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May 21, 2013

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2013 MAY 15 PM 1:06

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW Room 200 South
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case 18553

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 18553

EXHIBIT NO. 29

Dear Members of the Board,

My wife Arden and I have lived at 4503 MacArthur Blvd since 1968. We cherish the neighborhood and our single family homes. For that reason we have been organizing the community to oppose tearing down the house at 4529 MacArthur (corner of MacArthur and Q) and replacing it with a four unit apartment building.

For us, the change of use from single family to multi-unit is unacceptable. We ask you to deny this application and recognize that so much community opposition should take precedence over the proposals of the developer.

First we point out the scale of community opposition. To date we have 115 signers who all agree to the statement of opposition at the top of the attached sample page. These signatures, along with our analysis below, have persuaded the Foxhall Community Citizens Association and ANC3D to stand with us against this development.

Next, we make three points for your consideration:

1. **No change of Use.** 115 property owners who signed our petition find that no change from single family use is acceptable. Particularly strong in their objections were the home owners in the same block as 4529. (See the attached map with petition signers grouped by area.) Here's why we all object:
 - A. Tearing down 4529 reduces the single family housing stock in the Palisades. It diminishes the quality of life here by making us denser and darker;
 - B. It tips the architectural balance of our block away from our Federal and Craftsman styles toward a stark, rectilinear modernism that looks wrong here;
 - C. It poses a long term threat to single family property owners, who have seen the rezoning of the Riverside Hospital property to accommodate a PUD and the over-building of 34 townhouses on that property. Q Street is particularly at risk because it

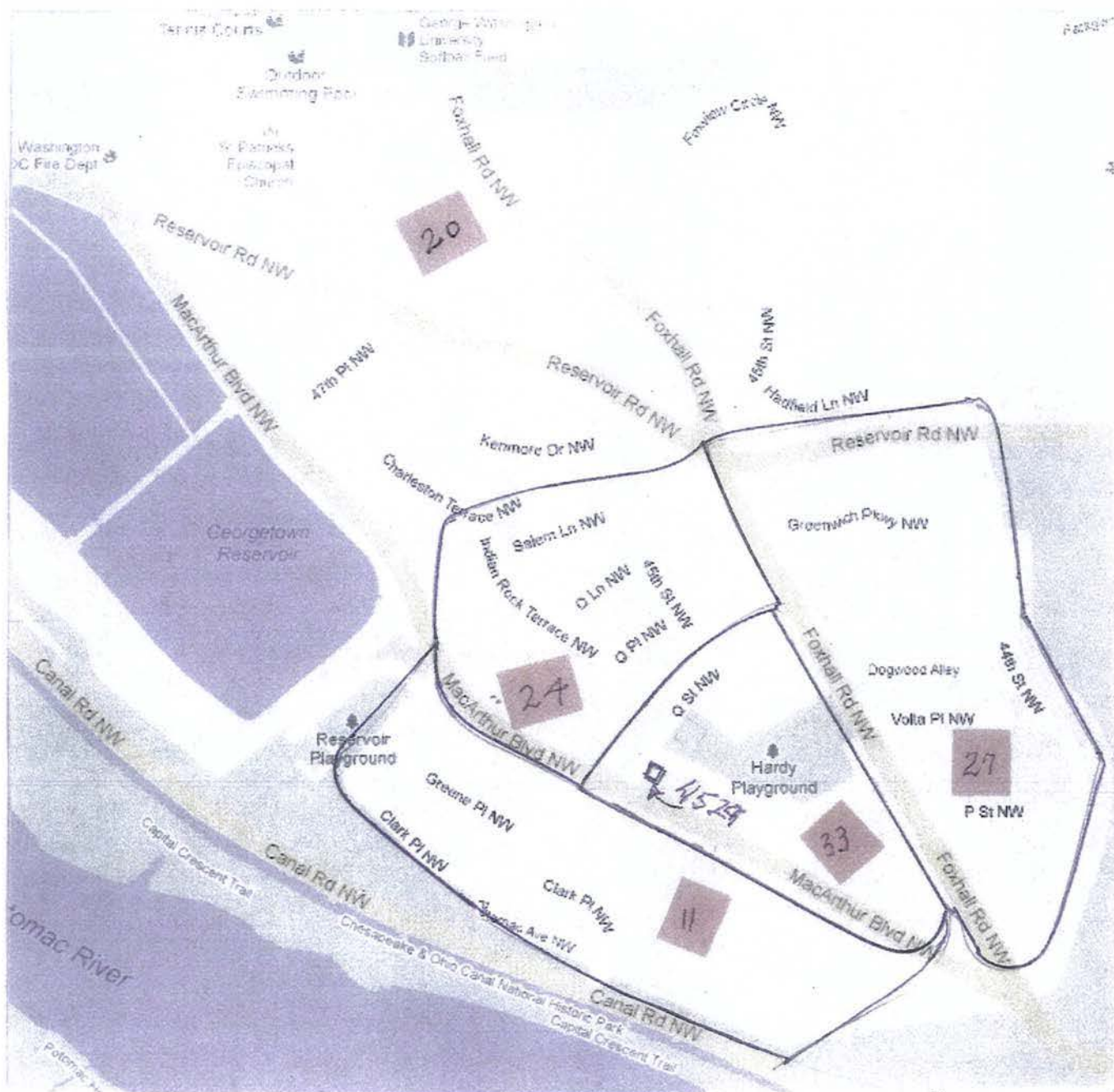
would have a new apartment house facing Q like an invitation to expand with apartment buildings up the street.

