet and would include a raised cedar planter with bike storage.
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III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

Zone – RF-1	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Lot Width E § 201	18 ft. min.	18 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Area E § 201	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,530 sq. ft.	No change	Existing nonconforming
Pervious Surface E § 204	20% min.	Not provided	Not provided	None requested
Court E §203	2.5 in. per 1 ft of height of the court; 6 ft. min.	5.2 ft. (dwelling)	5.2 ft. (dwelling) 6.1 ft. (deck)	None required
Rear Wall Extension E §205	Rear addition may not extend more than 10 ft. beyond rear wall of any adjoining building	Rear wall equal with wall to the east and behind wall to the west	No change	None required
Height E § 303	35 ft. max.	32.9 ft.	No change	None required
Lot Occupancy E § 304	60% max.	53.4%	66.7%	Required
Front Setback E § 305	Within range of existing front setbacks (0 ft.)	Not provided	No change	None requested
Rear Yard E § 306	20 ft. min.	34.1 ft.	21.5 ft.	None required
Side Yard E § 207	None required; 5 ft. min. if provided	0 ft.	0 ft.	None required

IV. ANALYSIS

Subtitle E Chapter 5201 ADDITION TO A BUILDING OR ACCESSORY STRUCTURE

5201.1 *For an addition to a principal residential building on a non-alley lot or for a new principal residential building on a substandard non-alley record lot as described by Subtitle C § 301.1, the Board of Zoning Adjustment may grant relief from the following development standards of this subtitle as a special exception, subject to the provisions of this section and the general special exception criteria at Subtitle X, Chapter 9:*

- (a) ***Lot occupancy up to a maximum of seventy percent (70%) for all new and existing structures on the lot;***
- (b) *Yards, including alley centerline setback;*

- (c) *Courts; and*
- (d) *Pervious surface.*

The applicant has requested relief from lot occupancy having less than a maximum of 70%, consistent with this section.

5201.2 & 5201.3 are not relevant to this application.

5201.4 An applicant for special exception under this section shall demonstrate that the proposed addition, new building, or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property, in particular:

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

The proposed addition consists of a single-story screened porch having a ceiling height of nine feet. The north-south orientation of the property, in addition to the minimal height of the structure, should limit the potential impact of shading to adjacent properties. Most shadowing should occur on the rear yard of the subject property and potentially on the side yards of adjacent properties. A rear yard would continue to comply with the Zoning Regulations, ensuring that a sense of openness is maintained along the rear yards along the block. As such, the proposed addition should not unduly affect the light and air available to neighboring properties.

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

The proposed addition would be one-story in height and screened by existing fencing and landscaping. The screen element of the structure should also mitigate the impact of noise to adjacent properties. Therefore, the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties should not be unduly compromised.

- (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 one-story addition should not be visible from South Carolina Avenue as it is located behind an existing row building having no side yards. The top of the addition would be visible from the public alley at the rear of the lot, but it would be compatible with the character of the alley, which consists of various additions.

- (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 or accessory structure to adjacent buildings and views from public ways.*

The applicant has provided graphical representations, including plans, photographs and elevations sufficient to represent the relationship of the proposed addition to adjacent buildings and views from public ways (Exhibits 4 and 5).

5201.5 The Board of Zoning Adjustment may require special treatment in the way of design, screening, exterior or interior lighting, building materials, or other features for the protection of adjacent and nearby properties.

OP does not recommend special treatment in the way of design, screening, exterior or interior lighting, building materials, or other features for the protection of adjacent and nearby properties.

5201.6 This section shall not be used to permit the introduction or expansion of a nonconforming use, lot occupancy beyond what is authorized in this section, height, or number of stories, as a special exception.

The subject lot is developed with a row building consisting of one dwelling, which is a permitted use in the RF-1 zone. The proposed one-story screened porch would not increase the height or number of stories beyond what is permitted in the Zoning Regulations.

V. OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of the date of this report, other District Agencies had not provided comments to the record.

VI. ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION

As of the date of this report, the ANC had not provided comments to the record.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS TO DATE

Seven letters of support have been provided to the record, including two letters from the abutting neighbors that would be most impacted by the proposed addition (Exhibits 10 through 12, and 29 through 32).

Attachment: Location Map

Location Map

