

Docket Item #1
BZA CASE #2008-0018
Board of Zoning Appeals
June 12, 2008

ADDRESS: 718 GRANDVIEW DRIVE
ZONE: R-8, RESIDENTIAL
APPLICANT: CHRISTINE LEONARD, ARCHITECT FOR MATTHEW AND
KRISTINA BUCHOLZ, OWNERS

ISSUE: Special exception to construct an open front porch in the required front yard facing Grandview Drive.

CODE SECTION	SUBJECT	CODE REQMT	APPLICANT PROPOSES	REQUESTED EXCEPTION
3-306(A)(1)	Front Yard	30.00 feet	17.00 feet	13.00 feet

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION OF JUNE 12, 2008: On a motion to approve as submitted with conditions by Mr. Zander, seconded by Mr. Allen, the special exception was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

CONDITION: The approved porch length of 45.10 feet is contingent upon the construction of the second story addition facing Grand View Drive.

Reason: The application met the criteria for a special exception.

Speakers

Matthew Bucholz, owner and Christine Leonard, architect, made the presentation.

Jeffery Griffin, resident at 604 North Overlook Drive, spoke in support of the application as submitted the applicants.

James Danaher, resident at 717 South Overlook Drive, spoke in opposition and requested a deferral.

George Cushmac, resident at 712 Grandview Drive, spoke in opposition.

Merle DeLancey, resident at 717 Grandview Drive, spoke in support of the application as submitted by the applicants.

Douglas Schultz, resident at 811 Grandview Drive, spoke in support of the application as submitted the applicants.

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Megan Donley, resident 102 South Union Street, spoke in support of the application as submitted by the applicant.

Mett Miller, resident at 719 South Overlook Drive, spoke in support of the application as submitted by staff.

Denny Brisley, resident at 3406 Gilden Drive, spoke in support of the application as submitted by the applicant.

Staff **recommends approval** of the request for special exception to construct a covered open front porch with the condition that the length of the front porch not exceed 33.80 feet in length across the main building wall.

If the Board decides to grant a variance, it should contain the conditions under the department comments. The variance must also be recorded with the deed of the property in the City's Land Records Office prior to the release of the building permit.



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06/12/08



I. Issue

The applicants propose to construct a one-story open front porch and to add a second-story addition above an existing one-story addition at 718 Grandview Drive in the required front yard facing Grandview Drive.

II. Background

The subject property, a corner lot, is one lot of record with 60.00 feet of frontage facing Grandview Drive, 90.00 feet of frontage facing Gilden Drive, 85.00 feet of depth along the south side property line and 115.00 feet of depth along the east side property line. The property contains 9,775 square feet of lot area and complies with the minimum lot area



required by the R-8 zone for a corner lot. The property is substandard as to the lot frontage facing Grandview Drive, where the minimum required by the zone for a corner lot is 80.00 feet.

The property is developed with a two-story brick and frame dwelling with a one-story addition located 24.90 feet from the front property line facing Grandview Drive, 29.80 feet from the front property line facing Gilden Drive, 8.00 feet from the east side property line and 42.00 feet from the south side property line. According to real estate assessment records the dwelling was constructed in 1940.

III. Description

The applicants propose to construct a one-story open front porch facing Grandview Drive across the entire front building wall that measures a maximum of 8.00 feet in depth and measures 45.10 feet in length, totaling 360.80 square feet. The front building wall plane varies slightly in its distance from the property line facing Grandview Drive. No portion of the front building wall facing Grandview Drive makes up more than 50 percent of the total length, therefore one front building wall plane cannot be determined. At no point is the proposed porch more than 8.00 feet depth from the front building walls, therefore the porch facing Grandview Drive varies its distance from the front property line from 17.00 feet at its closest to 21.00 at the farthest. The applicants request a special exception to reduce the required front yard from 30.00 feet to 17.00 feet, a reduction of 13.00 feet.

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The proposed second-story addition along the west side of the house will measure 11.30 feet by 20.30 feet, totaling 229.39 square feet. The addition will be located above the existing one-story addition 29.80 feet from the front property line facing Gildden Drive and 29.00 feet from the front property line facing Grandview Drive. The proposed addition complies with the prevailing setbacks along Gildden Drive and Grandview Drive.

The applicants also plan in the future to construct a two-story rear addition. The preliminary plans submitted indicate the addition will measure 23.50 feet by 25.00 feet, totaling 1175.00 square feet. As shown on the plans the proposed future addition will measure 19.25 feet in height to the eaves. The proposed addition will be located 8.00 feet from the east side property line, 41.50 feet from the south side property line and 53.00 feet from the front property line facing Gildden Drive. As submitted the future addition complies with the R-8 zone requirements.

There are similar style front porches elsewhere in the North Ridge/Beverly Hills neighborhood. The applicants have submitted photographs of built porches to demonstrate that the request meets the requirement that the proposed porch is compatible with the existing building architecture, neighboring properties and neighborhood character, and complies with the following requirements:

- (a) No portion of the porch shall extend beyond the end of the walls of the front building facade, except where the resulting lot and structure retain a side or front yard which complies with the zone requirements.
- (b) The roof line of the porch shall be in scale with the existing building architecture.
- (c) No second floor balcony, deck, or enclosed construction shall be permitted above the front porch.
- (d) A ground level covered front porch shall remain open, and shall at no time be enclosed with building walls, glass or screens; provided that railings, no higher than the minimum height required by the building code, and with balusters evenly spaced so as to leave at least 50 percent of the perimeter length of the railings open, shall be permitted.

If the new front porch is approved it will comply with the R-8 zone floor area ratio requirements. (Refer to floor area calculations.)

There have been no previous variances or special exceptions previously granted for the subject property.