2. **No building that high.** No structure of the height proposed is right for this lot. Any building more than two stories above grade is wrong here because this lot is already more than five feet above sidewalk level. The combination of terrain plus grade will make the building overwhelming.
 - A. Zoning allows a structure up to 40 ft above grade. The proposed building is three stories and 37.5 ft above grade. On this lot, grade level is already 5.5 ft above the sidewalk. Put these two heights together and you make the building 43 ft above the sidewalk on MacArthur Blvd. It would stand like an awkward tower on the corner, the tallest building with the smallest footprint at that intersection.
 - B. Three houses now stand in a row on the 5.5 ft grade before the grade drops to the sidewalk level. Replacing 4529 with an apartment 11 ft taller than the next house would dwarf that house and its neighbor, decreasing their property values. (See the schematic elevation.)
 - C. Two design professionals and an architect who live in the 4400-4500 block of MacArthur agree on the two most serious flaws in this design: height and modern style, even though the builder has changed the outside from stucco to brick and white trim to black.
3. **No short term mistakes.** We think the proposal to tear down 4529 is a warning -- just like the proposal to replace the MacArthur Safeway with a new store and 100 apartments, which is an even bigger warning. The number of petition signers from farther west in the Palisades shows this sense of danger.

Both situations tell us that we need a long term plan to evaluate such proposals for change. In the absence of such a plan, we must not make incremental mistakes. Resisting this proposal is a careful step toward preserving what we value while we think about how we want to grow. 115 land owners live in our homes, pay taxes, tend gardens, and work with the city to make the city work. Our quality of life is at risk, and we're saying to developers, "Enough already!"

On the basis of these three points, we ask the Board of Zoning Adjustment to deny approval of Case 18553. Your action would recognize the value of strongly held homeowner views and demonstrate that technical compliance is not enough to approve a proposal that is out of touch with the very community the developer says he wants to join.

