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**To:** The Office of Zoning  
Board of Zoning Adjustment  
Government of the District of Columbia  
Suite 210 South  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington DC 20001

**From:** Fowler Architects  
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**Date:** January 6, 2012

**Subject :** BZA Application for 1414 A Street NE #18290  
(Square 1056, Lot 28)

Dear Board of Zoning Adjustment,

At the conclusion of the hearing on December 20, 2011, in the above referenced case, the Board of Zoning Adjustment left the record open for more information regarding the impact of the addition on the streetscape and neighboring properties. This letter responds to those issues:

**Plan changes:**

The application of Steven and Elizabeth Allenbach has been revised to reflect the following changes:

It was determined that the front of the house site 2' to the north of the front property line. The plans have been adjusted to reflect the correct position of the house. The size of the proposed rear deck has been decreased in order to stay within the 70% coverage maximum. The nature of the relief requested has not changed.

The third floor addition overall length has been reduced by 9'-6". In response to feedback from the Board, the front wall of the addition has been set back 3' from the existing front wall. This will help to reduce the visual impact of the addition on the streetscape. See Exhibit A in this filing for a three dimensional perspective view of the proposed addition. See Sheet A-9 in the revised plans that show a larger elevation view.

In response to the concerns of Bonnie Holod of 1409 Ames Street NE, the rear wall of the third floor addition has been set back 6'-6". As a result the third floor addition rests atop the original brick structure, and the resulting rear addition is only two stories.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT  
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18290

EXHIBIT NO. 34

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.18290  
EXHIBIT NO.34

## Responses to neighbor concerns:

### 1409 Ames Street NE:

Ms. Holod has seen the revised plans and indicated to us that she would be submitting a letter of support for the rear two story addition. She created her own 3D sun studies that indicated that the reduced height of the rear addition would significantly decrease the amount of shadows cast on the rear of her property.

### 1433 Ames Place NE:

Ms. Sharon Davis listed several concerns.

1. *The proposed third floor will affect the historical nature of the block.* In response we would state that the addition has been designed to blend in with the existing house, using brick to match. The existing cornice line, which is a prominent feature on the block, will remain intact. The proposed revised plans show the addition set back three feet from the front façade, further reducing the impact on the streetscape.
2. *The extended construction will create a rodent infestation.* The rodent problem on this block is a much broader issue and residents on the block in the past have put in requests to the city to mitigate. The owners will continue to work with the city to eradicate rodent issues.
3. *The dust and chemicals will drain into the alley and eventually flow into the Anacostia River.* The project will be subject to DCRA's requirements regarding lead paint safety and control of runoff and sediment.
4. *Construction noise.* The contractors will adhere to the DCRA regulations regarding allowed working hours. No work will be performed outside of those time limits. The house at 1433 Ames place is across the alley and eleven houses to the east of 1414 A Street NE. This distance of approximately 220 feet means that Ms. Davis will not likely be disturbed by construction noise.

### 1420 A Street NE:

Ms. Valerie Mills listed several concerns.

1. *The proposed third floor will affect the historical nature of the block.* In response we would state that the addition has been designed to blend in with the existing house, using brick to match. The existing cornice line, which is a prominent feature on the block, will remain intact. The proposed revised plans show the addition set back three feet from the front façade, further reducing the impact on the streetscape.
2. *Construction noise.* The contractors will adhere to the DCRA regulations regarding allowed working hours. No work will be performed outside of those time limits. The house at 1420 A Street NE is three houses to the east of 1414 A Street NE, approximately 40' away.
3. *The construction will create noise, dust, and loud sounds emitting from machinery.* The project will be subject to DCRA's requirements regarding lead paint safety and control of runoff and sediment. There will be minimal use of heavy machinery for a project of this type.
4. *The extended construction will create a rodent infestation.* The owners are sensitive to this issue and plan to contract the services of a pest management company to mitigate pests during construction. The rodent problem on this block is a much broader issue and residents on the block in the past have put in requests to the city to mitigate.

5. *The proposed third floor will affect the aesthetic and historic preservation of the block. See our response from item #1.*
6. *Real estate agents have stated that the construction could influence the resale value of her home. While there may be inconvenience during the construction process if Ms. Mills were to try to sell her house, the resulting project can only increase the values of the properties on the block. Additionally, the house at 1420 A Street NE is forty feet away from the proposed project, thus there will be no impact on the light or air available to her property.*

**Additional Information:**

The Board requested that we provide information regarding the ability of neighbors to add third floor additions to their houses. Based on a survey of the alley we concluded that of the 16 houses on A Street NE on the north side of the street, 9 of them would be able to construct a third floor addition by-right. The owners of 1414 A Street NE would also be able to build a third floor addition by-right in conjunction with the removal of the existing garage. Without the garage the lot coverage is below 60%

Exhibit B in this filing includes photographs of the Car Barn, a multi unit condominium that sits on an entire block between East Capitol Street and A Street NE, and 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets NE. It is a streetcar depot building that was originally built in 1896 and converted into condominiums in 2004. It is a three story structure with English basement.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Fowler

Exhibit A- 3D Perspective views from A Street NE

Image #1- Existing view of A Street looking east. 1414 A is the third house from the left.



