

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
FROM: Stephen J. Mordfin, AICP, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review
DATE: September 9, 2014
SUBJECT: BZA Case 18819, 4308-4310 Georgia Avenue, N.W.

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) recommends **approval** of the following requested variance:

- § 2101, Off-Street Parking (10 spaces required, none proposed).

OP also recommends **approval** of the following requested special exception:

- § 401.1, to permit more than one roof structure.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

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|------------------------------------|---|
| Address | 4308-4310 Georgia Avenue, N.W. |
| Legal Description | Square 2914, Lot 802 |
| Ward | 4 |
| Lot Characteristics | Through lot with minimal alley access |
| Zoning | C-2-A – low to moderate density commercial land use |
| Existing Development | Two 2-story buildings used as office |
| Adjacent Properties | North: Apartment buildings and row houses South: Commercial buildings East: Across Georgia Avenue, semi-detached dwellings West: Across Iowa Avenue, public schools and a public library |
| Surrounding Neighborhood Character | Mixture of moderate density residential, commercial and institutional uses |

III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

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| Proposal | Construction of a four-story twenty-unit apartment building with no off-street parking. A roof deck would be provided for the occupants of the building, with access provided via an elevator and two separate stairwells. The elevator override would be fourteen feet in height and the stair towers would each be 8.5 feet in height. |
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IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and RELIEF REQUESTED

| C-2-A Zone | Regulation | Proposed | Relief |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Height § 770 | 50-foot max. | 46 feet | None required |
| Floor Area Ratio § 771 | None prescribed | -- | None required |
| Lot Occupancy § 772 | 75% max. | 75% | None required |
| Rear Yard § 774 | 15-foot min. | 16.3 feet | None required |
| Parking § 2101 | 1 per 2 units or 10 | None | Required |
| Number of Roof Structures § 411.3 | 1 max. | 3 | Required |
| Roof Structure Height § 411.5 | One height | 2 | Required |
| Green Area Ratio § 3401 | 0.3 | 0.3 | None required |

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

a. Variance Relief from § 2101.1, Off Street Parking

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

The subject property is unusually shaped, with five sides and two street frontages. The lot abuts a public alley, but only for a distance of 5.65 feet, insufficient for vehicular access. Even if vehicles could access the subject property, the lot, at a depth of less than sixty feet on the south and less than fifty feet in width, is too small to permit to drive aisle widths and minimum parking dimensions necessary for efficient below grade parking. Therefore, it would be a practical difficulty to the applicant to provide parking on the subject property.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The subject property is well served by a variety of transportation options. It has a Walk Score of 78 (very walkable), a Transit Score of 76 (excellent transit) and a Bike Score of 84 (very bikeable).¹ The Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metrorail station (Green and Yellow lines) is located approximately one-half mile to the south, the site is served by several Metrobus routes on Georgia and Kansas avenues, and nearest share and bike share facilities are located approximately one-tenth of a mile from the site.

¹ www.walkscore.com

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

There would be no substantial harm to the Zoning Regulations. Six bicycle parking spaces and a transportation information center display kiosk stocked with printed materials of available transportation options would be provided. The subject property is located within close proximity to a wide variety of transportation options that would be available to the future occupants of the building, minimizing the need for dependence on private automobiles and the accessory parking spaces needed to store those vehicles.

b. Special Exception Relief pursuant to § 411

i. Is the proposal in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps?

The applicant proposes to provide three roof structures; one for the elevator over ride and two for stair access. Provision of three penthouses would allow the applicant to provide the stair wells at height lower than the elevator override. The height of the stairwells could be increased to match the height of the elevator override, and one uniform wall could be constructed around all three penthouses, but this would only serve to increase the visibility of the penthouses and increase the appearance of bulk on the roof of the building.

ii. Would the proposal appear to tend to affect adversely, the use of neighboring property?

Although the applicant could connect the three roof structures within one fourteen-foot high wall, the result would be one larger and more visible roof structure. Separating them into three structures and limiting the height to the minimum necessary would minimize the appearance and bulk of the roof structures, while providing the necessary access to the roof. The lower height of the stair wells would be less visible than if one fourteen-foot high roof structure was provided.

VI. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

No comments were received from DDOT.

VII. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 4C is scheduled to review the subject application at its regularly scheduled meeting of September 10, 2014.

Attachment: Location Map