Arden and Frank Staroba



Petition Signers by Area -- 111 total

Immediate neighbors – blocks including 4529 -- 33 signers

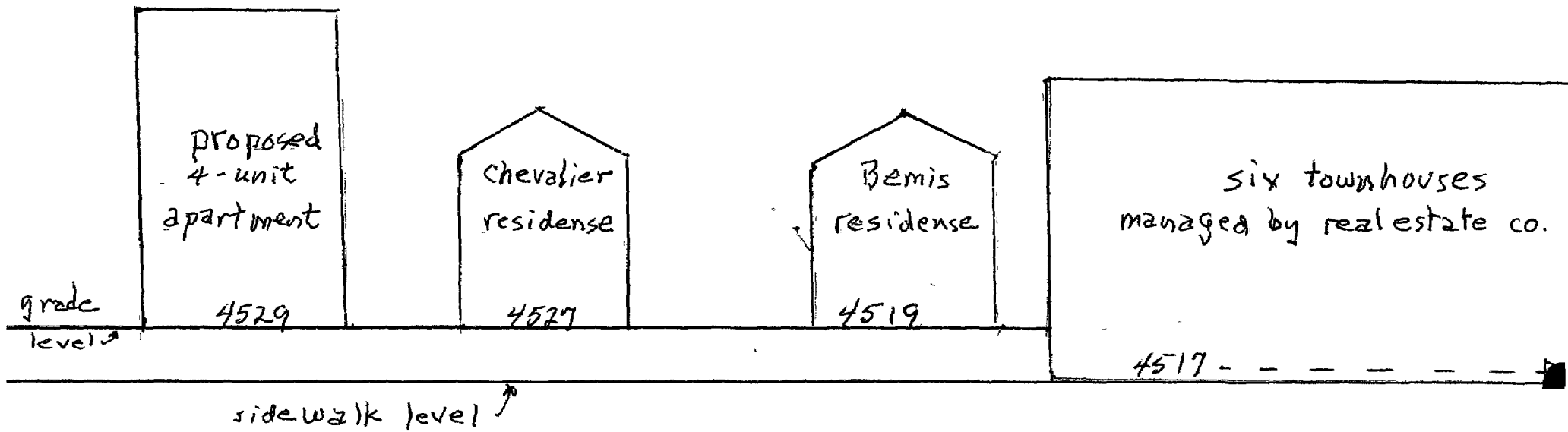
Q Lane-Q Place-Salem Lane -- 20

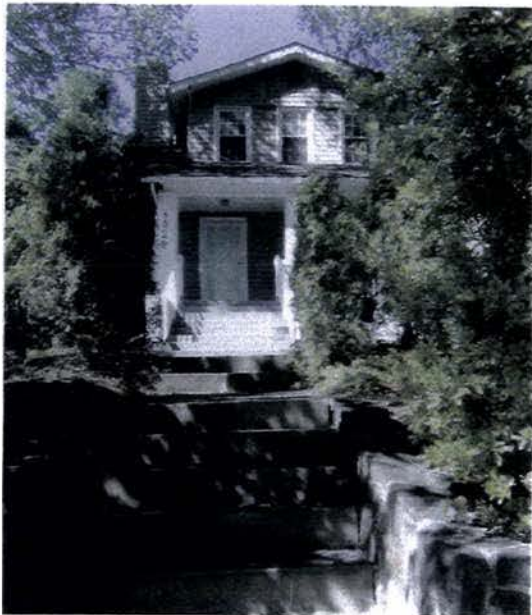
Foxhall Community -- 27

Q Street -- Greene Place -- Clark Place -- 11

Greater Palisades -- 20

Schematic Elevation



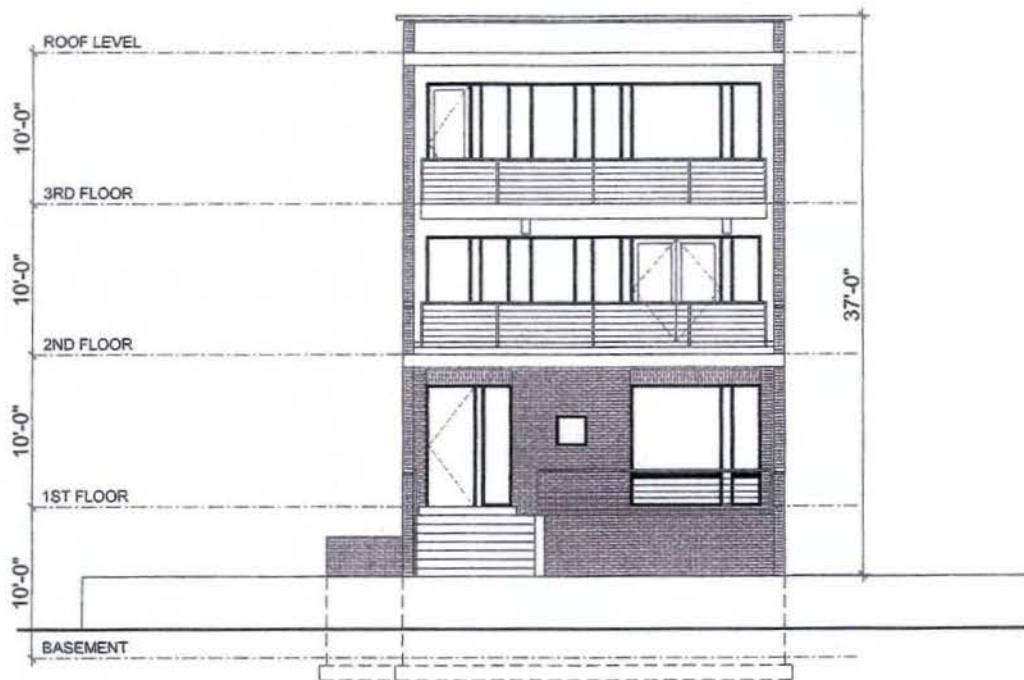


Single family home, 4529 MacArthur,
