

Minutes
ANC 6A Economic Development & Zoning Committee
7:00 - 8:42 PM, Wednesday, September 16, 2026
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Attending: Rachael Loper (EDZ Chair), Mike Cushman, Scott Kilbourn, Russ Greenfield, Ayisha Lockett

Also present: Commissioner Roberta Shapiro (6A03); Commissioner Morgan Conley (joined by phone); Renee Dworakowski, ANC 6A Administrator

Absent: Becca Buthe (EDZ)

Presenters/Guests: Jennifer Fowler (Fowler Architecture) and Bill Schultheiss (1225 F Street NE); Jack Becker (23 Overbeck Alley NE); Stephen Ander and Roberto Ramirez, architect (1020 C Street NE); Michelle Grifka (neighbor, 1226 F Street NE); Dominique Vobis (neighbor, 1020 C Street NE)

7:00 pm Call to Order / Agenda

Chair Rachael Loper called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm.

Chair Loper proposed two changes to the published agenda: (1) correcting the committee's stated position on 1226 F Street, NE from "oppose" to "withhold support," and (2) postponing discussion of 316 12th Street (BZA # 21505) at the request of the homeowner, pending clarification from the DC Office of Zoning.

Motion: Chair Loper moved to accept the amended agenda. Seconded by Scott Kilbourn. Motion passed.

A quorum of the committee was confirmed present.

Old Business

1. 628 15th Street, NE (BZA 21349). Update only – no vote taken.

- The Alternative Dwelling Unit (ADU) rules changed while this case was pending before the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA).
- The case will be reheard on November 4, 2026; the applicant will now seek a special exception rather than a variance.

2. 1226 F Street, NE (BZA 21475) - third-story addition.

- The committee had planned to wait for Commissioner Kimberly Butler (ANC 6A02) to weigh in, but she was unable to attend due to a scheduling conflict (congressional testimony).
- Chair Loper reported on the BZA hearing held earlier that day, which lasted roughly two hours and drew 16 letters of opposition. The BZA asked the applicant to provide additional information (including updated shadow/sun studies addressing the privacy lattice) by October 7, 2026; the ANC may supplement the record by October 14, 2026; a BZA decision hearing is scheduled for October 21, 2026.
- Neighbor Michelle Grifka presented a map (drafted originally by Chair Loper, then refined by Ms. Grifka) illustrating the concentration of opposition letters near the property. The committee agreed Ms. Grifka should submit the map directly to the BZA, since it reflects her own work and Chair Loper's earlier comments at the BZA hearing were made as a neighbor, not on behalf of the ANC.

- Ms. Grifka reiterated neighbors' concerns about loss of privacy, light, and air, and about the manner in which the application has been presented.
- Committee members (Kilbourn, Cushman) discussed the by-right ability to add a third floor and precedent for third floors elsewhere on the block, while noting continued concerns about the rear-yard stair enlargement, AC placement, and privacy screening.
- Commissioner Shapiro advised that the ANC is unlikely to move this item from the consent agenda to formal opposition, since much of the addition is by-right, but recommended clarifying the committee's recommendation and delegating authority to the EDZ Chair to represent the ANC's position at the BZA hearing.

Motion: Chair Loper, incorporating Commissioner Shapiro's amendment, moved to clarify the EDZ Committee's recommendation on 1226 F Street, NE to state that the ANC will not support, but will not formally oppose, the proposed third-story addition, and to authorize the Chair of the EDZ Committee to represent the ANC's position at the upcoming BZA hearing, consistent with the committee's discussion. Seconded by Scott Kilbourn. Motion passed.



- Commissioner Morgan Conley volunteered to join a committee member on a walking survey of vacant properties.

Motion: Chair Loper, incorporating an amendment from Mike Cushman, moved that the EDZ Committee ask the ANC to support the committee's vacant-property review effort, encourage SMDs to partner with the committee on a property-by-property basis, and ask the ANC to publicize the effort to keep the public database of vacant and vacant/blighted properties updated and complete. Seconded by Ayisha Lockett. Motion passed.

4. RFK Campus Master Plan. Update only — no vote taken. Chair Loper noted the ANC submitted a 10-page comment letter on the RFK Campus Master Plan, [linked in the agenda packet](#), and encouraged members to review it.

New Business

1. 1225 F Street, NE - special exception, second floor above existing garage.

