

Docket Item #1  
BZA CASE #2011-0002

Board of Zoning Appeals  
April 14, 2011

**ADDRESS:** 205 LA VERNE AVENUE  
**ZONE:** R-2-5 RESIDENTIAL  
**APPLICANT:** Karen Swanson

**ISSUE:** Special exception to construct a covered front porch in the required west side yard.

CODE SECTION	SUBJECT	CODE REQMT	APPLICANT PROPOSES	REQUESTED VARIANCE
3-506 (A)(2)	Side Yard (West)	10.00 ft.	7.00 ft.	3.00 ft.

**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION OF APRIL 14, 2011:** On a motion to approve by Mr. Koenig, seconded by Ms. Lewis, the special exception was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

Reason: The application met the criteria for a special exception as outlined in the staff report.

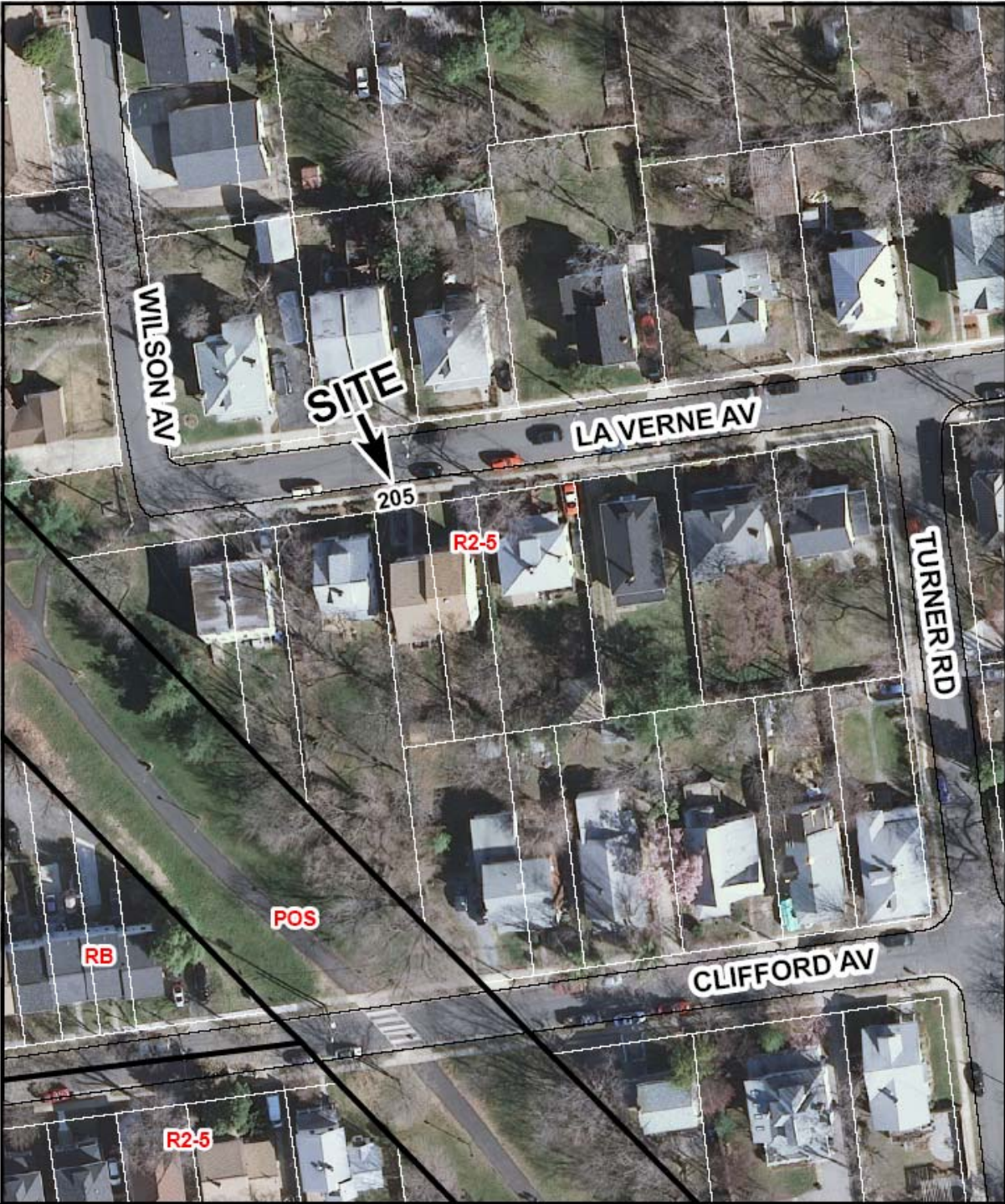
Speakers:

Karen Swanson, owner, made the presentation.

**Update on April 14, 2011:** Request changed from variance to special exception pursuant to the April 14, 2011 Memorandum to the Board

Staff **recommends approval** of the requested exception because the case met the criteria for a special exception and with the condition that the porch must remain open.

If the Board decides to grant the requested special exception it must comply with the code requirements under the department comments and the applicant must submit a survey plat prepared by a licensed surveyor confirming building footprint, and setbacks prior to the release of a Certificate of Occupancy. The special exception 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.



**BZA CASE #2011-0002 CONTEXT MAP**



**I. Issue**

The applicant proposes to construct a covered open front porch on the existing dwelling at 205 La Verne Avenue in the required west side yard.

**II. Background**

The subject property is one lot of record with 25.00 feet of frontage, a depth of 120.00 feet, and a total lot area of 3,000 square feet.