corner of MacArthur and Q built in 1927,
remodeled about 2005.

Hassan wants to tear it down and
replace it with a modern apartment
building 11 ft taller than the house
next door and 43 ft above the sidewalk.

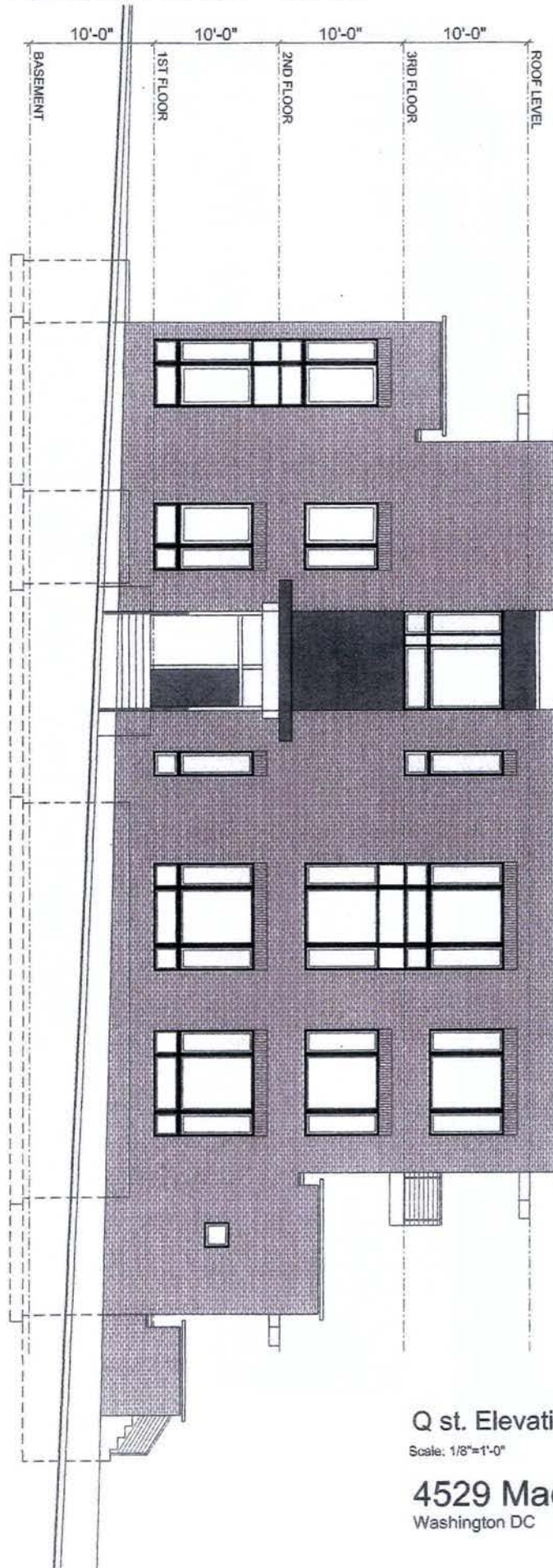


Single family home next door at
4527 MacArthur, would be in the
shadow of 4529, a modern tower
out of character with the neighborhood
and opposed by 111 petition signers.



