



President Lincoln at Fort Stevens, 1864

ALLIANCE TO PRESERVE THE CIVIL WAR DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON

1140 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1210

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-296-7999

Fax: 202-265-5048

Dec. 11, 2009

OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tersh Boasberg, President

Loretta Neumann, Vice President

Gary Thompson, Treasurer

Eugene Dewitt Kinlaw, Secretary

J. Peter Byrne

B. Franklin Cooling

Jonathan Fleming

Ellen M. McCarthy

John G. Parsons

Mr. Marc B. Loud, Chairman
D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St. N.W. Suite 200 South
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Emory United Methodist Beacon of Light Church, BZA # 17964
6100-20 Georgia Ave. N.W.

SUPPLEMENT I

Dear Chairman Loud and Honorable Board Members,

This is the First Supplement to our letter to you of Dec.2, 2009. This letter will deal with some of the more troublesome technical aspects of the project.

I. Would this case be better as a PUD before the Zoning Commission?

Even the staff report notes (at p.2), "Normally, a project requiring such extensive relief would be expected to be reviewed by the Zoning Commission as a Planned Unit Development (PUD)". We submit that the PUD process is much more flexible than the BZA process because the Zoning Commission can require set backs, screening, varying height configurations, etc. of the kind requested by many of those including the Alliance and the National Park Service. We submit that the BZA should consider Zoning Commission review of this project as a PUD.

II. Would it be possible to ask the Applicant for a model showing just how and where the western wall of the project would restrict the views from Ft. Stevens?

It is virtually impossible to tell from the materials submitted by the Applicant just how the 63 foot mass of the project, especially along the western side of the Church's property would obscure the views from the Fort to the east, northeast, and southeast. This is a critical. For without

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Hon. Michael A. Andrews

Edwin C. Bearss

Ernest B. "Pat" Furgurson

Eric Gilliland

Frances H. Kennedy

Frank D. Milligan

Richard Moe

Douglas L. Wilson

RECEIVED
D.C. OFFICE OF ZONING
2009 DEC 14 PM 12:22

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 17964

EXHIBIT NO. 41

these views the visitor to Ft. Stevens can not locate the Confederate route of advance along the 7th St. Pike (now, -Georgia Ave) nor understand where the Union and Confederate lines took hold, nor envision the important battle which drove the Confederates on both sides of Georgia Ave. north, causing their retreat from Washington.

III. A variance cannot be granted where to do so would cause “substantial detriment to the public good” and substantially impair “the intent, purpose and integrity of the zone plan as embodied in the Zoning Regulations and Map” 11 D.C.M.R 3103.3.

The BZA has received many letters from citizen organizations, Civil War groups, local citizens, national organizations, the National Park Service, and others decrying the impact on Ft. Stevens of the proposed project. Indeed, it would seem that, on balance, the “public good” would lie with those who argue that views from this important local and national landmark should be preserved for the good of all. That is not to say that no development should take place on the Church’s property, but only that such development should respect the important viewsheds from the Fort for the education and enjoyment of all.

Further, the correspondence with the BZA has highlighted the Office of Planning’s own directives in the Capital Space Initiative and, especially, in the Comprehensive Plan to “protect and enhance the Fort Circle Parks” and to “[P]revent District and Federal actions that would harm ..the Fort Circle Parks and strongly support actions that would improve their maintenance, connectivity, visibility. .” (Ch 8, Policy Pros-3.1 5)

In a similar regard, the correspondence from the National Park Service refers the BZA to Chapter 22 of the Revised Comprehensive Plan cited at 10 D C M.R. which identifies this property as being within the Rock Creek East planning area. The NPS letter argues strongly that it “disagrees with the Applicant and does not feel that the variances can be granted without having an adverse impact on the intent, purpose, and integrity of the zone plan, particularly as it related to historic resources” (p.2)

IV. The large variances requested would enable the Applicant to tower over its Fort Stevens neighbor.

The Church rests on the original berm of Ft. Stevens which is approximately 14 feet higher than the front of the Church property along Georgia Ave. Instead of using its property in the manner intended by the Zoning Regulations (measuring the allowed 50 foot height from the front of its property), it seeks a variance to use its property as a pedestal from which to measure the addition’s 50 feet of “allowable” height. However, because the Church property slopes down toward the west, the new

addition's rear (western) "wall" could tower as much as 63 feet over the beleaguered Fort. Thus, with the monolithic rear of its project dwarfing the Fort (and including two 30 ft deep loading berths), this project seriously compromises the visitor experience at Ft. Stevens.

With the utmost respect for the Church and its right to develop its property, we respectfully ask the BZA not to grant the additional height to 63 feet along the western portion of the Church's property, set that portion back, and screen the mass in an appropriately manner from Ft Stevens

Respectfully submitted,



Tersh Boasberg, President