

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

November 14, 2017

Via Emailed PDF



David Shove-Brown, AIA
//3877
3333 K Street NW, Suite 60
Washington, DC 20007

RE: PDRM for 765 18th Street NE [Square 4507, Lot 0143 – Subject Property]

Dear Mr. Shove-Brown:

This letter is in regarding to the proposed addition and conversion of the current single family use into a multi-unit apartment building at the Subject Property to memorialize the Preliminary Design Review Meeting [PDRM] that you had with my staff on September 11, 2017.

Property and Project Description

The Subject Property is located within the RA-2 District and consists of 3,333 square feet of lot area. The property has its western street frontage along 18th Street NE, and its southern and eastern property lines along abutting public alleys. The building shares a party wall with the building along its northern side property line. The existing two story single family house currently occupies 523.8 square feet of the lot area [or 17%], and has an existing Floor Area Ratio [FAR] of 0.31.

You are proposing to add a third story to the existing building, construct a four story rear addition, and convert the building into a seven (7) to nine (9) dwelling unit apartment house [see attached Proposed Plat]. The sum of the current building's footprint and the new rear addition, will be under the maximum allowable Lot Occupancy limitation of 60%, and also will not exceed the maximum FAR limitation for the RA-2 zone of 1.8 FAR.

Parking Requirement

A nine unit apartment house use in the subject RA-2 zone would normally require, under Section C-701.5, one parking space per three dwelling units in excess of four units, or 2 spaces [$9 - 4 = 5/3 = 1.66$ or ~ 2]. However, due to the property being less than .25 miles from the H Street Streetcar, under Section C-702.1(b), the parking requirement is reduced by 50%, or in this case, a reduction to one space. In fact, as shown on the attached plat, you propose two full size and one compact parking spaces, or two spaces in excess of the minimum required one parking space.

Side Yard and Courts

As the existing building has a corner that touches the southernmost side property line, the building is considered a Row Building, and is not semi-detached. With the Row Dwelling classification, there is no side yard required under Section F-306.1(b), and the proposed addition to the rear is not required to have a side yard, and may be built up to this southern side property line. The spaces between the building and the southern side property line are therefore considered as open courts.

Under Section B-100.2, the relevant definitions regarding courts are as follows:

Court: An unoccupied space, not a court niche, open to the sky, on the same lot with a building, which is bounded on two (2) or more sides by the exterior walls of the building or by two (2) or more exterior walls, lot lines, or yards. A court may also be bounded by a single curved wall of a building

Court, Open: A court opening onto a street, yard, or an alley not less than ten feet (10 ft.) wide.

Court, Height of: The vertical distance from the lowest level of the court to the highest point of any bounding wall.

Court, Length of: The mean horizontal distance between the open and closed end of an open court or the greater horizontal dimension of a closed court.

Court, Width of: The minimum horizontal dimension substantially parallel with the open end of an open court or the lesser horizontal dimension of a closed court; or, in the case of a non-rectangular court, the diameter of the largest circle that may be inscribed in a horizontal plane within the court.

Under Section B-322.2, “Where a court is open to a yard or any lot line, the court width requirements apply only to the dimension that is parallel or nearly parallel to the opening”. Under Section F-202.1, the minimum open court width is 4” per foot of height of the court, with a 15’ minimum. With the proposed court height of 47’ 3” the required minimum court width is at the 15 foot minimum. Based on the attached plat, the proposed non-rectilinear court south of the building, which uses the diameter of the largest circle that can be inscribed in the court as per Section B-322.4, would be 15’, and therefore is compliant with the court requirements.

Balconies

The proposed exterior balconies, which are shown at the rear of the proposed rear addition [see attached floor plan set] and are also permitted to align with the northern property line, would be permitted as a part of the proposed designed addition, but will be counted as towards lot occupancy; these exterior balconies would also be counted towards FAR if they project more than six feet from the exterior wall of the building, but as proposed, they do not. The proposed interior balconies along the southern side of the building are within the building’s exterior walls, and are counted towards lot occupancy and FAR.

Cellar

Under Section B-100.2, the relevant current definitions for basement and cellar are as follows:

Basement: That portion of a story partly below grade, the ceiling of which is four feet (4 ft.) or more above the adjacent finished grade

Cellar: That portion of a story, the ceiling of which is less than four feet (4 ft.) above the adjacent finished grade

The floor area of within basements is included in Gross Floor Area and is charged towards FAR, while cellar floor area is not. In order to consider the lowest level of your addition to be a cellar, in which you propose bedrooms that are to have window wells [to conform to egress code] they cannot be more than 4'-0" perpendicular from the face of the building and be no wider than the windows themselves. The attached plan set for the cellar level show compliant window wells.

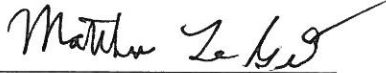
Summary

The plans show the project is compliant with the maximum building height of 50 feet, and the minimum rear yard of 15 feet, with a proposed building height of 47' 3" feet and a proposed rear yard of 18 feet. There are no rooftop penthouses proposed. The minimum GAR requirement is .3 and the project will use permeable pavers in conjunction with dual flush toilets, low flow fixtures, proper insulation values and green roofs.

Based on the determinations above, and as shown on the attached proposed plan set and plat, your project meets applicable yard, court, building height, parking, GAR, lot occupancy, and FAR zoning requirements.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance in regard to your project.

Sincerely,



Matthew Le Grant
Zoning Administrator

Attachments: Proposed Plat
Floor Plan Set dated 8-28-17

cc: A. Rozzi
S. Tessema
A. Vora

File: Det Let re 765 18th St NE to Shove-Brown 11-14-17