



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director Development Review & Historical Preservation

DATE: September 7, 2010

SUBJECT: **BZA Case 18096** - Request for a special exception for 2513-2517 Alabama Avenue SE

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends **approval** of the special exception relief requested per § 353 to allow construction of the proposed 91-unit apartment building for the elderly.

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	2513-2517 Alabama Avenue SE (generally)
Legal Description:	Square 5730 Lots 0038, 0923 and 0942
Ward:	8B
Site Characteristics:	The site consists of three properties total 97,487 square feet (2.23 acres) with approximate overall dimensions of 200 x 550-feet, and frontages along Alabama Avenue and Naylor Road. The site slopes down and away from the intersection of Alabama Avenue and 25 th Street SE, and is bounded to the east and south by unopened public alleys 20-feet wide.
Existing Development:	A two-story detached dwelling stands on lot 0038. The other two lots appear undeveloped.
Zoning:	R-5-A – multiple dwellings are allowed by special exception per § 353.
Historic District:	None.
Adjacent Properties:	Stanton Public Elementary School property is to the north across Alabama Avenue; undeveloped land and a vacant and boarded-up three-story apartment building fronting Naylor Road are to the south across one unopened alley; two-story semi-detached dwellings occupy the two neighboring properties to the east; and west across another unopened alley is property utilized for vehicle parking by Allen Chapel AME Church (located further west across 25 th Street SE).
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	A mixture of low-density residences, commercial and institutional uses, and apartment buildings (refer to Exhibit 1).

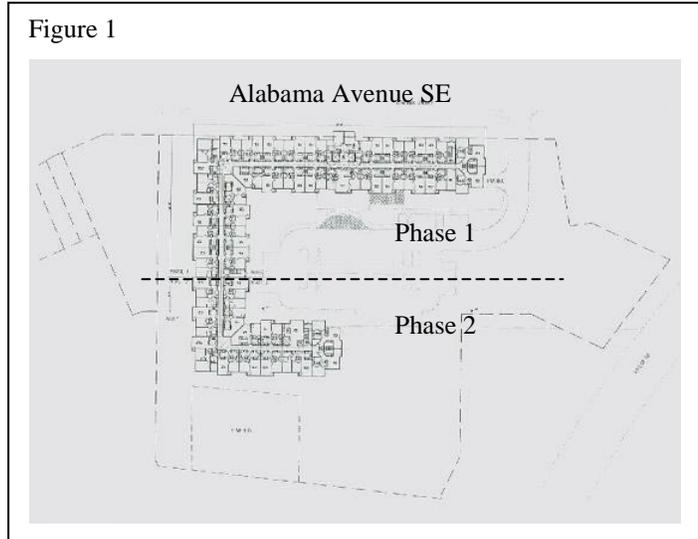


III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

Applicant: Vision of Victory CDC

Proposal: The applicant proposed to construct a three-story, 91-unit apartment building for the elderly with a surface parking lot for 27 vehicles in the rear of the building. Submitted plans show one new curb cut along Alabama Avenue for vehicular access to the parking area and two additional curb cuts for a passenger drop-off at the front building entrance.

This is the first of two development stages. Sometime after this application is approved, the applicant plans to petition the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to close the bordering alley to the south. A three-story addition would then be constructed, continuing the apartment building across the former alleyway onto another tract of land under common ownership. The final L-shaped structure would wrap around the west end of the central parking area (refer to Figure 1 to the right).



Relief and Zoning: Under § 353.1 all residential developments, except those composed entirely of one-family detached or semi-detached dwellings, are subject to special exception review by the Board of Zoning Adjustment in accordance with a § 3104. This submitted was submitted to meet this requirement. Below is the OP analysis of this request.

OP also pointed out to the applicant that required documentation for this case is missing. Although the Vision of Victory CDC is the applicant, public records list Allen Chapel AME Church as the property owner. Accordingly, § 3113.4 requires that the church file a letter in the case file authorizing the Vision of Victory CDC to represent it in this matter. To date no such letter has been filed.

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

Compliance with § 353

- 353.1 *In R-5-A Districts, all new residential developments, except those comprising all one-family detached and semi-detached dwellings, shall be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as special exceptions under § 3104 in accordance with the standards and requirements in this section.*
- 353.2 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Board of Education for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of existing and planned area schools to accommodate the numbers of students that can be expected to reside in the project.*

The proposed elderly apartments would not impact the capacity of any existing or planned schools.