The lot is currently developed with a two-story single family semi-detached dwelling located 26.70 feet from the front property line, 7.00 feet from the west side property line, and 58.00 feet from the rear property line. According to real estate assessment records the house was constructed in 1976.

**III. Description**

The applicant proposes to construct a front porch 18.00 feet from the front property line and 7.00 feet from the west side property line. The porch measures 8.00 feet by 18.00 feet, totaling 144.00 square feet and 13.00 feet in height from grade to the top of the roof. The existing house is noncomplying as to existing floor area, but the proposed front porch is an allowable deduction which will result in no increase to the net floor area ratio (FAR).

The Residential Infill regulations approved by City Council in 2008 encourage open front porches of a particular size by allowing them to be deducted from FAR.

Although the subject property is located within the Town of Potomac Historic District, the existing house is not identified as a contributing structure. In staff's opinion, the proposed front porch will improve the scale and design of this dwelling and will make it more visually compatible with the architectural character of nearby historic buildings.

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

**IV. Master Plan/Zoning**

The subject property is zoned R-2-5 and has been so zoned since adoption of the Third Revised Zoning Map in 1951 and identified in the Potomac West Small Area Plan for residential low land use.

**V. Requested Special Exception**

3-506 (A)(2) Side Yard:

The applicant requests a special exception of 3.00 feet from the required 10.00 foot setback to build 7.00 feet from the west side property line.

**VI. Noncomplying structure**

The existing building at 205 La Verne Avenue is noncomplying with respect to the following:

<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Required</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Noncompliance</u>
Lot Frontage and Width	37.50 ft.	25.00 ft.	12.50 ft.
Side Yard (West)	10.00 ft.	7.00 ft.	3.00 ft.
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)*	1350 sq. ft.	1472 sq. ft.	122 sq. ft.

\*Based on a total lot area of 3,000 square feet and a permitted floor area ratio of .45 in the R-2-5 zone

**VII. Special Exceptions 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 believes exists and thus warrants granting 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 zone.
- 4) Whether the proposal will be compatible with the development in the surrounding neighborhood.
- 5) 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. Applicant's Reasons**

The applicant states that the existing house was built with a seven foot setback, and to terminate the porch ten feet from the side property line would not only look odd, but proposed porch is compatible with the character of the neighborhood, will improve the require the porch railings to return into existing windows. According to the applicant, the building's aesthetic appeal, and will encourage social interaction between neighbors.

The applicant has also shown plans for proposed porch to her neighbors and has submitted letters of support.

**IX. Staff Analysis**

The existing two-family semi-detached home was constructed in 1976, at which time the side yard setback was 7.00 feet. The proposed porch will comply with the front yard setback as established by the average prevailing setback along the blockface. At the time the house was constructed, the property was complying as to lot width, and side yard setback, and if the front porch had been constructed at the same time as the rest of the house, it would have complied with side yard setback.

Several other houses within the immediate vicinity of this property have porches. The modest design and size of this porch are compatible with the character of the existing dwelling as well as the surrounding neighborhood. While this porch is proposed to remain open, staff notes that in this case, any enclosure in the future would result in an increase in FAR which is not permitted as the existing dwelling currently exceeds allowable FAR.

The substandard nature of the lot creates a hardship for the applicant; therefore, staff **recommends approval** of the requested side yard special exception with the condition that the porch must remain open.

**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 The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 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.]. (T&ES)
- R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R-3 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R-4 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. (T&ES)
- R-5 An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R-6 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. (T&ES)
- R-7 The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)
- R-8 Construction of a new driveway entrance, or widening of an existing driveway entrance, requires separate application to; and approval from, the Department of Transportation and
- F-1 After review of the information provided, an approved grading plan is not required at this time. Please note that if any changes are made to the plan it is suggested that T&ES be included in the review
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)

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- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25) (T&ES)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)

Code Administration:

- C1 If the variance is approved, a building permit will be required prior to the start of construction.
- C2 Five sets of plans are required to be submitted for review prior to the issuance of the building permit. The plans shall include pier footing details, framing, crawl space ventilation (if applicable), tread and riser dimensions, and handrail details.

Recreation (Arborist):

- F-1 No trees are 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.

