

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT



Application No. 12908 of International Associates, pursuant to Sub-section 8207.2 and Paragraph 8207.11 of the Zoning Regulations, respectively, for a special exception under Paragraph 4101.44 to allow an addition to a hotel and for a variance from the rear yard requirements (Sub-section 4303.1) in the SP-2 District at the premises No. 10 Thomas Circle, N.W., (Square 245, Lot 833).

HEARING DATE: April 11, 1979

DECISION DATE: May 2, 1979

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The subject premises is located on the northeast side of Thomas Circle between M Street and Vermont Avenue, N.W. It is in an SP-2 District and is known as number 10 Thomas Circle, N.W.

2. The subject lot has an area of 78,526 square feet and is roughly triangular in shape. It is bounded by a sixteen foot wide public alley on the northeast side. The site is improved with a 344 room hotel known as The International Inn. The hotel occupies more than one third of square 245.

3. To the north of the subject premises there are high rise apartments. To the east, along M Street there are row dwellings and a few commercial establishments. Directly across Vermont Avenue to the northwest, there is the Luther Memorial Church. On the southeast side of Thomas Circle, there is the Holiday Inn and small retail businesses. There are other hotels in the nearby vicinity of the subject site.

4. The subject premises was constructed in 1961. At the time of construction, the FAR was less than the maximum permitted FAR in an SP District. By Zoning Commission Order number 235, effective October 5, 1979, the FAR applicable to hotels was reduced from 6.0 to 3.5 in an SP-2 District. With the proposed addition, the hotel will still have an FAR less than the maximum permitted in the SP-2 District.

5. The main portion of the existing hotel is ninety feet in height. The main portion of the addition has a building height of eighty nine feet, eleven inches which is slightly less than the ninety feet maximum allowed in the SP-2 District.

6. The addition is consistent in both height and FAR with the existing hotel and is in harmony with the majority of existing buildings and uses in the area.

7. The rear yard of the subject premise is currently used for surface parking for approximately twenty vehicles.

8. There is an underground garage of two levels which provides 191 parking spaces. The hotel with the addition will require 130 parking spaces. There will be sixty-one parking spaces in excess of the amount required by the Zoning Regulations.

9. The applicant, in part, is requesting a special exception to allow an addition to an existing hotel. This addition will provide another 175 new hotel rooms, bringing the total number of rooms to 519. There will also be 15,040 square feet of space for convention and miscellaneous support facilities on the ground floor.

10. The applicant is also requesting a variance from the rear yard requirements.

11. The Zoning Regulations require 18.54 feet of rear yard. The proposed addition will extend to the sixteen foot alley and utilize all of the remaining rear yard. The existing surface parking lot will be eliminated. The applicant therefore requires a variance of 18.54 feet.

12. The triangular shape of the site and the location of the existing improvements on the site make it impossible to provide this addition without a rear yard variance.

13. If the rear yard is not used for the addition approximately thirty rooms plus the end rooms which are to be used as "super-suites" for business or convention parties could not be constructed.

14. Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2C made no recommendation on the application.

15. There was no opposition to the application.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

Based on the findings of fact the Board concludes that the applicant is seeking a special exception and a variance. The Board also concludes that the application is in full compliance with the Zoning Regulation's under Paragraph 4101.44 in that the height, bulk and design are in harmony with existing uses and structures on neighboring property; that more than adequate parking spaces are provided, thus eliminating dangerous or other objectionable traffic conditions. The Board further concludes that the proposed use will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and map and will not tend to affect adversely the use of neighboring properties.

As to the requested variance, the Board concludes that the relief sought is an area variance, the granting of which requires a showing of a practical difficulty inherent in the property itself. The Board notes that there is no other available space to be built upon and concludes that the practical difficulty lies in the size of the lot thus restricting the applicant from providing the required rear yard.

The Board further concludes that the variance can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantially impairing the intent, purpose and integrity of the zone plan. Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the application be GRANTED in its entirety.

VOTE: 3-0 (Charles R. Norris, William F. McIntosh, Chloethiel Woodard Smith to grant; Leonard L. McCants not voting, not having heard the case).

BY ORDER OF THE D.C. BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

ATTESTED BY: _____


STEVEN E. SHER
Executive Director

FINAL DATE OF ORDER: 9 JUL 1979

THIS ORDER OF THE BOARD IS VALID FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDER, UNLESS WITHIN SUCH PERIOD AN APPLICATION FOR A BUILDING PERMIT OR CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY IS FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES, INVESTIGATIONS AND INSPECTIONS.

UNDER SUB-SECTION 8204.3 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS "NO DECISION OR ORDER OF THE BOARD SHALL TAKE EFFECT UNTIL TEN DAYS AFTER HAVING BECOME FINAL PURSUANT TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE BEFORE THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT."