

MINUTES
ANC 6A Economic Development & Zoning Space Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting via WebEx
Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Present:

Members: Brad Greenfield (Chair), Jake Joyce, Nick Alberti, Mike Cushman,
Commissioners: Brian Alcorn

Brad Greenfield chaired the meeting.

Community Comment

None.

Previously Heard Cases

None.

Old Business

1. 308 11th Street, NE (HPA Case#20-390): Request for historic approval for a new third floor addition and roof deck over an existing house in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

The project was presented by the architect, Jennifer Fowler. The owner stated that, at this point, they wanted to focus only on the addition of the third floor, which requires historic approval.

Mr. Greenfield asked what the façade of the house would look like. Ms. Fowler replied that the addition would not be visible from the front of the house. She said that they would be doing a detailed site line survey to ensure that it could not be visible from the front. The rear would have hardi board siding, but the color would blend with the rest of the house.

Ms. Fowler said that they are currently under permit to renovate the house. The work is for the interior, and does not include the doors and windows. There is a separate permit/review underway to cover the replacement of doors and windows.

Mr. Greenfield asked if any portion of the side of the building would be visible from the alley or the street. Ms. Fowler said that there will be some visibility from the alley, but the detail would come out of the mock-up that is going to be done.

Mr. Greenfield asked if there had been outreach to neighbors. The owner reported that they have met with many of the neighbors. Neighbors had expressed concerns about earlier plans that had been circulated. Those earlier plans had been withdrawn because of neighbor concerns. A light and air study is being conducted. E-mail communication has been ongoing.

Neighbors of the property expressed their concerns about the project. The concerns were that the project will disrupt the historic nature of the neighborhood. They also expressed concerns that the current site line survey is not adequate. Mr. Greenfield asked if there was any room for compromise on the project. The neighbors said that the project as it is

right now would be unacceptable to them, and they have not seen a proposed version that would be acceptable.

Committee member Mike Cushman expressed concerns about the changes to the project, and that he felt that what was being considered today was not the full scope of the project.

Mr. Greenfield asked if there were any other properties in the neighborhood that had additions or roof decks. The owner reported that this would be the first property on the block that has an addition of this type.

Mr. Greenfield noted the significant amount of neighbor opposition, and that he wanted to see the mock-up and sight survey to ensure that the project would not be visible from the street. Mr. Cushman said he wanted to see the site survey, and the full plans. Committee member Jake Joyce and Commissioner Brian Alcorn echoed the desire to see the site survey.

Mr. Greenfield asked if the owners would be willing to suspend consideration of the project until the site survey was completed. The owners expressed a preference to move forward now, but agreed to delay consideration of the project until the September 2020 EDZ meeting.

Consideration of the project was tabled.

New Business

2. 722 19th Street, NE (BZA Case# 20295): Application pursuant to 11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapter 9, for special exceptions under Subtitle E § 5201, from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle E § 304.1, and from the rear yard requirements of Subtitle E § 306.1, to construct a second-story rear deck addition to an existing semi-detached principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 Zone.

No one appeared to present the project. Consideration of the project was tabled.

3. 1637 D Street, NE: Informational discussion on a project to remove an existing concrete rear deck and replace it with a rear addition.
The project was presented by Mr. Fisher, the owner of the property. He stated that they were going to have to do some work on the rear deck, and that prompted him to consider a full rear addition. He plans to do an addition that is similar in scope and size to that of his neighbor. He has had preliminary discussions with his neighbor, and there is no opposition to date. The addition would only go back to where the existing deck ends.

Mr. Greenfield expressed the view that he should communicate early and often with his neighbors; anyone that could be impacted by the project. Mr. Greenfield recommended Mr. Fisher conduct a light study of the proposed addition. Commissioner Alcorn said that this property looks to have the shallowest rear wall of any of his neighbors. He also stated that the lots in this area were quite large.

Mr. Greenfield summarized the schedule and process for zoning approval and permitting for the project. Mr. Greenfield also explained ANC6A's standard of best efforts to get letters of support.

4. Discussion of criteria to be used when adding projects to the EDZ agenda.
This discussion focused on what standards should be used for items to be added to the EDZ agenda. The initial discussion focused on whether a BZA number would be required before an item was added to the agenda.

Mr. Cushman cited some of the past projects that came before the Committee and voiced the opinion that there were applicants that had not communicated fully to neighbors, so that neighbors who were impacted by a project did not know how to participate.

There was a lengthy discussion of what the notification requirements for BZA and HPRB are. Mr. Cushman felt that there is an imbalance between the property owners and neighbors because the property owners are more familiar with the process and deadlines and neighbors may not know them. Mr. Cushman expressed an interest in having an additional placard for the ANC being posted for projects, giving them notice of the EDZ committee.

Mr. Greenfield expressed skepticism that posting an additional placard would meaningfully increase the neighbor's understanding of a project. He expressed that informal communication, which the Committee currently encourages and requires, is more important and meaningful. Mr. Cushman noted that the Committee is dependent on the owners and architects reporting on those conversations and the conversations are not normally independently verified.

Mr. Cushman expressed that he thought that architects that come before the committee game the system to benefit the project. Mr. Greenfield disagreed, stating that following the existing process is not gaming the system.

Mr. Cushman expressed an interest in possibly sending out an e-mail notification to neighbors. Mr. Greenfield noted that there were several logistical problems with that problem; additionally, it would require the ANC to send out unsolicited e-mails to neighbors.

Mr. Greenfield committed to getting the EDZ agenda published at least a week before each EDZ meeting, to improve notification and communication.

Mr. Greenfield made a motion that, on a trial basis, ANC 6A require extra signage announcing upcoming EDZ meetings and ANC 6A meeting dates for all applicants for zoning and historic district relief before they are added to the agenda for the EDZ. The signage will be printed and made available by the ANC, and must be posted in a prominent location. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cushman. The motion passed unanimously.

**Next Scheduled ED&Z Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, September 16, 2020
7:00-9:00 pm
WebEx information to be posted on ANC6A Website**