



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: November 2, 2010

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18129 – 1671 31st Street NW

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of this application pursuant to § 223, to permit an addition to an accessory detached garage at 1671 31st Street NW, requiring special exception relief as follows:

- Lot Occupancy (40% permitted, 49.35% existing);
- Minimum Lot Size (5,000 SF required, 4,237 SF existing);
- Minimum Lot Width (50 ft. required, 35 ft. existing); and
- Side yard (8 feet required, 8ft. and 0 ft. existing).

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	1671 31 st Street NW
Legal Description	Square 1282, Lot 821
Ward	2E
Lot Characteristics	Slopes down 9 feet from front to back. The property is sunk at the rear with a detached accessory garage and is screened by a 6-ft tall brick wall and trees.
Zoning	D/R-1-B – detached single family dwellings. The Diplomatic Overlay designation has no bearing on this application.
Existing Development	Single family semi-detached dwelling.
Adjacent Properties	Single family semi-detached homes and row dwellings.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Almost entirely single family semi-detached and row dwellings, with some apartment residences.
Historic District	The property is in the Commission of Fine Arts Area and the Georgetown Historic District.

III. APPLICATION

The applicants, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Dreyer are requesting special exception relief under § 223 to construct a single-story frame addition (below main floor elevation) to an existing garage.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTED RELIEF

R-1-B Zone		Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height	§400	40' 3 Stories	38' 2 Stories	38' 2 Stories	Conforming
Lot Area	§401	5,000 sf	4,237 sf	No Change	Non-conforming (existing)
Lot Width	§401	50'	35'	No Change	Non-conforming (existing)
Lot Occupancy	§403	40% (3,374 sf)	49.35% (1,999.33 sf)	No Change	Non-conforming (existing)
Rear Yard	§404	25'	56.1'	No Change	Conforming
Side Yard	§405	8'	0' (north) >8' (south)	No Change	Non-conforming (existing)

The garage is accessory to a nonconforming principal structure not meeting the area requirements referenced in the above table and nonconforming structure requirements of §2001.3.

V. OP ANALYSIS

223 ZONING RELIEF FOR ADDITIONS TO ONE-FAMILY DWELLINGS OR FLATS (R-1) AND FOR NEW OR ENLARGED ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

223.1 An addition to a one-family dwelling or flat, in those Residence districts where a flat is permitted, or a new or enlarged accessory structure on the same lot as a one-family dwelling or flat, shall be permitted even though the addition or accessory structure does not comply with all of the requirements of §§ 401, 403, 404, 405, 406, and 2001.3 ... as a special exception if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.

The applicant requests special exception relief under § 223 from the requirements of §403, Lot Occupancy, § 401 Lot Area and Lot Width, § 405 Side Yard and § 2001.3.

223.2 The addition or accessory structure shall not have a substantially adverse affect 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 would not adversely impact light or air available to adjacent properties. Although the addition would add square footage (120 SF), the proposed addition is sunk as much as nine feet below the main floor of the principal structure and would not be considered within the building area to

contribute towards lot occupancy¹. No shadows would be created by the addition, since the roof line of the addition would be 2 feet beneath the main roof of the existing garage structure.

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

The privacy of neighboring properties would not be unduly compromised. The proposed addition would have glass-paneled doors facing the residence, but they would be screened by the existing fencing and existing shrubs along the property line at the north. The addition would not be immediately visible to the neighbors to the south, as it would be screened by the existing garage. Existing fencing and shrubbery would help maintain privacy.

- (c) *The addition or accessory structure, together with the original 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 subject street frontage; and***

The addition would not visually intrude upon the character and pattern of the houses along 31st Street or the neighborhood. The addition would also not be visible from the alley. The proposed addition would not add to the above-grade footprint or the bulk of the house, and will use materials similar and complimentary to the existing garage structure. The property and the abutting property at the rear have mature trees which would provide additional screening of any rear garage addition.

- (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 applicants have submitted elevations, sections, floor plans and photographs that illustrate the existing site and the proposed addition.

223.3 *The lot occupancy of all new and existing structures on the lot shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) in the R-1 and R-2 Districts or seventy percent (70%) in the R-3, R-4, and R-5 Districts.*

The lot occupancy would be 49.35% with the proposed addition.

223.4 *The Board 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.*

The Office of Planning recommends no conditions or special treatments of the addition.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2E's approval was unanimous at its regularly held meeting on October 4, 2010.

¹ BZA 18080, July 13, 2010. (**Square 1282**, Lot 259). BZA 17204 (2005)

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

As of this writing, the Office of Planning has received no comments on this application from other District agencies. Historic Preservation staff has indicated that there are no concerns with the addition.

The applicant presented its request to the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) on July 15, 2010. CFA has no objection to the addition.

JL/kt