

MINUTES
ANC 6A Economic Development & Zoning Space Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting via WebEx
Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Present:

Members: Brad Greenfield (Chair), Missy Boyette, Nick Alberti and Mike Cushman
Commissioners: Brian Alcorn and Amber Gove

Brad Greenfield chaired the meeting.

Community Comment

None.

Previously Heard Cases

None.

Old Business

1. 128 12th Street, NE (BZA Case#20310): Application pursuant to 11 DCMR Subtitle X, Chapter 9, for a special exception under Subtitle E § 5201 from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle E § 304.1, to construct a one-story rear addition to an existing attached flat in the RF-1 Zone.

The project was presented by the architect, Jennifer Fowler. She stated that the project is a small addition, they are requesting relief to build to 62.7% lot occupancy, up from the current 55%. The addition will extend four feet past 126 12th Street. It is a one-story addition with steps down to grade. The addition is about 15 feet. The addition will extend from the kitchen with a new room, with windows on the side.

Historic Preservation has agreed to sign off on the project at the staff level. The applicants have three letters of support from neighbors. This includes 128, 126 and 130 12th Street NE, two of which are the adjacent neighbors.

Mr. Greenfield asked what the exterior treatment will look like. Ms. Fowler said that it would be painted panel details, with divided light windows. The addition is completely above grade.

Committee member Missy Boyette asked if the south elevation would also have the panelized treatment. Ms. Fowler said that they would defer to whatever the neighbor wants.

Committee member Mike Cushman asked if the covered porch on the neighbor's yard was included with the elevations. Ms. Fowler said that they were not. Mr. Cushman said that in the future he would recommend she include these conditions in elevations.

Mr. Cushman said that he had concerns about the large windows in the project impinging on the privacy of the neighbors. However, since the neighbor has already provided a letter of support, he did not think it was a concern for the neighbors.

Mr. Greenfield moved that the EDZ recommend that ANC 6A support the request for relief. Ms. Boyette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 6-0 with Commissioners Gove and Alcorn voting.

New Business

2. 1511, 1513, and 1515 A Street, NE (Raze Application): Permit request to demolish a single-bay accessory garage at 1511 A Street, NE, a four-bay accessory garage at 1513 A Street, NE, and a six-bay accessory garage at 1515 A Street, NE.

This is a raze permit request. No one appeared to present the project. This address has a long history of concern in the neighborhood.

Mr. Greenfield noted that the EDZ does not normally get involved in raze permits. Mr. Alcorn asked what the normal process works. Mr. Greenfield said that the ANC gets the notice but does not get plans.

Commissioner Brian Alcorn noted that the raze permits cover the garages that are present. These are corrugated metal structures. Mr. Alcorn discussed this permit request with the Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS); they had no objections to the permit request since it is outside of the Capitol Hill Historic District. Mr. Alcorn said that he had no reason to oppose the raze permit but the history of the property makes it a concern.

Mr. Greenfield said that he hoped that this meeting would give the EDZ the opportunity to meet with the owner and get an update on the project. Mr. Greenfield said that the EDZ could oppose the project to get the owner's attention and get them to attend a meeting. Mr. Cushman noted that he would like to see more detailed plans before he voted on the project at all. Mr. Greenfield said that if the ANC takes no action, the raze permit would move forward with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA).

Commissioner Amber Gove asked if the Committee had received any plans for the property. Mr. Greenfield noted that we had the plans that were put forward over a year ago. Mr. Alcorn talked through the history of the project, and the last interaction that the ANC had with the property owner. These plans included inclusionary units for the project. This case was heard in March 2019.

Mr. Greenfield asked if the ownership of the property had changed. Mr. Alcorn said that the property was sold in 2014, and it has not changed ownership since then. The properties are owned by 57th Street Mews.

Mr. Alcorn raised the idea of tentatively opposing the raze permit as a mechanism to get the developer to appear before the ANC and confirm that their plans had not changed since March 2019. Mr. Greenfield stated that the EDZ could make a recommendation to oppose and let the developer know that the plan is to oppose. Committee member Nick Alberti said that he is against opposing a project if there are no actual reasons to oppose, and that would not help the ANC's reputation if the ANC did that. Mr. Greenfield said that it does go against the role of the EDZ to make a recommendation that the Committee does not intend the ANC to follow; however, the background and history of this project would avoid setting a precedent.

Mr. Alberti also noted that if the Committee went forward with tentative opposition, this might result in bad sentiment with the developer and it could make for a more antagonistic relationship.

Mr. Greenfield raised the idea of the EDZ recommending the ANC support the raze permit. This would add it to the agenda for the October ANC meeting, and would not antagonize the developer. It would also provide the ANC with a chance to confirm that the plans put forward in March of 2019 are still in place. Mr. Alcorn preferred this option, and noted that we could condition our support on the March 2019 plans still being in effect.

