



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: December 8, 2009

SUBJECT: BZA Case No. 18008, 932 Bellevue St. SE (Square 5924, Lot 142)

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the special exception request, pursuant to §353.

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	932 Bellevue St. SE
Legal Description:	Square 5924 - Lot 142
Ward:	8
Lot Characteristics:	The site has a rectangular shape, 22 ft. wide and 157 ft. deep.
Existing Development:	Vacant Lot
Zoning:	R-5-A – Row-dwellings are permitted by special exception.
Adjacent Properties:	The adjacent property to the south-west is improved with a 3-story apartment building. A series of 2-story semi-detached dwellings are across the alley to the north-east. There are row-dwellings located to the rear of property, across the alley. (Refer to location map, Attachment I)
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	Square 5924 is located a block west of Southern Avenue which is the border that separates DC from Maryland. Most of the Square is zoned R-5-A and is developed with a mixture of row homes, semi-detached homes and small apartment buildings. The northwestern corner of the Square is zoned C-1, and is improved with a small church and surface parking lot
Background:	The Board of Zoning Adjustment, in case 17945, previously approved a proposal for an 8 unit apartment building on all three lots. The Office of Planning supported that application.



III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF:

The applicant, District Properties LLC, proposes to improve one of three vacant lots with a three-story single family row dwelling. The two adjacent lots (141, 143, also owned by District Properties LLC) have already received building permits for construction.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and REQUESTED RELIEF

The application before the BZA is a special exception pursuant to § 353.4. Section 353.4 requires BZA approval of any new residential development that is *not* a one-family detached or semi-detached dwelling in the R-5-A. This is intended to allow for review of issues related to the site plan, provisions of light and air, parking, recreation, landscaping and grading as they relate to the future residents of the project, and the surrounding neighborhood.

The table below provides a review of all required standards for development. Other than the special exception review requirement for the row dwelling form of use and the proposed lot width, the building fully complies with the applicable development standards of the zone for a row dwelling.

Table 1: Overview of Development Standard Compliance

Item-Section R-5-A	Existing Condition	Required	Provided
Lot Area	3,465 sq. ft.	1,800 sq. ft.	3,465 sq. ft.
Lot Width	22 ft.	As prescribed by the Board pursuant to 3104	22 ft.
Lot Occupancy	-	40 %	26 % (902 sq. ft.)
FAR (Maximum)	-	0.9	0.78 (2,706 sq. ft. GFA)
Parking	-	1 Space	1 Space
Side Yard	-	None required in accordance with §405.3	No Side Yards provided.
Rear Yard (ft)	-	15 ft.	90 ft.
Height	-	40 ft.	40 ft.

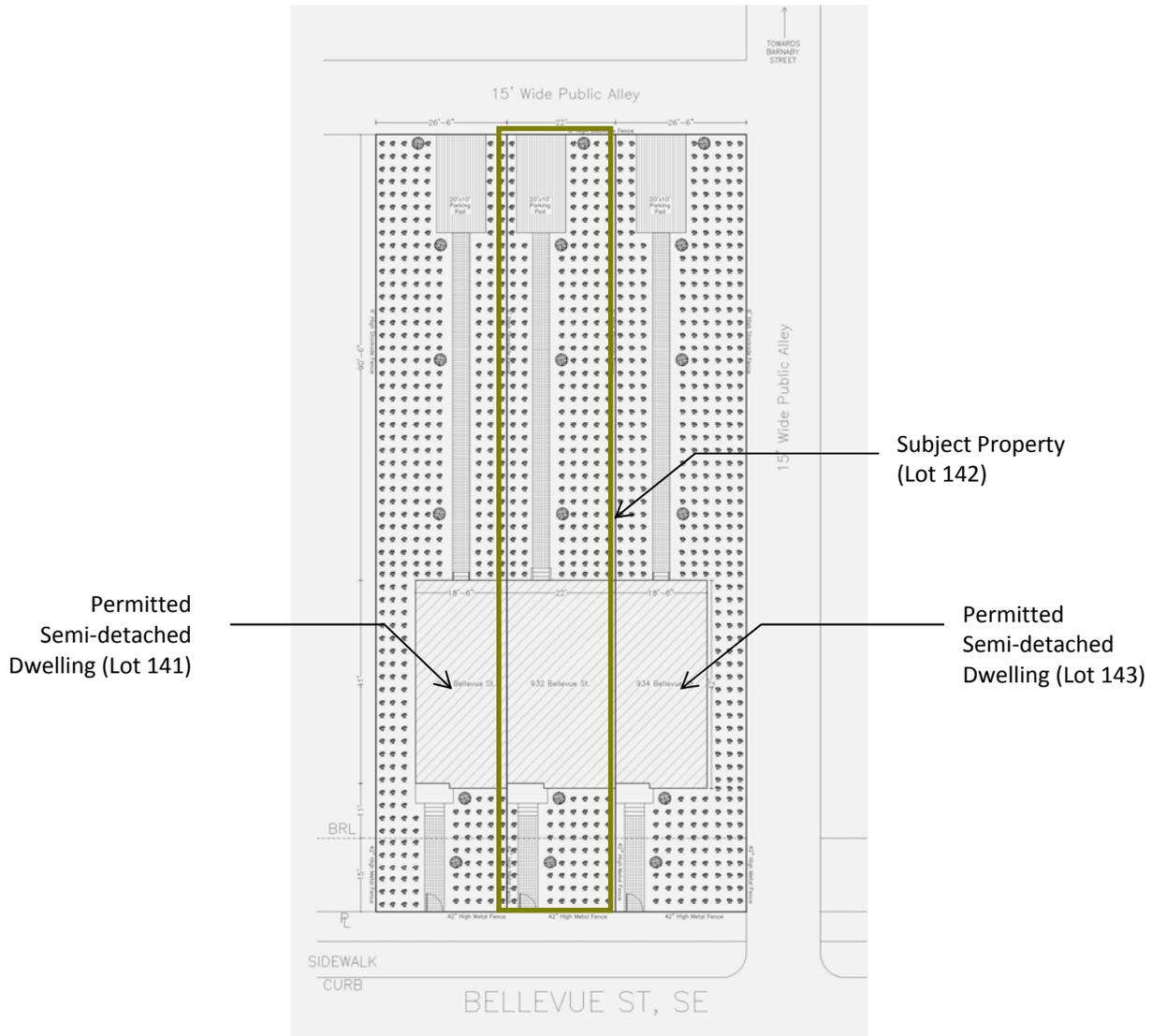
V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

A review of the proposal in relation to the criteria of § 353.4 is presented below.

Site Plan and Arrangement of Buildings and Structures

The proposed row-dwelling would be constructed between two other buildings. When all three buildings are constructed they will form a three unit Community House. Although this application only contemplates the building to be constructed on Lot 142 at 932 Bellevue St. SE, this review will consider this building within the context of a comprehensive site-plan, including the other two adjacent semi-detached properties (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Site Plan



The proposed row-dwelling is generally consistent with the building type and scale in the surrounding area. Other than the existing three story apartment building located to the south-west side of the subject property, surrounding buildings are mostly two to two and a half stories. The proposal is compliant with the required height standard for the zone.

The row-dwelling, as proposed, would have four bedrooms, consistent with the existing and desired unit types in the area. A letter from the Department of Housing and Community Development submitted for the previous application located at this site indicated that the area is in need of housing units with a larger number of bedrooms to help satisfy the need for larger household sizes.

The building would be setback from the front property line consistent with the existing surrounding properties, many of which have front yards. Although setback from the front yard a large rear yard would be maintained and would include an individual parking pad for the subject property.

In general, the proposal of a row dwelling housing form is appropriate for this site. The proposed dwelling type creates the potential for a more direct ownership and maintenance of the portions of the property immediately adjacent to particular units.

Provision of Light and Air

The size of the subject property, and the associated front and rear-yard setbacks should ensure ample access to light and air, both for the subject property and surrounding ones.

Parking

There is one space proposed for the single family unit, consistent with the parking requirements of the ordinance. The space would be accessed from the existing public alley. The proposed parking location is the preferred alternative.

Recreation

The proposed location of the building, which would result in a very large rear-yard, should provide ample recreation space for the potential occupants.

Landscaping and Grading

The proposed landscaping plans are adequate, and include basic sod, with some small bushes.

A six foot high, solid stockade fence is proposed for the rear yard of the dwelling, while a lower see-through forty-two inch brick and metal fence is specified for the front of the property. This should enable an adequate level of security in both the front and rear-yards, while maintaining openness to the street, and privacy in the rear-yard.

The current site has a moderate rise in grade of about four feet from the sidewalk to the point where the front of the buildings would be located. The proposed grading plan would reduce the current rise in grade from the front sidewalk level.

Figure 2: Existing Grade Change at Front of Property



The re-grading plan should not pose any drainage problems for the subject or adjacent properties. The Office of Planning advised the applicant that the grade on all the lots should ensure proper drainage to the recently improved alley.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

OP has not received comments from other agencies regarding this proposal.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At the time of this report preparation, the ANC had been contacted regarding their position on this case, but no formal record has been received by the Office of Planning.

JS/JL

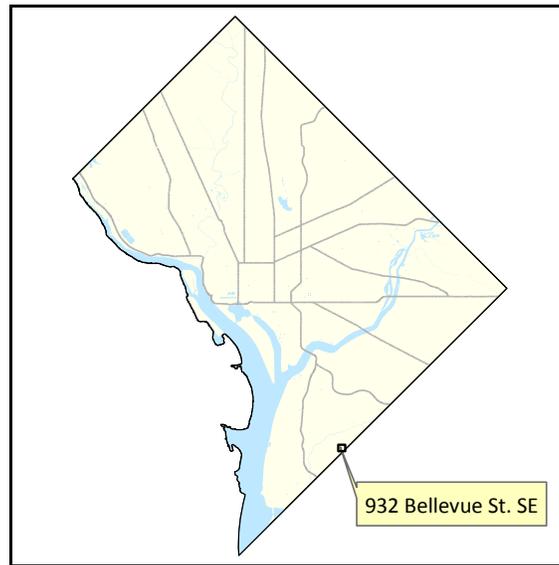
MG, Project manager

Attachments:

1. Location maps
2. Aerial photograph

Location Maps

Key Map



Neighborhood Map



Aerial Photograph