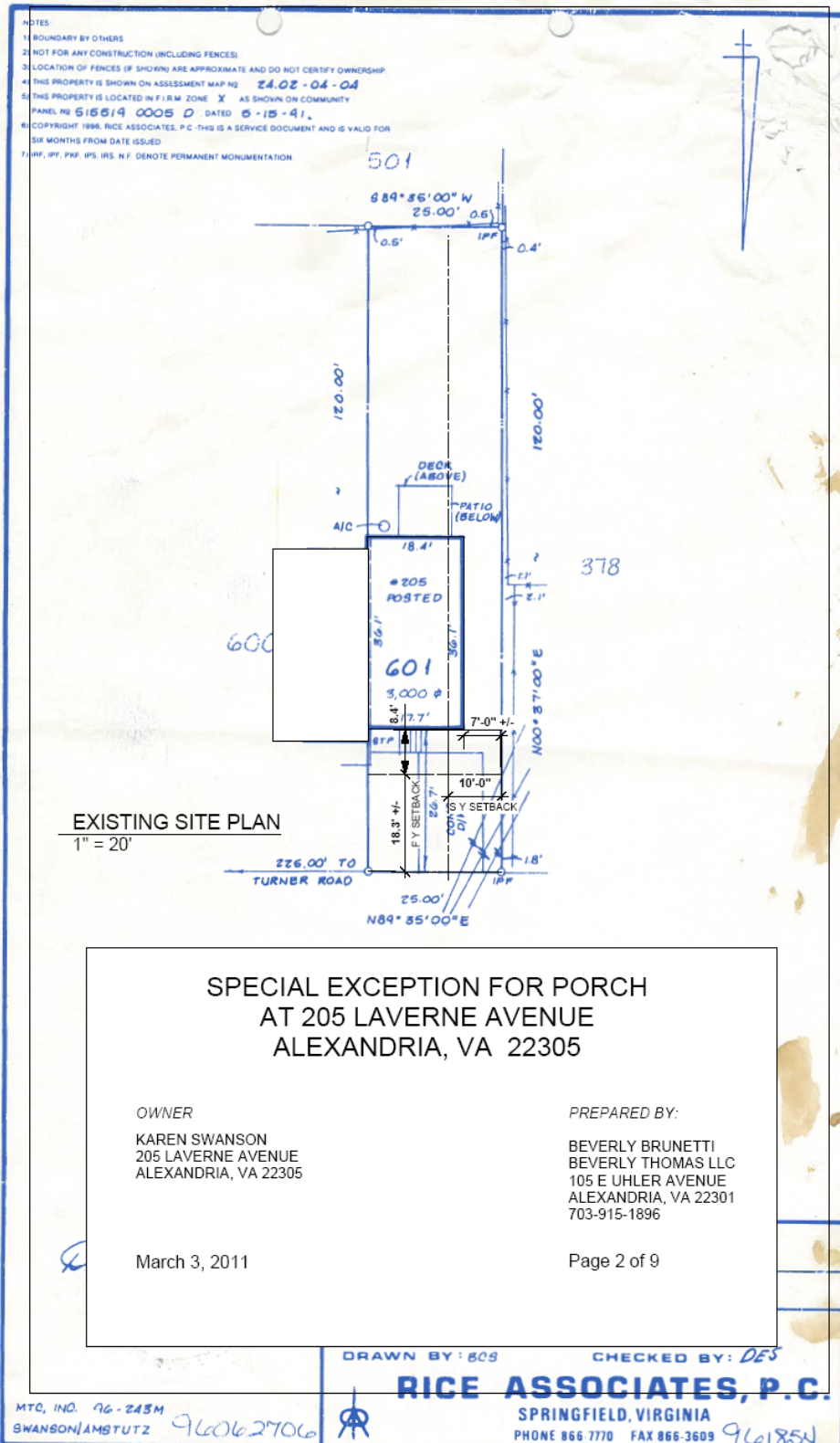
Other Requirements Brought to the Applicant's Attention (P&Z):

- 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.

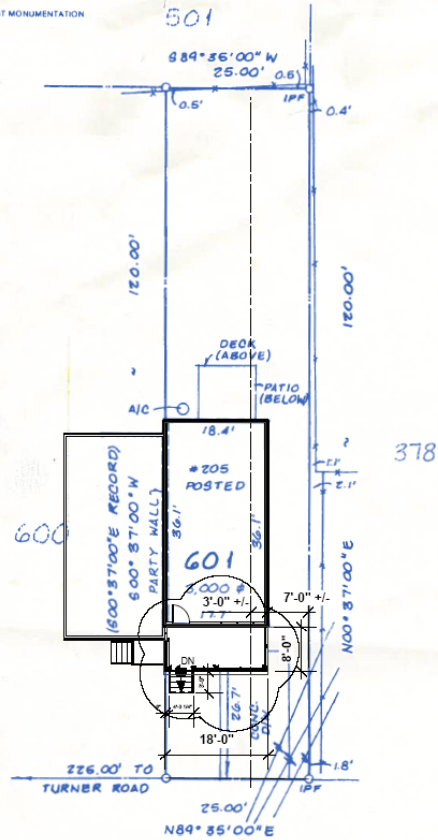
VII. Images







- NOTES:
- 1) BOUNDARY BY OTHERS
  - 2) NOT FOR ANY CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDING FENCES)
  - 3) LOCATION OF FENCES (IF SHOWN) ARE APPROXIMATE AND DO NOT CERTIFY OWNERSHIP
  - 4) THIS PROPERTY IS SHOWN ON ASSESSMENT MAP NO. 24.02-04-04
  - 5) THIS PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN F.I.R.M. ZONE X AS SHOWN ON COMMUNITY PANEL NO. 515519 0005 D, DATED 6-15-91.
  - 6) COPYRIGHT 1996, RICE ASSOCIATES, P.C. THIS IS A SERVICE DOCUMENT AND IS VALID FOR SIX MONTHS FROM DATE ISSUED.
  - 7) I.P.F., I.P.F., P.F.F., I.P.S., I.R.S., N.F. DENOTE PERMANENT MONUMENTATION



SITE PLAN  
1" = 20'

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR PORCH  
AT 205 LAVERNE AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305**

OWNER  
KAREN SWANSON  
205 LAVERNE AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305

PREPARED BY:  
BEVERLY BRUNETTI  
BEVERLY THOMAS LLC  
105 E UHLER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22301  
703-915-1896

March 3, 2011

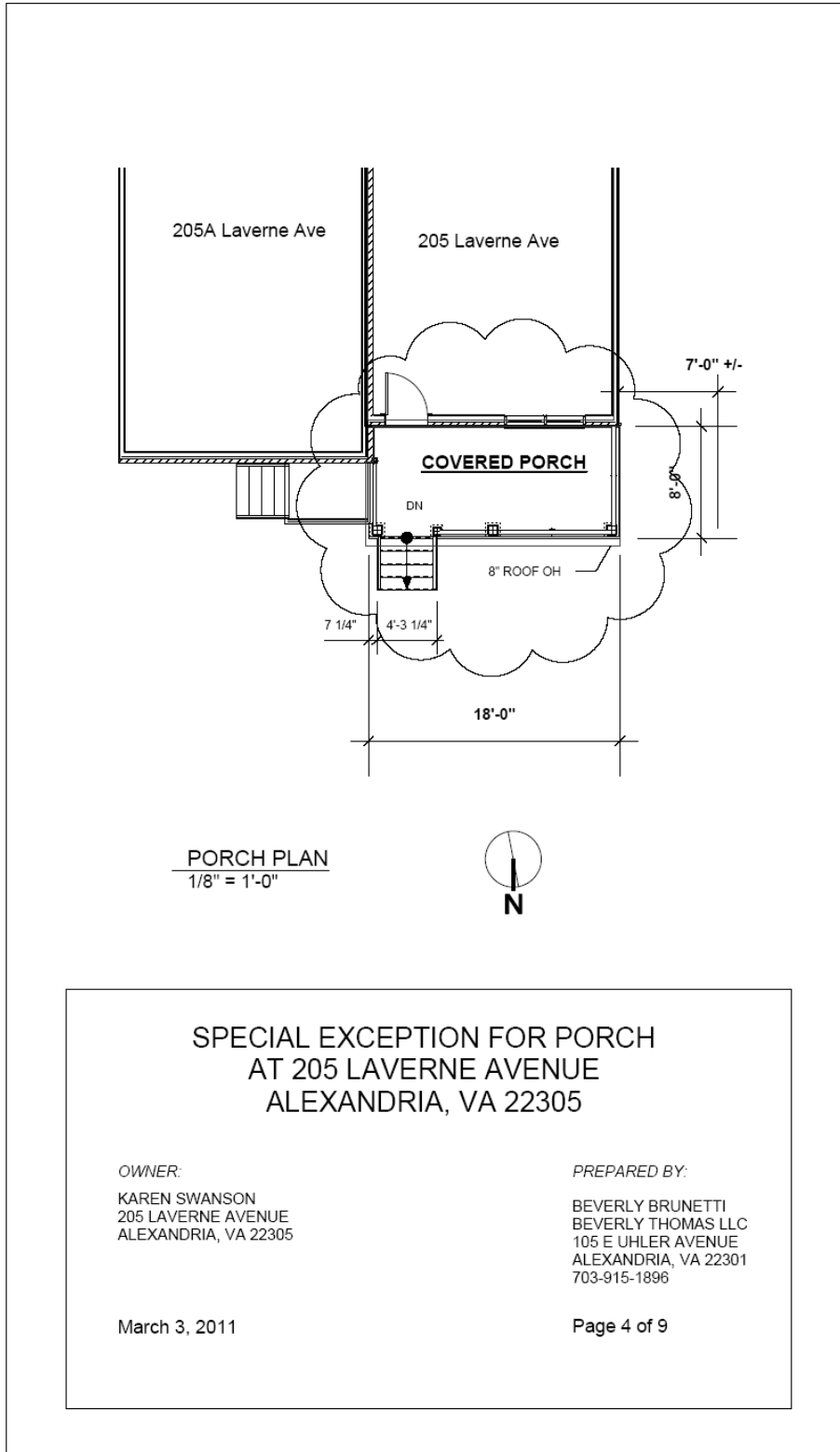
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928531

MTC, INC. 76-243M  
SWANSON/AMBTUTZ 96062706

DRAWN BY: 609      CHECKED BY: DES

**RICE ASSOCIATES, P.C.**  
SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA  
PHONE 866-7770    FAX 866-3609 9121851





NORTH ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"

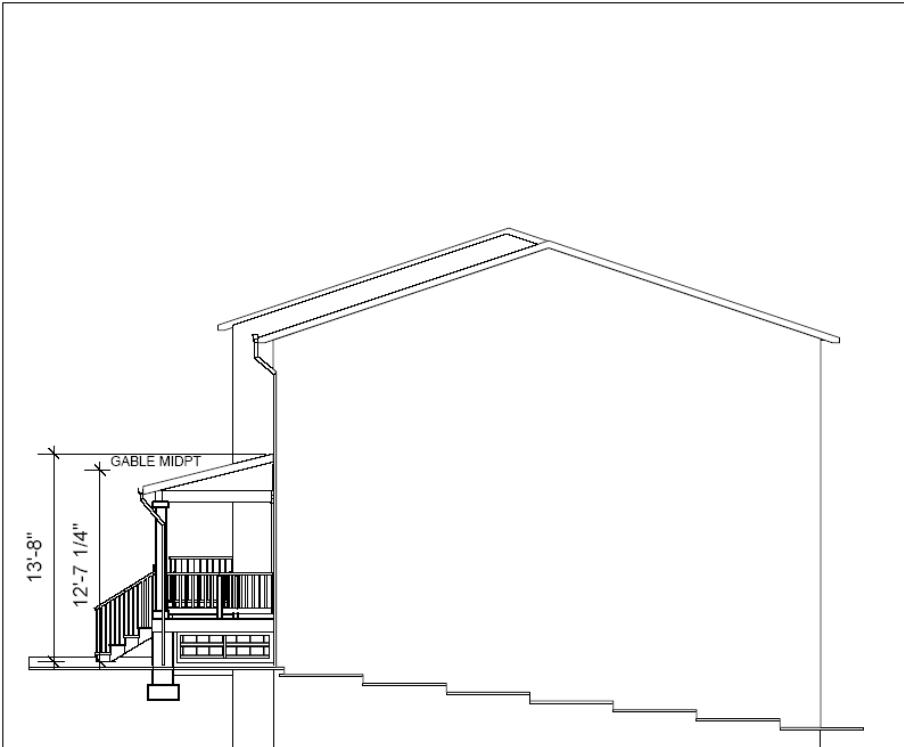
**SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR PORCH  
AT 205 LAVERNE AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305**