- Presented by architect Jennifer Fowler (Fowler Architecture) on behalf of homeowner Bill Schultheiss.
- The request is for special exception relief under Subtitle E § 5003.1 to add a second floor above an existing detached garage (built in 2012, prior to the current 450-square-foot accessory-structure limit). The garage's existing footprint is 580.1 square feet and would not change; overall lot occupancy (56.3%) would not change.
- Proposed height is 20'6", below the by-right maximum of 22 feet. The lots on this block are unusually deep (approximately 75-76 feet from house to garage), and the surrounding alleys are lined with existing garages, including a two-story garage previously approved by the BZA nearby.
- The adjoining neighbor at 1229 has submitted a letter of support; the only anticipated sun impact is to that neighbor's rear yard in afternoon hours.
- In response to committee questions, Ms. Fowler and Mr. Schultheiss confirmed the space will remain owner-occupied use (a workshop for the homeowner's model-railroad hobby) and not a rental unit, and that no proposed windows overlook neighboring properties.
- Mike Cushman asked whether the applicant would consider replacing the alley-facing pedestrian door with a wider garage door to reduce the risk of the space being converted to an independently accessible rental unit in the future; the applicant and architect explained that, given alley access on two sides of the property, the door location does not materially change that risk, and noted the committee could revisit the matter if the use of the space changes.

Motion: Chair Loper moved that the committee recommend the ANC support the special exception request at 1226 F Street, NE to add a second floor above the existing garage. Seconded by Scott Kilbourn. Motion passed.

2. 23 Overbeck Alley, NE - letter of support for proposed cornice/awning.

- Presented by homeowner and architect Jack Becker, who requested a letter of support for a proposed cornice/awning projecting approximately 30 inches into the alley public space, roughly 18 feet above grade (well above vehicle and fire-apparatus clearance), constructed of wood, cork, copper roofing, and galvanized steel brackets to mitigate solar heat gain and weather exposure on the home's west-facing facade.
- DOB raised no objection to the design, but a DDOT reviewer indicated the projection would require approval from the Public Space Committee, since the alley is public right-of-way.

- The matter is also on the agenda for the ANC's Transportation and Public Space (TPS) Committee for Monday, September 21, which the applicant and Chair Loper noted is likely the more directly relevant committee for the public-space approval.
- Committee members expressed support for the design; Commissioner Shapiro requested (in jest) a tour of the property.

Motion: Chair Loper moved that the EDZ Committee provide a paragraph of support, to be included in a joint ANC letter with the Transportation and Public Space Committee, supporting the proposed cornice/awning at 23 Overbeck Alley, NE. Seconded by Mike Cushman. Motion passed.

3. 1020 C Street, NE - variance request, porch enclosure.

- Presented by homeowner Stephen Ander and architect Roberto Ramirez. The proposal would enclose an existing, structurally deficient second floor back porch (identified as a safety hazard at the 2023 home inspection, and currently experiencing water infiltration) to create conditioned interior space within the existing footprint, with no change to the footprint, building height, or roofline.
- Because zoning treats enclosure of the porch as an “addition,” and a citywide zoning amendment enacted in spring 2026 removed covered porches from the lot-occupancy calculation, the property's resulting lot occupancy (approximately 80-83%) now exceeds the 80% threshold that triggers a variance rather than a special exception. Mike Cushman explained that, had the same request come before the rule change, the project would have qualified for a special exception rather than a variance, and cautioned that the variance/hardship standard is difficult to meet.
- Neighbor Dominique Vobis (joined by her husband as a co-signer) spoke in opposition, citing anticipated loss of privacy and light/air from a proposed window, the loss of the porch's historic Victorian character (noting no other additions exist on this block), and concerns about construction access and damage given the alley's narrow width, citing a prior renovation project that damaged neighboring properties. She stated additional neighbors also oppose the project, and that the one existing letter of support was conditioned on the contractor not blocking the alley.
- Committee discussion included: whether letters of support are on file from the most directly affected neighbors (Mr. Ander stated the adjacent neighbor and the neighbor across the alley have agreed to the project, though Chair Loper noted she had not seen a letter from them in the BZA file); a request for further documentation addressing alley and view-shed/privacy impacts (Scott Kilbourn); and observations that windows only 15 feet from neighboring structures would meaningfully change privacy conditions (Mike Cushman).
- In response to a question from Commissioner Shapiro, the architect confirmed the project could be revised to bring lot occupancy below the 80% threshold (requiring only a minor reduction, less than one square foot), which would allow the applicant to pursue a special exception rather than a variance. Commissioner Shapiro urged the applicant to pursue that path and to continue working with neighbors toward an agreement.
- Mike Cushman noted the project may also require Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) review because it may be visible from the street or alley and could affect the alley's historic character; the applicant's team stated HPRB has already approved the project. A posted notice at the property lists a December 2, 2026 BZA hearing date.

Motion: Chair Loper moved to table consideration of 1020 C Street, NE until the committee's October meeting, to allow the applicant to provide additional documentation (including a design option below 80% lot occupancy and letters from directly affected neighbors) and to allow neighbors on both sides of the issue to continue discussions before the item returns to the agenda. Seconded by Mike Cushman. Motion passed.

Announcements

- The next EDZ Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 (3rd Tuesday; usually 3rd Wednesday).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:42 pm.