353.3 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Departments of Transportation and Housing and Community Development for comment and recommendation as to the adequacy of public streets, recreation, and other services to accommodate the residents of the project and the relationship of the proposed project to public plans and projects.*

The application indicates that recreation opportunities and amenities for the elderly tenants (such as a game room, lounge and wellness center) would be provided within the new building.

DDOT reviewed the transportation and public space implications of this proposal during a Preliminary Design Review Meeting (PDRM) on August 19, 2010. Changes requested to the submitted site plan included:

- narrowing the entrance driveway to the parking lot to 24 feet;
- eliminating the two curb cuts for the passenger drop-off and, instead, requesting a street entrance designation along the Alabama Avenue frontage to prevent vehicles from parking in front of the proposed apartment building; and
- various landscaping and lighting standards.

The applicant agreed to all the requested changes. DDOT also indicated that it may provide addition comments in a separate memorandum.

The Department of Housing and Community Development indicated support for this special exception request in a memorandum dated June 3, 2010.

353.4 *The Board shall refer the application to the D.C. Office of Planning for comment and recommendation on the site plan, arrangement of buildings and structures, and provisions of light, air, parking, recreation, landscaping, and grading as they relate to the future residents of the project and the surrounding neighborhood.*

The proposed development is subject to the following zoning provisions.

Standard	R-5-A Requirement	Proposal	Relief Required?
Lot Area (§ 401.3)	As prescribed by the Board	97,487 s.f. (2.24 ac.)	No
Lot Width (§ 401.3)	As prescribed by the Board	509 ft.	No
Unit Count (elderly apartments)	--	91 units	--
Height (§ 400.1)	40 feet, 3 stories	31.4 feet, 3 stories	No
Rear Yard (§ 404.1)	20 feet	21 feet	No
Side Yard (§ 405.9)	3 in./height foot or 8 feet	8 feet	No
Lot Occupancy % (§ 403.2)	40%	25%	No
Parking, On-Site (§ 2101.1)	1 per 6 units (15 spaces)	25 spaces (surface)	No

OP concluded the proposal, as presented, would be consistent with the referenced standards.

The three-story façade is designed with a series of bay-like projections characteristic of row house construction. The application also indicates that the building is designed fit with the site. According to the submitted landscaping and grading plans indicate, the site would be terraced and the turf reinforced to the extent necessary to create a plateau for the proposed building and parking lot. Plans also indicate that the emergency generator east of the building would be

enclosed with a masonry wall, six-feet tall.

Landscaping would consist primarily of shrubbery planted around the building and along the Alabama Avenue frontage with additional trees planted in the rear of the site. Disturbed slopes would be reseeded with a wildflower/grass mix and a seeded bio-retention storm water management structure would occupy the southeast corner of the site. The application emphasized that native plants would be used to reduce the need for irrigation.

OP suggested that the applicant consider relocating the emergency generator south of the building, possibly to the southeast corner of the parking lot, to minimize potential noise impacts on the dwellings east of the site. Otherwise the preliminary site, grading and landscape plans appear sufficient.

353.5 In addition to other filing requirements, the developer shall submit to the Board with the application, four (4) site plans and two (2) sets of typical floor plans and elevations, grading plans (existing and final), landscaping plans, and plans for all new rights-of-way and easements.

The application forwarded to OP included copies of the referenced documents.

Based on this analysis, this application meets the standards for approval.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

This application was forwarded to Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 8B for review and comment. To date no final ANC resolution has been added to the case record file.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

OP recommends approval of the requested special exception.

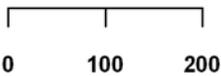
Arthur Jackson, Case Manager

Attachment: Exhibit 1 Vicinity Aerial with Site Plan and Zoning



BZA Application No. 18096
2513-2517 Alabama Avenue SE

OPI/D0018954



Office of Planning ~ August 26, 2010

This map was created for planning purposes from a variety of sources. It is neither a survey nor a legal document. Information provided by other agencies should be verified with them where appropriate. Oblique imagery © Pictometry International

LEGEND

- Property Squares
- Lots
- Public Schools
- Metro Bus Routes
- Street Centerlines