*OWNER:*  
KAREN SWANSON  
205 LAVERNE AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22305

*PREPARED BY:*  
BEVERLY BRUNETTI  
BEVERLY THOMAS LLC  
105 E UHLER AVENUE  
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March 3, 2011

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WEST ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"

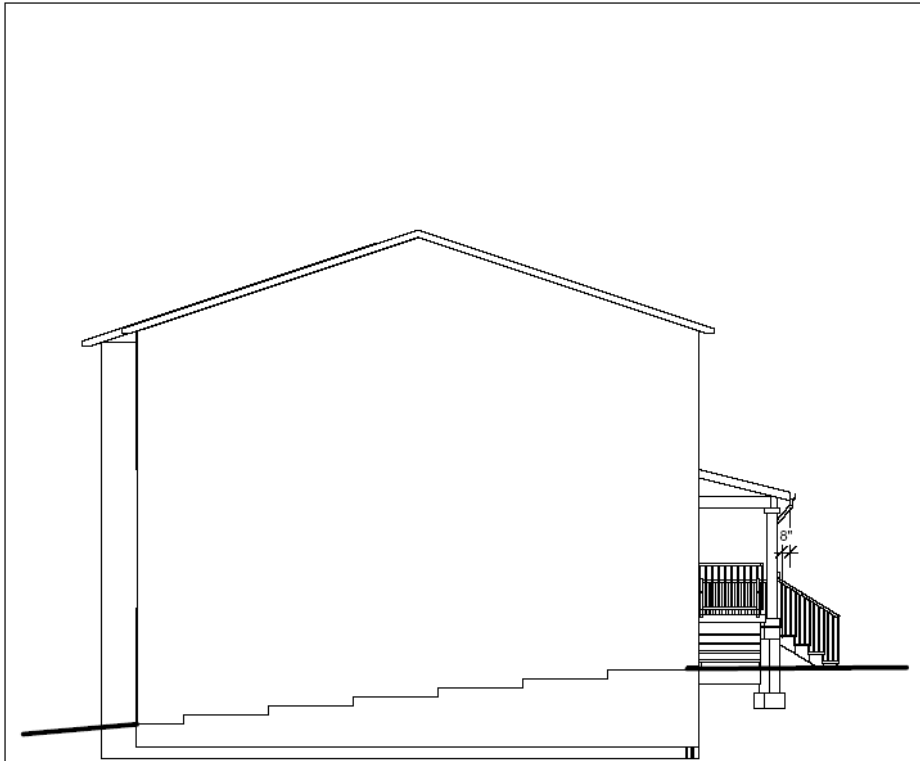
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EAST ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"

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EXISTING EXTERIOR PHOTOS

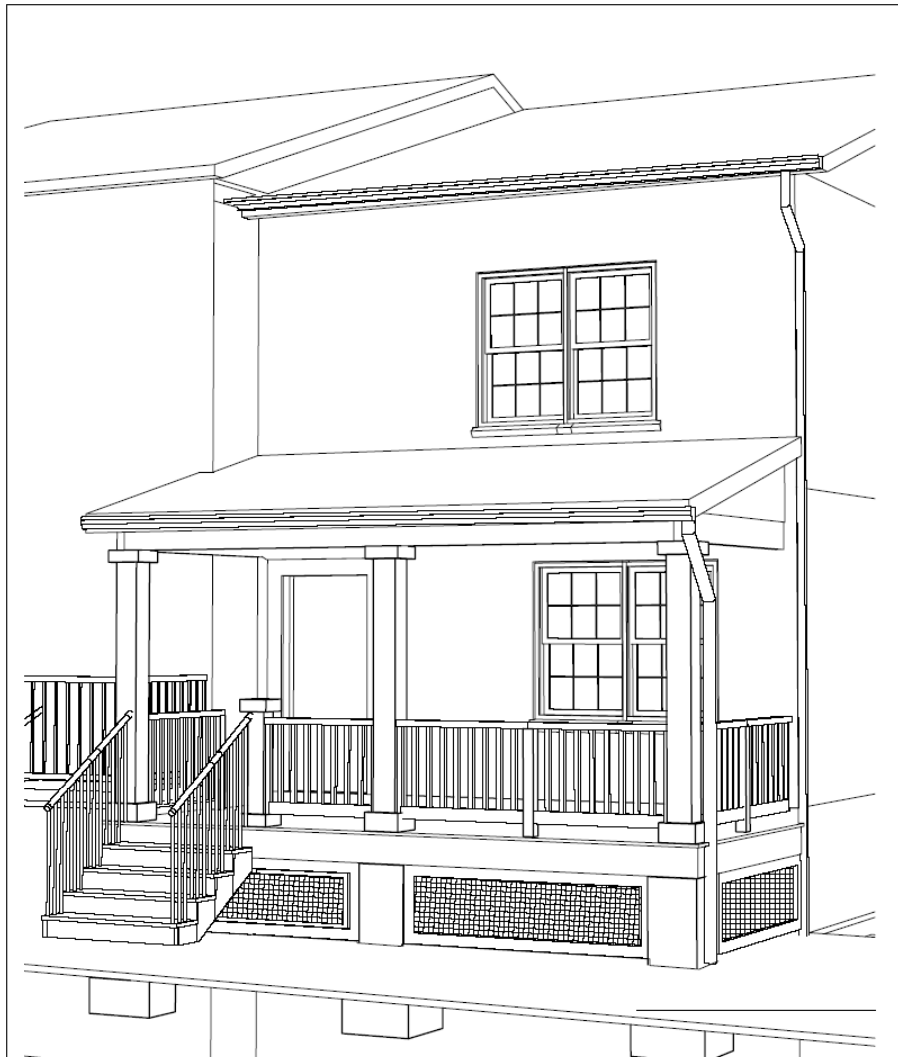
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**SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR PORCH  
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March 3, 2011

