

November 24, 2012

LETTER OF RECORD

Submitted by: Lukas Kohler  
3600 11<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20010

Submitted to: Board of Zoning Adjustment  
Office of Zoning

Regarding case: 18448  
Address: 1221 Otis Pl NW

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To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to submit this letter of record to the BZA *against* the application to convert the property to a four unit condo that would include adding an additional story to the building. I live down the street at the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Otis Place and have concerns about the proposed zoning variance for two reasons: 1) maintaining a density that does not burden the neighborhood nor public infrastructure, and 2) maintaining the existing cohesion of the historic two-level facades (see picture below).

The applicant does not appear to meet the burden of proof that would justify additional burden on the neighborhood:

- Exceptional Situation or Condition: The variance of use for a Boarding House does not equate to an exceptional condition, but is rather a vestige of a previous age. Nor can a Boarding House be construed as equivalent to a condominium complex. The current plans include one bathroom per floor and no kitchens; the proposed floor plan calls for eight bathrooms and four kitchens. This would pose an additional, substantial burden on the neighborhood's combined sewer system. Furthermore, parking is already difficult which a four two bed-room units would exacerbate. The lot size and shape are standard, not exceptional. R-4 already contains sufficient flexibility for two units by right that balances the interests of the existing neighbors.
- Practical Difficulty: The applicant does not demonstrate undue financial difficulty nor substantial structural damage to the property of which the applicant was unaware before purchasing the property. The applicant cannot point to the zoning code itself for justification of practical difficulty. Moreover, the owners of two adjacent properties at 3601 and 3602 13<sup>th</sup> Street have found it financially viable to make substantial renovations into two units each.
- No Substantial Detriment: As noted in bullet one, the proposal does represent substantial detriment on public infrastructure, availability of parking, and the cohesion of the street's architecture. The proposal also does not appear to conform with the intent of R-4, nor does there appear to be an "exception" that would justify a variance. Furthermore, allowing the variance would set a poor precedent and would endanger the livability of DC's R-4 neighborhoods.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO. 18448  
EXHIBIT NO. 32

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.18448  
EXHIBIT NO.32

Regards,



Lukas Kohler



View of north side of the 1200 block of Otis Place NW. Applicant's property is at the extreme left.