

1610 Potomac Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20003
May 14, 2012

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Honorable Members of the DC BZA
DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

**Re: BZA Application No. 18352; Request
for Variance for Frager's Hardware**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

For the past five years I have been an employee at Frager's Hardware. For the seventeen years prior to that time I was a loyal and happy customer. Those circumstances have little to do with why I am writing this letter.

Just two years ago Frager's Hardware happily observed 90 years of service to the Capitol Hill community; to the greater-Washington DC-metropolitan area; and -- to a lesser extent -- to innumerable delighted visitors from all parts of the Country. That anniversary was an occasion of celebration, of nostalgia, of thankfulness, and of optimism for a promising future. No one could then have guessed that Frager's would today find itself in need of a variance from the D.C. Board of Zoning Adjustment to continue to use its property in the way it has historically.

The reason we need the variance is because in 1958 the zone boundary line was drawn in such a way that Frager's property was divided into two different zone districts: Commercial (C-2-A) at the front and Residential (R-4) at the rear.

It is certainly true that Frager's has become a less pastoral operation than it was at its founding in 1920 when there were likely still more horses than cars on the streets of Washington. This is a very different time; key to our current operation is our need for the use of a fork-lift to transport pallets of inventory. We have for years stored and displayed merchandise in the R-4 portion of our property so we might best meet the needs, wishes, and expectations the community we serve. A fork-lift makes the storage and removal of these materials possible. A variance approval from the BZA could make it possible to again use our residentially zoned land as we have used it in the past.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO.

18352

EXHIBIT NO.

60

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 18352
EXHIBIT NO. 60

Not least of our concerns now is the future welfare of our valued employees (a total of 65 full- and part-time workers at this time). Should Frager's not receive the relief it needs from the BZA there exists the real possibility that its sales will be adversely affected, ultimately leading to a necessary reduction of its work-force.

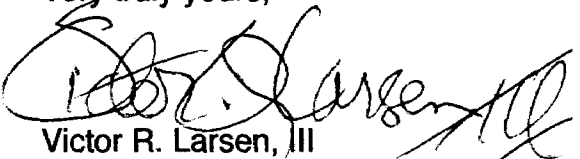
A community is comprised of its residents, its visitors, its retail establishments, and its institutions (schools, houses-of-worship, hospitals, museums, sports facilities, and the like) -- all operating and mingling under the protective authority of its municipal government. Frager's is unique, perhaps, in being both a retail establishment and an "institution," having provided for 92 years friendly advice, professional service, and quality materials for the ever-evolving Capitol Hill community and the City-at-Large.

We want Frager's to endure, and to improve, well into the future. We need the the BZA to understand why we feel that certain aspects of Frager's operation are "essential," not "discretionary" (I am speaking of the use of the 11th Street private easement alley for the passage of certain materials essential to the functioning of the store), even though the approval of such may step outside the strict requirements of the currently existing Zoning Map / Regulations. We at Frager's are not scoff-laws and we are not bad neighbors. On the contrary, the magnitude of the up-swelling of support we have been the beneficiaries of (from our customers, friends, and neighbors) attests to the degree of support and good-feeling we enjoy from our community.

Of course, we now feel burdened and constrained by our recognition of Square 994's zone district boundary lines, the reasoned placement of which, frankly, eludes our understanding. In all candor I must state that Frager's today had no notion of the placement of the zone line that is fueling this controversy. Certainly it would be presumptuous of me to suggest that these lines were less-than-optimally drawn; yet, were you to ask me to, I could suggest some alternatives that might today -- possibly -- make a lot more sense.

I respectfully request that the BZA endorse this request for variance approval (including the customary use of the 11th street private alley for materials passage by motorized vehicles) and that it allow Frager's to conduct its business on its R-4 zoned property as it has done historically, not primarily for its own self-interest, but in the name of common sense and for the best consideration of the safety (the alternatives are not nearly as safe) of the community it serves. Thank you for the time you have taken to give serious thought to this matter.

Very truly yours,



Victor R. Larsen, III