Macarthur Blvd Front Elevation

Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"



Q st. Elevation

Scale: 1/8"=1'-0"

4529 Macarthur Blvd
Washington DC

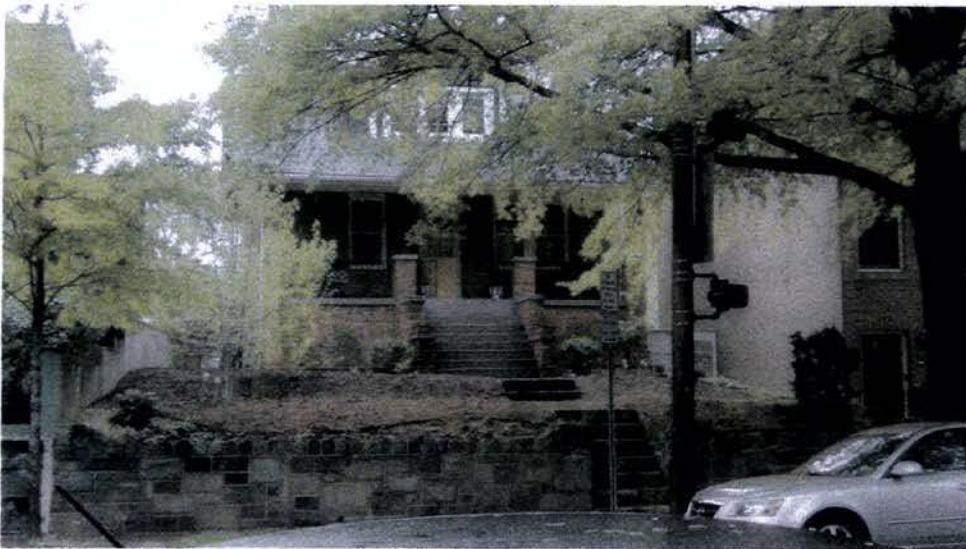


APR. 15, 2013

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4527 MacArthur, second from corner of MacArthur and Q, built in 1927, owner plans to remodel.



4519 MacArthur, third from corner, built 1927, G.H. Bemis home, last house on high grade, currently being renovated.

**Five single family homes built on MacArthur Blvd
by the Thompson Family 1898 – 1927**



4511 – built c. 1920, remodeled 2000



4507 – built 1927, remodeled 2013



4505 – built c. 1920, remodeled 2000



**4503 -- the first Thompson family home, c. 1898,
remodeled 1980**



4501 – built c. 1920, remodeled 2013

THE FCCA FOXHALL COMMUNITY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

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Robert B. Avery, President of the Board
Foxhall Community Citizens Association
4442 Greenwich Parkway, NW
Washington, DC 20007

May 13, 2013

Mr. Anthony Hood
Chairman, D.C. Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Case 3D 18553 Application of Hashim Hassan for a development at
4529 MacArthur Blvd.

Dear Chairman Hood and Members of the Commission:

I am president of the Board of The Foxhall Community Citizens Association (FCCA), a community organization which since 1928 has represented an area of 900 households in the eastern edge of the Palisades. Our service area includes 4529 MacArthur Blvd where a developer, Hashim Hassan is proposing to replace a single family home with a four unit apartment, an action which requires approval as an exception by your Commission. At our last FCCA Board meeting in April the attending Board members voted unanimously to oppose Mr. Hassan's application as it currently stands.

There were several reasons for our action. First, and most importantly, we were presented with a petition of opposition signed by virtually every local homeowner whose home was visible from the proposed development. These are the parties most directly impacted by the project. It is the FCCA Board's view that projects which are opposed by the vast majority of directly affected neighbors should not be granted exceptions as they are clearly objectionable. It is our view that developers should work with local neighbors to alter elements of their proposals such that they would no longer be viewed as objectionable. That does not appear to have happened in this case.

The FCCA Board was also concerned that this particular development, should it be allowed to proceed, would set a dangerous precedent for further development along the rest of MacArthur. This area is currently populated by a mixture of single family homes and apartment buildings. The proposed development has the potential to alter that balance.

The FCCA Board urges the Zoning Commission to deny the application as it currently stands and to encourage the developer to negotiate with the local residents. It is our view that community interests will be best served by a development which does not alter the fundamental character of the neighborhood and is not objectionable to local neighbors.

Sincerely

Robert B Avery for the FCCA Board