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200 LaVerne Avenue



206 LaVerne Avenue



202/202A LaVerne Avenue



208 LaVerne Avenue



204 LaVerne Avenue



210 LaVerne Avenue

205 LaVerne 2-1



201 LaVerne Avenue



209 LaVerne Avenue



203 LaVerne Avenue



211 LaVerne Avenue



207 LaVerne Avenue



213 LaVerne Avenue

205 Laverne 2-2

Duplex Treatments in the 300 Block of LaVerne Avenue



205 LaVerne 2-3

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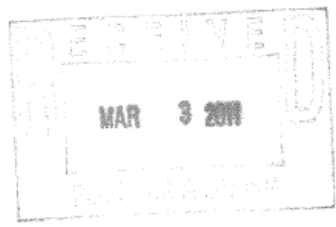
**APPLICATION  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR PORCHES**

Section of zoning ordinance from which request for special exception is made:

3-506 (A)(2) SIDE YARD SETBACK PER 11-1302 C

- 1. Applicant:  Owner  Contract Purchaser  Agent  
 Name KAREN SWANSON  
 Address 205 LAVERNE AVE  
ALEXANDRIA VA 22305  
 \* Daytime Phone 202.633.4281  
 Email Address SWANSKA @ VERIZON.NET
- 2. Property Location 205 LAVERNE AVE
- 3. Assessment Map # 024 Block 02-04-04 Lot 601 Zone R 2-5
- 4. Legal Property Owner Name KAREN SWANSON  
 Address 205 LAVERNE AVE, ALEX VA 22305



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5. Describe request briefly :

SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUESTED TO BUILD AN  
8' X 18' COVERED PORCH ENCRROACHING 3 FEET  
INTO REQUIRED SIDE YARD

6. If property owner or applicant is being represented by an authorized agent, such as an attorney, realtor or other person for which there is a form of compensation, does this agent or the business in which they are employed have a business license to operate in the City of Alexandria, Virginia?

*NA*

- Yes — Provide proof of current City business license.
- No — Said agent shall be required to obtain a business prior to filing application.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the projects, etc., are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

Applicant or Authorized Agent:

*K*  
KAREN A SWANSON  
 Print Name  
703.683.8045  
 Telephone

Karen A. Swanson  
 Signature  
FEBRUARY 25, 2011  
 Date

Pursuant to Section 13-3-2 of the City Code, the use of a document containing false information may constitute a Class 1 misdemeanor and may result in a punishment of a year in jail or \$2,500 or both. It may also constitute grounds to revoke the permit applied for with such information.

Note to Applicant: Only one special exception per dwelling shall be approved under the provisions of Section 11-1302(B)(4).

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OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

	Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.	KAREN SWANSON	205 LAVERNE	100
2.			
3.			

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 205 LAVERNE (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

	Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1.	KAREN SWANSON	205 LAVERNE	100
2.			
3.			

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

	Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1.	NA		
2.			
3.			

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

2/25/11      KAREN SWANSON      Karen Swanson  
 Date                      Printed Name                      Signature

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**PART B** (SECTIONS 11-1302(C) and 11-1304)

**APPLICANT MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:**  
(Please use additional sheets where necessary.)

1. Please provide the following details of the proposed porch:
  - a. Porch projection from front building wall to deck edge 8 FT
  - b. Length of building wall where porch is to be built 18 FT
  - c. Length of porch deck 18'
  - d. Depth of overhang ROOF OVERHANGS PORCH DECK 8 INCHES
  - e. Distance of furthest projecting porch element from the front property line 18.1' TO PORCH DECK, 18' TO PORCH ROOF OVERHANG, ROOF
  - f. Overall height of porch from finished or existing grade 13'-8" 12'-7" TO MID POINT
  - g. Height of porch deck from finished or existing grade 3'-0" TO AVG GD
  
2. Explain the conditions of the subject property which prevent locating the proposed porch in compliance with the zoning ordinance.
 

EXISTING HOUSE WAS BUILT WITH A 7 FOOT SETBACK. TO TERMINATE PORCH 10 FEET FROM PROPERTY LINE WOULD LOOK ODD, AND WOULD REQUIRE PORCH RAILINGS TO RETURN INTO EXISTING WINDOWS.
  
3. Explain if the proposed porch will be detrimental to the adjacent properties or the neighborhood in general.
 

MOST HOMES ON THE BLOCK HAVE FRONT PORCHES AND THE PROPOSED PORCH WILL NOT BE DETRIMENTAL. THE OWNER WILL TIE THE NEW ROOF DRAIN TO AN EXISTING UNDERGROUND DRAIN LINE
  
4. Explain how the proposed porch will affect the light and air to any adjacent property.
 

THE PROPOSED PORCH, BECAUSE IT IS ON THE NORTH ELEVATION, WILL NOT AFFECT THE LIGHT AND AIR TO ADJACENT PROPERTIES
  
5. Has the applicant shown the plans to the most affected property owners? Have any neighbors objected to the proposed special exception, or have any neighbors written letters of support? If so, please attach the letter.
 