Image #2- 3D perspective view of A Street looking east

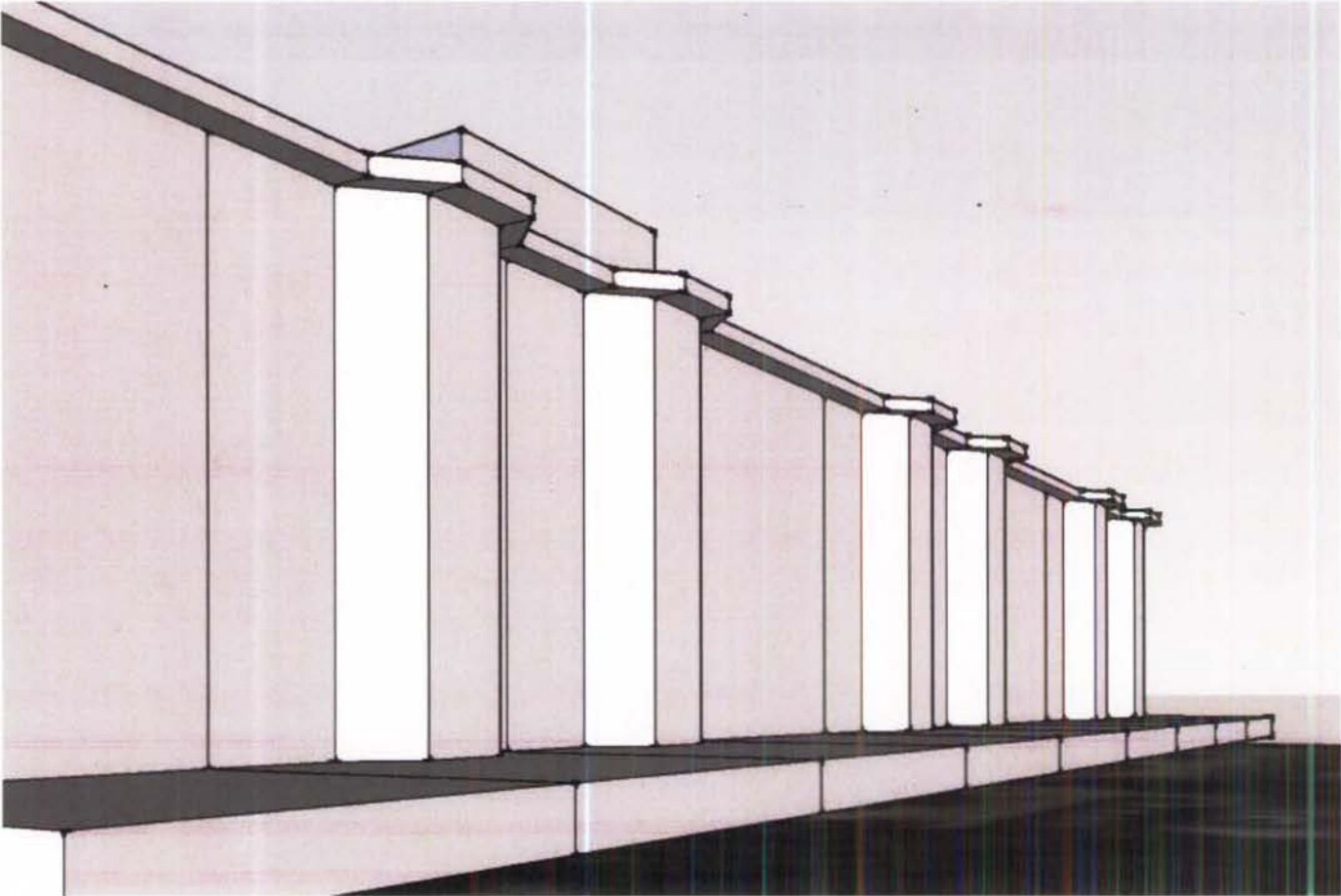


Exhibit B- Images of the Car Barn Condominium

Image #1



Image #2

