

Minutes
ANC 6A Economic Development & Zoning Committee
7:00 - 9:00 PM, Wednesday July 15, 2026
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attending:

*Rachael Loper EDZ Chair, Mike Cushman, Becca Buthe, Russ Greenfield
Scott Burger (6A04), Roberta Shapiro (6A03)*

7:00 pm Welcome/Introductions

7:05 pm Resolution of previously heard cases / Old Business

Old Business:

1. 628 15th Street NE (Square 1051, Lot 113) ([BZA 21349](#)).

We received notification that the alley does not meet the 10' requirement. No changes from the original plan supported by ANC in September 2025. EDZ acknowledges the existing public alley is non-conforming; no changes to plans or design. ANC revised letter on April 9 consent agenda. BZA hearing administratively rescheduled to June 17, 2026.

BZA requested more info, hearing continuation scheduled for September 2.

Comments:

- Mike Cushman - This had been going for a variance and the self-assessment for zoning has changed many times. They do not meet the special exception for variance - this will come back up in September.
- 2. 1226 F Street, NE (Square 1006, Lot 0026) ([BZA 21475](#)) To construct a third story addition to an existing, detached, two-story, 4-unit, apartment house in the RF-1 zone. Requested relief for rear yard and lot occupancy. Yard sign posted May 30. Neighbors and architect/attorney in negotiations. BZA hearing postponed by applicant request from Sept 2, 2026 to September 16, 2026.**
- Martin Sullivan & Barry Rodgers - Shared new renderings. They added a privacy feature on the roof.
 - Commissioner Roberta Shapiro: Expressed confusion and requested explanation about the rear yard setback and what the back of the building gets as an addition? Why can they not just comply with “by-right” with the 60% occupancy for the 3rd story? Is it being built for purchase or rent?
 - Response: Rear relief for the portion that adds the stairs.
 - Follow up question: Why can’t it be internal to the existing?
 - Response: Clarified that they are not actually taking more rear space.
 - Response: The area that neighbors are concerned about is the area closest to them in the back. The 10% represents a slice of the bedrooms and it would impact on the size and quality of available housing. They are rentals.
 - Chair Rachael Loper: Where are the AC units?
 - Response: They are on the side where the trash already exists. The bottom floor would have a mini split AC, right now it is all window boxes.

- Mike Cushman: The choice to add the AC units on the pad instead of the roof adds the noise to neighbors, not their own. The privacy panels are just furniture and would just easily be removed.
 - Response: If someone tried to remove them the BZA could enforce it.
- Russ Greenfield: Did the developer/project planner actually reach out to the neighbors?
 - Response: Yes, to Ms. Grifka who had concerns about light and air. Applicants did not reach out to neighbors with concerns about existing tenant behavior.

Neighbor comments:

- Michelle Grifka: Still has significant concerns. There is still a standard the matter of right project would have to meet. Still concerned about light, air, and privacy. It will impact how they use their backyards. The AC is very close to her backyard, only separated by a fence. These AC units would be very noisy. The neighborhood character of this area is a unique open roof lined area, on a triangle block with a low roofline area.
- Blair Pitcairn: From last month, architectural graphics did not show nearby neighbors to show the difference in character. He spoke with many neighbors and has had a fair number voice their opposition. There are no letters of support for the project. He was not contacted. Misleading to say there is barely any more sunlight blocked vs. a matter of right, because the comparison he is concerned about is the existing conditions in comparison.
- Chair Loper: There are 13 letters of opposition.
- Commissioner Shapiro: ANC does not meet in August, so we would need a recommendation from this meeting at the Sep meeting for the ANC to make its recommendation for the next BZA. The height in the area is not unprecedented. This committee has had success in asking the developer and the community to work it out. Absent some agreement, we could say we withhold approval, and give that as the recommendation to the ANC.
- Stacey Swanson: Flags that the side with windows into the interior significantly impact her property. She is part of the shared driveway with Michelle's property and sent a letter of opposition. The proposed new windows would look directly into a bedroom and her kitchen.
 - Response: They made sure not to have windows in the back and the privacy screening is all around.

Motion:

- Commissioner Shapiro moved that the committee and neighbors come to a compromise that can be presented to ANC 6A at its meeting. In the interim the EDZ would not recommend approval of the exception requested by the developer. The motion passed unanimously.

3. DC 2050 ANC Roundtable - Becca

- The recent meeting on Small Area Plans in DC focused on improving neighborhood planning efforts and making them more equitable across the city. Small Area Plans provide more detailed planning than the city's Comprehensive Plan, but there is confusion around the different types of planning efforts, inconsistent terminology, and no clear mechanism for tracking implementation of plan recommendations. Discussion also noted that planning efforts have historically been concentrated in high-growth areas rather than covering the entire city.