ALL OWNERS RESIDING IN THEIR HOUSES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH PLANS AND RENDERING. THERE HAVE BEEN NO OBJECTIONS AND THERE HAS BEEN ONLY POSITIVE FEEDBACK. LETTERS OF SUPPORT ARE ATTACHED

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6. The applicant shall demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the proposed porch is compatible with the existing building architecture, neighboring properties and neighborhood character. Provide information such as style and number of similar porches in the immediate neighborhood (provide dimensions and roof height as well as distance from curblin). Photographs should be included as part of the evidence supporting this request.

THE HOUSES AT 200, 204, 206, 208, 210, 203, 207, 209 AND 211  
ALL HAVE FULL PORCHES TYPICAL OF THE PERIOD IN WHICH  
THEY WERE BUILT (1920S). THE HOUSE AT 213 HAS A SMALL  
PORCH. LATER INFLU HOUSES AT 202, 205 AND 201  
ARE DUPLEXES AND DO NOT HAVE FRONT PORCHES.

THE INSTALLATION OF PORCHES ON THESE NEWER STRUCTURES  
WOULD BENEFIT THE STREET BY BRINGING THE NEWER  
HOMES FRONT ELEVATIONS IN LINE WITH THE PREVAILING  
AVERAGE SETBACK AS SHOWN IN THE SPECIAL EXCEPTION  
PAPERWORK.

THE PROPOSED PORCH IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER  
OF OTHER PORCHES ON THE STREET. THE PORCH WILL  
IMPROVE THE BUILDINGS AESTHETIC APPEAL AND  
ENCOURAGE INCREASED SOCIAL INTERACTION BETWEEN  
NEIGHBORS.

THE 300 BLOCK OF LAVERNE HAS SEVERAL DUPLEXES  
WITH ATTACHED FRONT PORCHES. THE ADDITION OF A PORCH  
TO 205 LAVERNE WOULD NOT BE OUT OF CHARACTER  
WITH THE OTHER DUPLEXES ON THE STREET (SEE  
ATTACHED PHOTOGRAPHS)



BZA 2011-0002



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING  
 FLOOR AREA RATIO AND OPEN SPACE CALCULATIONS FOR  
 SINGLE AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL OUTSIDE HISTORIC DISTRICTS

**A. Property Information**

A1. Street Address 205 LAVERNE AVE Zone R 2-5  
 A2. 3000 x .45 = 1350  
 Total Lot Area Floor Area Ratio Allowed by Zone Maximum Allowable Floor Area

**B. Existing Gross Floor Area**

Existing Gross Area*		Allowable Exclusions	
Basement	648	Basement**	648
First Floor	648	Stairways**	104.5
Second Floor	648	Mechanical**	
Third Floor	648	Porch/Garage**	
Porches/Other patio	105	Attic less than 5**	472.5
<b>Total Gross*</b>	<b>2697</b>	<b>Total Exclusions</b>	<b>1225</b>

B1. Existing Gross Floor Area \*  
2697 Sq. Ft.  
 B2. Allowable Floor Exclusions\*\*  
1225 Sq. Ft.  
 B3. Existing Floor Area minus Exclusions  
1472 Sq. Ft.  
 (subtract B2 from B1)

**C. Proposed Gross Floor Area (does not include existing area)**

Proposed Gross Area*		Allowable Exclusions	
Basement		Basement**	
First Floor		Stairways**	
Second Floor		Mechanical**	
Third Floor		Porch/Garage**	144
Porches/Other	144	Attic less than 5**	
<b>Total Gross*</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>Total Exclusions</b>	<b>144</b>

C1. Proposed Gross Floor Area \*  
144 Sq. Ft.  
 C2. Allowable Floor Exclusions\*\*  
144 Sq. Ft.  
 C3. Proposed Floor Area minus Exclusions  
0 Sq. Ft.  
 (subtract C2 from C1)

**D. Existing + Proposed Floor Area**

D1. Total Floor Area (add B3 and C3) 1472 Sq. Ft.  
 D2. Total Floor Area Allowed by Zone (A2) 1350 Sq. Ft.

\*Gross floor area for residential single and two-family dwellings in the R-20, R-12, R-8, R-5, R-2-5, RB and RA zones (not including properties located within a Historic District) is the sum of all areas under roof of a lot, measured from exterior walls.

\*\* Refer to the zoning ordinance (Section 2-145(A)) and consult with zoning staff for information regarding allowable exclusions.

If taking exclusions other than basements, floor plans with excluded areas illustrated must be submitted for review. Sections may also be required for some exclusions.

MAR 3 2011

**E. Open Space Calculations Required in RA & RB zones**

Existing Open Space	
Required Open Space	
Proposed Open Space	

The undersigned hereby certifies and attests that, to the best of his/her knowledge, the above computations are true and correct.

Signature: Beverly Thomas Date: 3/2/11

**BZA CASE #2011-0002**

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals

City of Alexandria

To whom it may concern,

I have reviewed the rendering and plans for adding an 8'x18' porch to the front of 205 LaVerne Avenue, Alexandria, VA. Front porches are an important part of our street in terms of social connection and aesthetic appeal. Many of the neighbors on the street use the front porch for reading, socializing and entertainment and often just as a place to sit and watch people walk by. The porch for the Swanson house would be a nice improvement.

