

Lovell Walls
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Washington, DC 20019
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BOARD OF ZONING
2011 MAY -5 AM 10:43

April 30, 2011

Jamison L. Weinbaum, Director, Office of Zoning
Government of the District of Columbia
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 200/210-S
Washington, DC 20001

Reference: Application Number 18205; Application of M. Sikder

Dear Mr. Weinbaum,

This letter is submitted to express my **strong objection** to the application of M. Sikder in the above application submitted for variances to build a one-family detached dwelling, at premises 4209 Grant Street, NE (Square 5092, Lot 31).

This letter is in response to the letter received by my mother from your office. My mother, Gwendolyn B. Walls owns 4213 Grant Street, NE, the property next to the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot. Our family has owned the 4213 Grant Street, NE property since my childhood with my grandparents, the late John W and Ada Bailey, being the original owners, purchasing the home & property in the mid-1940s. This house has been my second home since childhood and I have resided here since the mid-1990s.

The attached picture (Exhibit 1) from a Google Maps (from mid-October 2010) shows the location of 4209 Grant Street, NE (the property for the referenced application) in proximity to adjacent properties on the 4200 block of Grant Street, NE. 4209 Grant Street, NE is the vacant lot in the center of the picture with the trees on the left and right-hand side (beside the alley), with the dark gray/tan vehicle in front of the lot. My house, 4213 Grant Street, NE, is to the left; the yellow house with the gold/yellow truck in the driveway. To the immediate right of the 4209 Grant Street, NE property is the alley, and on the opposite side of the alley is 4205 Grant Street, NE.

M. Sikder never approached neither my mother (nor I, as the occupant of this property), nor the owner of 4205 Grant Street, NE to explain how a one-family detached dwelling could be properly built (or more appropriate, squeezed into) onto the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot. The attached Google Map picture visually displays it is impossible to build a one-family dwelling on this property regardless of the variances requested/sought for by M. Sikder without affecting the 4213 and 4205 Grant Street, NE properties. From speaking to my mother, seasoned (older) family members who stayed here with my

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grandparents (John Bailey passed in January 1972 and Ada Bailey passed in January 1985) and other family members, and my recollections visiting here as a child/teenage & living here more than 15 years, the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot has always been vacant with multiple owners, with liens placed on the property by the District of Columbia government as recent as 2007-2008. The District of Columbia government incorrectly identified my mother and I as the property owners during that period, having a sign on the lot listing us as the property owners and having at least one employee from the District of Columbia, Office of Tax and Revenue knocking on our door asking whether we owned the lot; my wife showed the employee our tax assessment for 4213 Grant Street, NE and the sign was subsequently taken down. My grandfather was approached multiple times by the various owners of the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot with (verbal) offers to purchase the lot. He turned down each offer because (based on my discussions with my mother; I did not ask my grandfather about the lot as a 9-10 year old child) he did not have any use for the lot and because the lot was used as an illegal dumping area by residents of the apartment buildings behind the lot and sometimes others traveling through the alley (The illegal dumping activity continues to occur on the lot to this day by the same parties).

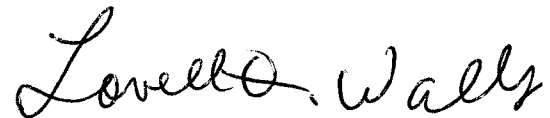
Apparently, the applicant (M Sikder) is anticipating approval of the application for the multiple variances/exemptions to construct the single-family dwelling on the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot because on Thursday morning April 21, 2011 (between 6:45 and 7:15 am) a tree cutting company (hired by the applicant) began removing trees from the lot. Two trucks, one a white truck with a hydraulic lift and the other a green truck identifying the name of the company (**Jacks Tree Service. Phone Number: (202) 277-1750; DOT 943415**). The ANC Commissioner for my neighborhood (Willette Seaward) drove by the lot on her way to work at 7:35 am as one of the workers asked me to move the truck (and minivan) from my driveway. She asked the worker if they had a license to remove trees from the lot. She got no response from the worker, only some inaudible mumbling as the worker walked away. Both of us proceeded to call Ms. Atkins from the Mayor's Office to report on the potential illegal tree removal activity on the lot. Exhibit 2 is a picture that I took from across the street from the 4209 Grant Street, NE lot as Ms. Seaward was calling Ms Atkins office from her car.

Our Councilwoman (Yvette Alexander) was also contacted and Mr. Muslim, the Director of Constituent Services from her office was at the lot at 7:50 am. As he began to ask for additional licensing information, four of the six workers at the lot quickly fled. Directly afterwards, one of the remaining workers and Mr. Muslim engaged in a heated discussion before the arrival of the Metropolitan Police Department and District Department of Transportation (DDOT), Urban Forestry Administration. Later that morning Mr. Muslim and a representative from DDOT, Urban Forestry Administration reported that the tree removal was in violation of the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2002, which requires community notification prior to removal of trees on public and private land and a special DDOT permit; they also stated that the four workers who fled were illegal immigrants. As of today, there has not been any additional tree removal on the lot, however the debris from the tree removal activities of Thursday April 21, 2011 remain (Exhibits 3 & 4). If I had not been working from home on Thursday April 21, 2011 all of the trees (many of them still healthy) probably would have been removed and my home potentially could have been damaged from the (illegal) tree removal operations on the lot.

In closing, the lot owned by M. Sikder is too narrow to build a single-family dwelling; it seeks too many variances/exemptions to build a dwelling in keeping with the designs of the homes of the Deanwood area, notably the potential of the proposed dwelling facing 4205 Grant Street, NE; to my understanding and in my (brief) research of the Deanwood area, there are no other dwellings that have their front entrance door(s) facing an alley.

Additionally, for your Board to approve this application would be a slap in the face of both my family (**where I now live with my wife and sons, four generations have lived in this home going back to the mid-1940s**), and the residents of the Deanwood community. The actions of the owner of the 4209 Grant Street, NE (Square 5092, Lot 31) with the illegal tree removal activities on Thursday April 21, 2011 (either knowing or not knowing the laws of the District of Columbia) clearly demonstrates the refusal to follow the laws of the District of Columbia and respect quality of life of the citizens of my community, many of whom were here before the purchase of the lot by the applicant. For the reasons stated in this and the previous paragraphs, I formally state my strong opposition to Application Number 18205 (Application of M. Sikder) and respectfully urge that the application to construct a single-family dwelling be denied.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lovell Walls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'L'.

Lovell Walls

Exhibit 1: 4209 Grant Street, Northeast
Square 5092, Lot 31

Google maps

Save trees. Go green!
Download Google Maps on your
phone at google.com/gmm



2011/10/05 AM 10:47



2011 MAY -5 AM 10:18

Exhibit 3. Photo of 4209 Grant Street, NE Square 5092, Lot 31. Taken 4/23/2011 at 12:21:26 PM



Exhibit 2, Picture of 4209 Grant Street, NE, Square 5092, Lot 31. 4/21/2011 7:38:59 AM



Exhibit 4: Photo of 4209 Grant Street, NE Square 5092, Lot 31. Taken 4/23/2011 at 12:23:02 PM