



Office of the Director

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: January 5, 2010

SUBJECT: **BZA 18015 – 2237 14th Street, SE**

I. RECOMMENDATION

OP recommends **approval** of the applicant's request for relief pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3103.2, from the off-street parking requirements under subsection 2101.1, to allow the construction of a new one-family row dwelling in the R-3 district at premises 2237 14th Street, S.E. (Square 5793, Lot 1019).

II. LOCATION and SITE DESCRIPTION

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Applicant | M. Sikder |
| Address | 2237 14 th Street, SE |
| Legal Description | Square 5793 Lot 1019 |
| Zone | R-3 |
| Historic District | Anacostia Historic District |
| Building Description | None - Currently vacant land |
| Square Boundaries | The square is bounded by W St on the north, 14 th Street on the east, Square 5799 on the south and Chester Street on the west. |
| Surrounding Area | The surrounding area is developed with single-family detached, semi-detached and row dwellings. |
| Proposal | The applicant has proposed construction of a single-family row in-fill dwelling on a vacant parcel located at 2237 14 th Street SE. Variance relief from the residential parking requirement is requested, as on-site parking would not be provided. |

III. SITE AND AREA DESCRIPTION



The proposed row dwelling would be developed on a 2,200 square-foot lot, 20 foot-wide in width. The lot is surrounded on three sides by residential lots; Lot 1018 to the north, Lot 165 to the south and Lot 847 to the west, which fronts on Chester Street. There is no alley in the square between the properties which front on 14th Street and Chester Street.

IV. ANALYSIS

The R-3 district is essentially designed for row dwellings, and also permits single-family detached, semi-detached and groups of three or more row dwellings, if it conforms to the height, minimum lot dimensions, and percentage of lot occupancy established for that district (§§ 320.1, 400.1, 403.2).

| Requirements | R-3 Standards | Existing | Proposal | Relief Required |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Height (§ 320.1) | 40 ft. | N/A – vacant land | 25ft 6in. | No |
| Area (§ 400.1) | 2,000 sq. ft. | 2,200 sq. ft. | 2,200 sq. ft. | No |
| Width | 20 ft | 20 ft | 20 ft | No |
| Lot Occupancy (§ 403.2) | 40% | N/A- vacant land | 20.9% | No |
| Parking requirement (§2101) Location of Parking Spaces (§2116.2) – when not in a garage or carport, parking must be located in a rear or side yard | 1 per each dwelling unit (minimum) | N/A – vacant land | None to be provided. | Yes |

Variance to § 2101 - Parking

Section 2101 sets the minimum parking requirements for the proposed residence. No on-site parking would be provided.

Uniqueness

The lack of alley access at the rear presents an exceptional circumstance related to the provision of on-site parking. The lack of an alley within the square is an existing condition, which the applicant cannot remedy.

Practical Difficulty

The lack of alley access make it practically difficult for the applicant to meet the requirements of §§2101 and 2116.2. The provision of a side yard with vehicular access to the rear yard or parking within the side yard would result in a dwelling with a maximum width of 12 feet. This would create a practical difficulty for the applicant in terms of contemporary living space standards. The provision of parking at the rear or within a side yard would also involve a curb cut at the front of the lot, which would not be supported by OP as it would result in the loss of on-street parking and would not be in keeping with the character of the historic district. Historic Preservation staff also commented that *“it is important in the historic district to maintain a general consistency of building setbacks...”* along the street frontage. This would preclude parking within the front yard, which is also not permitted by zoning. Therefore, there would be a practical difficulty in providing on-site parking for the proposed residence.

Intent of the Zone Plan and Detriment to the Public Good

The Zone Plan would not be compromised by the lack of on-site parking, as a conforming on-site space would require a new uncharacteristic curb cut and the loss of on-street parking. No other residence within the square has on-site parking due to the lack of an alley. In addition, since the vacant lot is located within the Anacostia Historic District, including on-site parking would potentially disrupt the character of the block or square due to:

- a setback which would not be in alignment with other residences, to accommodate parking within the front yard;
- a curb cut to access parking within the front yard, side yard or rear yard; or
- a design which may include a garage within the residential structure, accessed by a curb cut.

There is adequate on-street parking in the neighborhood for residential use. OP fully supports the infill development as part of the revitalization of the historic district and does not anticipate a detriment to the public good due to the lack of on-site parking for the subject property in this instance. Because it is within a historic district, the new building is subject to HPRB design review.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

OP has not received comments to date from the ANC8 or other neighborhood groups.

VI. AGENCY REFERRALS

The application was referred to DDOT. A report would be forwarded under separate cover.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

OP's review of the request for variance relief from the on-site parking requirement for the proposed residence at 2237 14th Street SE, finds the subject application to be in conformance with the provisions for the granting such relief. Therefore, the Office of Planning recommends **approval** of the request to waive the on-site parking for the proposed dwelling.