



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

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

DATE: June 8, 2010

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18069 - Request for special exception relief under § 223 to construct a rear addition to an existing single family, row house at 1126 I Street, SE.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the application by Patrick and Jennifer Serfass pursuant to §223, to permit a 3-story rear addition and roof attic to the house at 1126 I Street, SE, requiring special exception review for an increase in lot occupancy (§ 403) to 69%. The existing lot is also non-conforming to minimum lot area requirement.

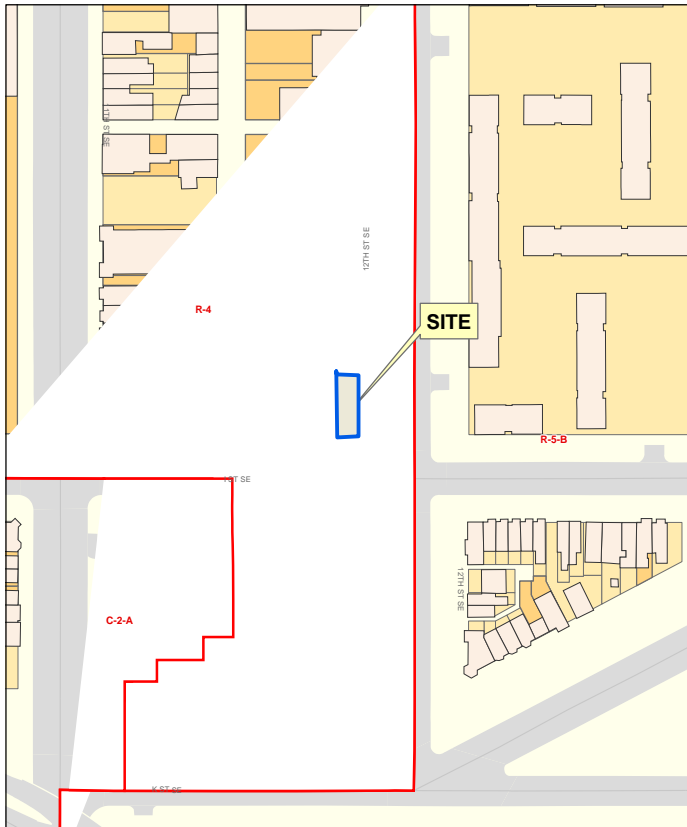
II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address:	1126 I Street, SE
Legal Description:	Square 995, Lot 31
Ward:	Ward 6, ANC 6B
Lot Characteristics:	The rectangular property is 64.66 feet by 21.50 feet (an area of 1,390.19 square feet). There is no rear alley.
Zoning:	R-4 – detached and semi detached single family dwellings.
Existing Development:	Single family, semi-detached dwelling, permitted in this zone.
Historic District:	Capitol Hill Historic District
Adjacent Properties:	Single family, attached and semi-detached residential units.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character:	The surrounding community has a mixture of single family attached, semi-detached attached, and flat/apartment buildings.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION IN BRIEF

Proposal:	Convert the existing flats to a single family house with a 3-story rear addition that would extend approximately 7.5 feet beyond the rear of the existing house. An attic above the existing roof would house storage, mechanical equipment and a roof deck.
Relief Sought:	§223 – Additions to One-Family Dwellings or Flats (R-1). The existing lot is also non-conforming for lot area.





Site Location



Front of the House

IV. HISTORIC DISTRICT

The subject property is within the Capitol Hill Historic District; however, the house is not a contributing building. The addition was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Review Board on May 27, 2010 and given concept approval with final approval delegated to the Historic Preservation Office staff with the condition that the applicant continue to study the detailing on the dormer and side wall treatment.

V. ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The subject property is in the R-4 district, designated for “. . . areas now developed with row dwellings . . .” The table below shows the zoning requirement for the R-4 district and how they are met by the existing and proposed building:

R-4 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed ¹	Relief
Height (ft.) § 400	40 ft. max.	28.7 ft.	35 ft.	None required
Lot Width (ft.) § 401	18 ft. min.	21.5 ft.	21.5 ft.	None required
Lot Area (sq.ft.) § 401	1,800 sq. ft. min.	1,390.2 sq .ft.	1,309.2 sq. ft.	409.8 sq. ft. (existing)
Lot Occupancy § 403	60% max. (up to 70% allowed under § 223)	63.1%	69%	9% requested
Rear Yard (ft.) § 404	20 ft. min.	27.6 ft.	20 ft.	None required
Side Yard (ft.) § 405	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Court § 406	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

V OP ANALYSIS:

The subject property was subdivided and the house constructed prior to 1958. As seen on the table above, the lot does not meet the minimum lot area requirement as currently prescribed for the R-4 district.

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 shall be permitted as a special exception if approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.*

The single family, semi-detached dwelling is a permitted use in R-4 zone. The existing structure is nonconforming because its lot area (§ 401) and lot occupancy (§ 403) do not meet the minimum requirements. The proposed addition would extend the nonconforming lot occupancy. The applicant has requested special exception review subject to the provision of §§ 223.2 to 223.5.

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

The 7.5 foot deep addition would extend approximately 10 feet beyond the adjacent house but would not have windows or doors overlooking that property. The house to the rear of the adjacent property does not have any windows or doors on the side of the building that faces the subject property. The proposed roof deck is sunken and would be hidden by the mansard roof. Therefore,

¹ Information provided by applicant.

the privacy and enjoyment of the adjacent properties would not be unduly compromised. Some of the adjacent neighbors have submitted letters in support of the application.

- (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***

Most of the rowhouses along I Street are 2-stories high and smaller than the subject house while houses along 12th Street are 2-stories and an attic, with above grade front porches. The houses along 12 Street are also contributing buildings to the historic district. As such, the existing 3-story house is between two varying architectural styles and building heights. The proposed addition of the attic would give the house additional height similar to those along 12th Street. The applicant is proposing to add architectural articulation to the building such as the mansard roof, to make the building more compatible to those along 12th Street. The addition would increase the scale of the house but it would not be intrusive or overwhelming and would not visually intrude onto adjacent properties. The location of the building on the corner would be a transition between the buildings along the adjacent streets. The proposed massing and design have received concept approval from HPRB.

- (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 applicant has provided graphical representations in the form of plans, photographs and drawings that sufficiently represent the proposed addition, in relation to adjacent buildings and as viewed from the adjacent I and 12th Streets.

- 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 proposed 69% lot occupancy does not exceed the 70% permitted by special exception in the R-4 district.

- 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.***

OP has no additional recommendations.

- 223.5 *This section may not be used to permit the introduction or expansion of a nonconforming use as a special exception.***

The residential use is conforming in the R-4 district and with the addition, would remain conforming.

VI COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The subject property is within Ward 6 and ANC-6B. The ANC met on May 11, 2010 and voted to recommend approval of the requested special exception.

The applicant has also placed in the record letters of support from the adjacent and other neighbors.

VII SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the special exception request as it would meet the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and would not unduly affect the light, air and use of the neighboring properties.

JLS/Staff: Maxine Brown-Roberts