IV. Master Plan/ Zoning

The subject property is zoned R-8 and has been so zoned since the adoption of the Third Revised Zoning Map in 1951, and is identified in the North Ridge/Rosemont Small Area Plan for residential land use.

V. Requested Special Exception

Section 3-306(A)(1), Front Yard

The R-8 zone requires a front setback of 30.00 feet. The proposed porch will be located 17.00 feet from the front property line facing Grandview Drive. The applicants request a special exception to reduce the required front yard to 17.00 feet, a reduction of 13.00 feet.

Section 11-1302(C)(1)

The zoning ordinance permits a ground level, open, covered front porch limited to the main architectural entrance of a dwelling, with a maximum depth of 8.00 feet to be located no closer than 15.00 feet from the front property line with an approved special exception. The applicants proposed front porch meets the criteria for a special exception.

VI. Noncomplying Structure

The existing building at 718 Grandview Drive is noncomplying as to the following:

<u>Yard</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Provided</u>	<u>Noncompliance</u>
Lot Frontage (Grandview Drive)	80.00 feet	60.00 feet	20.00 feet
Front Yard (Grandview Drive)	30.00 feet	24.90 feet	5.10 feet
Front Yard (Gilden Drive)	30.00 feet	29.80 feet	.20 feet

VII. Special Exception Standards

To grant a special exception, the Board of Zoning Appeals must find that the strict application of the zoning ordinance creates an unreasonable burden on the use and enjoyment of the property. Section 11-1304 of the zoning ordinance lists standards that an applicant must address and that the Board must affirm in order to grant a special exception of the zoning regulations.

1. Whether approval of the special exception will be detrimental to the public welfare, to the neighborhood or to the adjacent properties.

2. Whether approval of the special exception will impair an adequate supply of light and air to the adjacent property, or cause or substantially increase traffic congestion or increase the danger of fire or the spread of fire, or endanger the public safety.
3. Whether approval of the special exception will alter the essential character of the area or the zone.
4. Whether approval of the special exception will alter the essential character of the area or the zone.
5. Whether the proposal will be compatible with the development in the surrounding neighborhood.
6. Whether the proposed development represents the only reasonable means and location on the lot to accommodate the proposed structure given the natural constraints of the lot or the existing development of the lot.

VIII. Staff Conclusion

Staff recommends that the applicants reduce the length of the proposed porch, to 33.80 feet, not to extend beyond the main building wall (See Figure 1). This would result in a reduction of 11.30 feet by 8.00 feet or 90.40 square feet of porch, and would leave a remaining porch of 270.4 square feet that would be in better keeping with the scale and architecture of the house. As proposed (See Figure 2), the covered front porch appears heavy on the west side of the front building wall. The reduced length will provide a more balanced appearance, is in keeping with the existing architecture, and is in character with other front porches in the Beverly Hills neighborhood and North Ridge in general. Within the neighborhood there are many similar style porches, built in compliance with the applicable zoning regulations, and in the past, by variance or recently by special exception. No portion of the proposed porch extends beyond the end walls of the front building façade; the roof line of the porch is in scale with the existing building architecture; and no second floor balcony, deck or enclosed construction above the front porch is proposed.

Staff believes the reduced length of the proposed porch meets the intent of the zoning ordinance regulations that the proposed porch must be compatible with the existing building architecture, neighboring properties and neighborhood character.



Figure 1- Reduced porch length recommended by staff.



Figure 2 - Porch proposed by applicant.

Staff **recommends approval** of the request for special exception to construct a covered open front porch with the condition that the length of the front porch not to exceed 33.80 feet in length across the main building wall.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

* The applicant is advised that if the variance is approved the following additional comments apply.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

- R-1 An approved Grading Plan must be attached to the building permit application. The Grading Plan is required because the submitted documentation indicates that the area of land disturbance associated with all of the proposed improvements will exceed 2,500 square feet.
In general, a Grading Plan is required when construction of a proposed addition:
- Results in a new building footprint that exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more.
 - Results in less than 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining. The walls must comprise the footprint of the existing building and shall be measured in linear feet. The remaining walls must remain as exterior walls. The definition of a first floor exterior wall is that it must have its finished floor surface entirely above grade.
 - Results in land disturbance associated with the project of 2,500 square feet or greater in area. The disturbed area will be determined by adding a minimum of 10' to the perimeter of the building (or addition) footprint and calculating the area within the increased perimeter. In addition, a 10 foot wide access path from the edge of the disturbed area to the street or paved driveway must be included in the disturbed area calculation. Provision must be made for stockpile, staging, dumpsters and material storage areas within the limits of disturbance.
 - Changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater.
 - Changes to existing drainage patterns. (TES)
- R-2 The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (TES)
- R-3 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (TES)
- R-4 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (TES)

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- R-5 No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (TES)
- R-6 An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (TES)
- R-7 Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (TES)

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 The applicant has indicated a proposed future addition on the submitted plans. The following Code Enforcement comments are based on the proposed addition of an open front porch to the existing residential property.
- C-1 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-3 Sheeting and shoring shall not extend beyond the property line; except when the developer has obtained a written release from adjacent property owners which has been recorded in the land records; or through an approved encroachment process.
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- C-6 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.

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- C-7 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-8 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Recreation (Arborist):

- F-1 No specimen trees will be affected by this plan.

Historic Alexandria (Archaeology):

- F-1 There is low potential for significant archaeological resources to be disturbed by this project. No archaeological action is required.

Other Requirements Brought to the Applicant's Attention:

- C-1 A wall check survey plat shall be submitted to Planning and Zoning when the building footprint is in place, pursuant to Alexandria City Code section 8-1-12.