



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment  
**FROM:** Matt Jesick, Case Manager  
*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director for Development Review  
**DATE:** February 16, 2016  
**SUBJECT:** BZA #19188 – 1719 T Street, NW

**I. RECOMMENDATION**

With regard to this proposal to construct a new four unit apartment building, the Office of Planning (OP) **cannot recommend approval** of the following variance relief:

- § 402 FAR (1.8 maximum, 2.4 proposed);
- § 403 Lot Occupancy (60% maximum, 73% proposed); and
- § 406 Court Width and Area (18’4”, 672 sf required; 5’, 75 sf proposed).

**II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1719 T Street, NW
Legal Description	Square 151, Lot 10
Zoning	R-5-B
Ward and ANC	2, 2B
Historic District	Strivers’ Section Historic District
Lot Characteristics and Existing Development	Vacant rectangular lot, partially used for parking; 20’ x 100’; 10.25’ alley at the rear.
Adjacent Properties and Neighborhood Character	Overall neighborhood is a mix of rowhouses and apartment buildings. This block has a significant number of apartment buildings, and apartment buildings are located on immediately adjacent properties.

**III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION IN BRIEF**

The applicant proposes to construct a new four unit apartment building.





#### IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTED RELIEF

The subject site is zoned R-5-B. The application seeks zoning relief as noted in the table below.

R-5-B	Permitted / Required	Proposed	Relief
§ 400 Height	50'	50'	Conforming
§ 401 Lot Area	n/a	2,000 sf	n/a
§ 401 Lot Width	n/a	20'	n/a
§ 402 FAR	1.8 (3,600 sf)	2.4 (4,793 sf)	Requested
§ 403 Lot Occupancy	60% 1,200 sf	73% 1,461 sf	Requested
§ 404 Rear Yard	15'	19'	Conforming

R-5-B	Permitted / Required	Proposed	Relief
§ 406 Court	<u>Width</u> 4"/ft. of height 55' height => 18'4" <u>Area</u> $2 * (\text{width}^2) = 672 \text{ sf}$	<u>Width</u> 5' <u>Area</u> 75 sf	Requested
§ 2101 Parking	2	2	Conforming

## V. ANALYSIS

In order to be granted a variance, the applicant must show that they meet the three part test described in § 3103.

### 1. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject site does not exhibit any unique or exceptional conditions. The application states that existing party walls encroach onto the subject lot and contribute 348 square feet toward the floor area of the building. That amount would be significant on a smaller lot, but if that area were subtracted from the proposed floor area of 4,793 square feet, the resulting floor area of 4,445 square feet would still have an FAR of 2.2, well above what is permitted. Conversely, adding 348 square feet to the permitted floor area of 3,600 square feet would result in an FAR of 1.97, which OP could support as resulting from a practical difficulty.

### 2. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

Granting relief would not impair the public good. Allowing construction would provide an infill building on a long-vacant lot and improve the streetscape. The additional lot occupancy and FAR would not have a significant negative impact on light or air available to nearby structures, or on the privacy of nearby residents. Permitting court relief would allow a court on this property to reflect the existing court to the west. The project would also meet other zoning requirements such as height, rear yard and parking. Infill of the type proposed would be compatible with the neighborhood. Sheet 5 of the Exhibit 34 shows that while the proposed project would have a high lot occupancy, it would actually be lower than almost all of its immediate neighbors.

### 3. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

The requested FAR and lot occupancy relief would result in substantial harm to the Zoning Regulations. The requested FAR of 2.4 for a new building is well in excess of the FAR limit of 1.8 established for this zone. The Regulations intend that new development such as this conform to the regulations, not replicate any existing nonconforming development.

## **VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

This property is located in the Strivers' Section Historic District and the project has received conceptual approval from the Historic Preservation Review Board.

## **VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS**

As of this writing OP has received no comments from the community.