Mr. Greenfield moved that the EDZ recommend the ANC support the raze permit, on the condition that the owner's intent and plans conform to the plans previously provided and approved by the BZA, and on the condition that the raze permit only covers the accessory structures. Mr. Alberti seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 6-0 with Commissioners Gove and Alcorn voting.

3. 1382 East Capitol Street NE, (HPA 20-481): Add a third story to existing two-story building; addition at rear in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

The project was presented by Mr. Dario Davies, the agent for the owner of the property. Mr. Davies stated that this property used to be Al's Pizza. Al's Pizza experienced a fire, and the owner wants to redevelop the property. Mr. Davies said that in doing their zoning analysis, they found that they could add a third floor to the existing property.

Mr. Davies said that they would set the roof back to match the neighboring properties on East Capitol's mansard roofs. Mr. Davies said that the ground floor would be occupied by another pizza restaurant, with the second and third floors being apartments. The existing bay projection on East Capitol would remain, but the canopy would be removed to be more conducive to the original architecture. In showing the side elevation, Mr. Davies noted that the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) would prefer four over four windows to match the older part of the building.

Mr. Cushman wondered if the bay on the front was original the building or if it was done at some point in the past as illegal construction. Mr. Greenfield asked if the facade on the addition would be brick. Mr. Davies confirmed that the treatment will match the existing building.

Mr. Greenfield expressed concerns about how this project would fit into the historic fabric of the neighborhood. Mr. Alberti noted that he did not think that the plans were complete enough for the EDZ to make a recommendation. Specifically, he wanted to see a line of sight study. Mr. Alberti asked about what kind of windows are going to be in the third-floor addition since it is not clear in the elevations.

Mr. Alberti also questioned why one over one windows were used in portions of the addition, and four over four windows were used elsewhere. Mr. Davies stated that these are fixed windows, not dormers.

Mr. Cushman noted that the addition would go directly to the neighbor's walls and would be an encroachment and not appropriate for the neighborhood. Mr. Cushman also expressed concerns about the building encroaching on public space and not including any

place for trash except public space. Mr. Cushman also wanted to see additional details in the plans, including mechanical details. Mr. Cushman expressed concerns about the massing of the project on 14th Street NE and that it would tower over the neighboring buildings.

Ms. Boyette asked about whether the style of the addition was supposed to look historic or modern. She also asked about the roof slope, and whether it will accommodate the size of the building. Mr. Davies said that their plans would accommodate the drainage of the structure, and that those plans can be provided. Ms. Boyette also stated that she would want to see one over one double-hunt windows which are more historically consistent. Mr. Davies said that they chose four over four windows, since they thought they were more appropriate for the neighborhood.

Mr. Greenfield noted that there was a letter of support from 1380 East Capitol Street NE and asked if other conversations had been had with neighbors. The owner of the property was on the call, and said that he has scheduled a meeting with the neighbors. He said that one of the neighbors was excited because it would be an improvement to the neighborhood.

Mr. Greenfield asked if there was any thought about not building the third-floor addition. The owner said that the third-floor option was available by right. He said that he tried to make it conform to the historic nature of the neighborhood.

Mr. Albert noted that the Committee needs to know what the set back is on the front of the building. Additionally, there needs to be a sight study to ensure that the addition is not visible from the other side of the street. He also recommended a set-back on the 14th Street side, and a sight survey as well. With the set-back, he felt that the windows could be double-hung windows, rather than fixed windows. He was also adamant that the windows be one over one, not four over four. He also would like to see much more detail in the plans that get submitted.

Ms. Gove thanks the owner for the investment in the neighborhood, but thought that the plans needed to be updated to bring them into the nature of the surrounding buildings, particularly regarding the windows.

Mr. Cushman noted that this would be the first three story building on 14th Street NE and that the project may have some problems. Ms. Boyette recommended that the developers take a look at a project at 8th and E Streets SE as an example of a project where they are doing an addition in a historic neighborhood. Ms. Gove also recommended the developer contact the CHRS and get their comments on the project.

Mr. Greenfield recommended that the project be tabled, and that the owner come back to the next EDZ meeting and present more details. Mr. Dario said that, now that they have everyone's input, they will take that feedback and revise their plans for the addition. Mr. Greenfield agreed to follow up with HPRB to request a delay in their hearing, and that he would forward CHRS' comments on the project to the developer.

Mr. Greenfield tabled consideration of the relief request.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 pm.

**Next Scheduled ED&Z Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
7:00-9:00 pm
WebEx information to be posted on ANC 6A Website**