I support the addition and feel that an exception should be made to permit a 3 foot encroachment into the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Patterson



Kyle Patterson

211 Laverne Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22305



205 LAVERNE 2-11

**BZA CASE #2011-0002**

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals

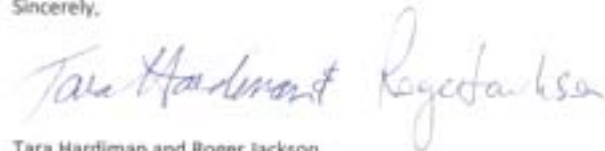
City of Alexandria

To whom it may concern,

I have reviewed the rendering and plans for adding an 8'x18' porch to the front of 205 LaVerne Avenue, Alexandria, VA. Front porches are an important part of our street in terms of social connection and aesthetic appeal. Many of the neighbors on the street use the front porch for reading, socializing and entertainment and often just as a place to sit and watch people walk by. The porch for the Swanson house would be a nice improvement.

I support the addition and feel that an exception should be made to permit a 3 foot encroachment into the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



Tara Hardiman and Roger Jackson

207 Laverne Ave.

205 LAVERNE 2-10

**BZA CASE #2011-0002**

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals  
City of Alexandria

To whom it may concern,

I have reviewed the rendering and plans for adding an 8"x18" porch to the front of 205 LaVerne Avenue, Alexandria, VA. Front porches are an important part of our street in terms of social connection and aesthetic appeal. Many of the neighbors on the street use the front porch for reading, socializing and entertainment and often just as a place to sit and watch people walk by. The porch for the Swanson house would be a nice improvement.

I support the addition and feel that an exception should be made to permit a 3 foot encroachment into the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



Veronica Burgess

205A LaVerne Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22305

205 LAVERNE 2-8

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals  
City of Alexandria

To whom it may concern,

We are the neighbors to the west of 205 La Verne Avenue, Alexandria, VA. We have examined the plans for an addition of an 8'x18' porch to the front of Karen Swanson's house and approve of this construction. Front porches are in keeping with the atmosphere of our neighborhood where many of us use our front porches to relax or socialize with each other. The porch for 205 La Verne would fit in with the esthetics of the surrounding houses.

I support the request of an exception to allow a 3 foot encroachment into the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



Anna Vascott and Douglas Bryant

203 LaVerne Ave. Alexandria, VA 22305

205 LAVERNE 2-7

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals  
City of Alexandria

To Whom It May Concern,

We support Karen Swanson's application for an exception to permit a 3 foot encroachment into her side yard, so that she might build a porch running the full length of her building.

Ours is a "front porch street", with many of us spending pleasant hours enjoying the outdoor comfort of our porches' additional living space, while staying in happy connection with our neighborhood. It would blend the property at 205 into this "porch community" in such a nice way if the porch could be built as her plans recommend.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Susan S. Mader

  
Nic Colling

208 Laverne Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22305

205 LAVERNE 2-6

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals  
City of Alexandria

To whom it may concern,

I have reviewed the rendering and plans for adding an 8' x 18' porch to the front of 205 LaVerne Avenue, Alexandria, VA. Front porches are an important part of our street in terms of social connection and aesthetic appeal. Many of the neighbors on the street use the front porch for reading, socializing and entertainment and often just as a place to sit and watch people walk by. The porch for the Swanson house would be a nice improvement.

I support the addition and feel that an exception should be made to permit a 3 foot encroachment into the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



James and Emma Cech  
206 Laverne Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 2230

205 LAVERNE 2-5

February 26, 2011

Board of Zoning Appeals  
City of Alexandria

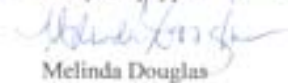
To whom it may concern:

I have reviewed the rendering and plans for adding an 8' x18' porch to the front of 205 Laverne Avenue, Alexandria. Front porches are an important part of our street because they enhance the aesthetic appeal and encourage social interaction amongst neighbors. Many neighbors use their front porches for reading, relaxing and socializing. The porch for the Swanson home would be a nice improvement. We support the addition and feel an exception should be made to permit a three foot encroachment to the required side yard so that the porch can run the full length of the building.

Sincerely,



Barry Culpepper



Melinda Douglas

204 Laverne Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22305

205 LAVERNE 2-4



**City of Alexandria, Virginia**

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: April 14, 2011

TO: Chairman and Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals

FROM: Peter Leiberg  
Zoning Manager

RE: BZA Case#2011-0002  
Side Yard Setback Relief for Open Covered Porch Facing the West Side Property Line  
205 La Verne Avenue

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The applicant is requesting to build an open covered porch located in the required west side yard. The new porch complies with the prevailing front setback facing La Verne Avenue.

This is an unusual case in that it does not fit neatly within either a variance or special exception. At the time this application was received as a request for special exception, staff determined that this case more properly was considered as a variance. Upon closer review of the special exception language, the staff believes the case does in fact qualify for as a special exception.

In this case the proposed covered open porch will be constructed within the west side yard setback in line with the home's noncomplying west wall, located 7.00 feet from the side property line instead of the 10.00 feet required for a semi-detached dwelling facing a side property line.

The new front porch meets the requirements of section 11-1302(C) of the zoning ordinance which requires that the applicant demonstrate "clear and convincing evidence that the proposed porch is compatible with the existing building architecture, neighboring properties and neighborhood character, and will comply with the following requirements." The applicant's proposed porch complies with the four requirements and can be supported.

- (a) No portion of the porch shall extend beyond the end of the walls of the front building façade, 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.

**BZA CASE #2011-0002**

- (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 not be permitted.

Staff has discussed with the applicant the fact that staff has converted this case from a variance to a special exception request, and staff will revise its records accordingly. As to the substance of the request, recommends that the Board approve this application as a special exception because the project meets the requirements of section 11-1302(C) of the zoning ordinance. The criteria for a variance should not be applied in this instance.

cc: Barbara Ross, Deputy Director  
Stephen Milone, Division Chief