4. H Street Plan - comments due to ANC.

- Comments from H Street BID Association (BID is in formative stage):
 - Mike Formant is on the board (Phil Coppage is spearheading it). Mr. Formant is a real estate property broker and developer and board member of the Atlas Performing Arts Theater. There is a lot to talk about for the H St Study. The city has been breaking the corridor into smaller segments and meeting with people. The biggest thing for H St is getting more people back down there. Can be accomplished through zoning, removing red tape for retailers and developers. The study shows that we have lost 1M people coming to H St. The people coming are just a 1-mile radius vs. much farther away. The goal is what is going to bring investment and people back. The question is what brings healthy activity to the corridor. The Office of Planning (OP) said if the lot is larger than 6k sq ft they automatically have to go through BZA approval and they are thinking of bumping this up. The plan right now does not include anything really bold. The study gives the basics so maybe the ANC could have more bold ideas. The retailers really struggle. When you study the corridor, the AVEC on H Apartments is a great example of good residential occupancy, but retail tenancy came much later and there are still multiple vacancies. It is harder to get people to want to live there if the retail is vacant. There could be tax incentives for retail. Nike is a good example - their lease ends in January because they do not have enough people coming - so how do you fill this space? If the building is older than a certain year - they ask you to preserve some of the facade which can be challenging.
 - Transportation - the news of the WMATA Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) came right after. This could be the backbone for transportation. This will bring vibrancy to H St. OP also said they are interested in increasing heights along H St, but they have not talked about the restrictions inside the buildings - the retail requirements, the facade requirements, The buildings need to have cool amenities. He would push back on the first-floor retail requirements and they could be apartment amenities instead.
 - Russ Greenfield- What is the BID focus? Who is cleaning up the streets?
 - Response: Right now, just 2-3 people, also removing snow, etc. It is a self-taxing entity and hard to get more businesses to buy in when they are already struggling.
 - Commissioner Shapiro: Clarified the retention of the historic facades is not a requirement but adds a FAR bonus. Also, not a mandate for first floor retail. The draft wanted to remove the requirement that it is just for arts. The ANC is very excited about the BID and the vacancy and trash pick-up needs. She would like to see taking some of the vacant and blighted money and earmarking it for helping new businesses on H St, even getting a TIF. We do need to be realistic about the needed incentives.
 - Commissioner Scott Berger: Commissioner Shapiro and others have drafted comments on the H Street Plan Study. They are directionally supportive but it does not go far enough. This is a plan that proposes tinkering around the edges but without investment identified. They excluded the transportation aspect but there is Gold Line BRT potential, just not a lot of consideration for streetscape, use of lanes and those issues that need to be considered. There was a lot of consideration in the previous bus lane plan and they do not know how much will be common to the Gold Line BRT proposal.

- Chair Loper: H St needs more “third spaces.”
 - Mike Formant: 1101 H St parcel of land is back on the market at a reduced price that is diagonal from the Douglas church. Whenever he passes the site he thinks that it could be a good “third space” like the Swampoodle Park. Logan Circle has a dog days park with a small inside enclosure as another example. Specific bold ideas is what the city would need to hear
 - Becca Buthe: If the AVEC residential units leased quickly while the retail space did not, is the primary challenge attracting more residents to H Street, or identifying alternative ground-floor uses that can better activate the street where retail demand is limited?
 - Response: Residents feel like their buildings have become a value play and residents do not actually stay there for recreation. You need more of a reason to be there.
 - Becca Buthe: Additional funding tools, such as tax increment financing (TIF), land banking and the creation of parks or other community spaces along the corridor. In regard to the question in the chat, planning charrettes remain a useful engagement tool, though their effectiveness depends on who leads them and how they inform the planning process. Community benefits and development incentives could be better structured to encourage developers to provide more shared public spaces and other neighborhood amenities.
 - Russ Greenfield: Need to have a clear understanding for how to hold existing businesses accountable for their activities, such as selling weapons. Holding them accountable in a systemic way. Does not know if the BID would be involved in this?
- Chair Loper: Motions to make a draft letter to the ANC, finalize and send it in. Passed unanimously.

5. RFK Master Plan - comments due to ANC.
<https://ourrfk.dc.gov/page/rfk-campus-master-plan>

New Business:

8:18 pm New Business

1. 800 10th Street NE (Square 1035, Lot 065) ([BZA# 21502](#)) To construct a rear three-story plus penthouse and cellar addition, and convert to a flat, an existing semi-detached, three-story plus cellar, principal dwelling unit in the RF-1 zone.

Presentation by owner Sami Satouri and representative Eric DeBear.

- Four areas of relief are all special exceptions
- Lot occupancy addition is almost entirely from the rear balconies which are open.
- The penthouse exceeds the max building height and would be 8’2” above the 35ft threshold.
- They have letters of support from two different business owners and then 807 10th St residence
- The neighboring property to the north has indicated their support, though it has not been uploaded yet.

Comments/Discussion

- Commissioner Burger: Thought there was a recent zoning text amendment that decks no longer counted towards occupancy?
 - Did not recall this (Mike Cushman)
- Chair Loper: Isn't this already built?
 - Response: Yes, it is already built including the penthouse. It was submitted as a by right and then changes happened in the field. They are needing to make this compliant vs. tearing it down.
- Mike Cushman: Does the neighbor to the north have a penthouse too? Did they need relief?
 - Yes, but it was before the requirement was
- Eric DeBear: It was submitted by right and then changes happened in the field.
- Sami Satouri:
 - Spiral stairs were a fire exit necessity.
- Commissioner Shapiro: Does not believe it is an appropriate action for the EDZ.
 - Response: DOB did issue the infraction and now they have to get relief from the BZA. If they do not grant the relief he would have to try to figure out how to bring the relief to compliance.
 - Roberta: Thinks it is a dangerous precedent to set to take any action here and would encourage people to come and ask forgiveness after doing a project.
- Commissioner Burger: Does not think it would be a precedent.
 - Mike Cushman: Disagrees and agrees with Roberta.

Commissioner Shapiro moved to take no action on the request, either to support or oppose it. Motion passed unanimously.

Administrative and Planning Updates

Other Business / Announcements

- None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

The next scheduled EDZ meeting is September 16, 2026 at 7:00 pm.