

District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
Case Number: 18784
Applicant: Observatory Land Trust
Property Address: 3915 Fulton Street, NW
Hearing Date: 06/24/2014

May 28, 2014

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Case Description: Application of Observatory Land Trust, pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3104.1, for a special exception under section 353, and variance from the lot occupancy requirements under section 403, to construct a new six (6) unit apartment house in the R-5-A District at premises 3915 Fulton Street, N.W. (Square 1806, Lot 804).

Related Case Number 18765 to be heard on 06/03/2014: Application of Fulton Land Trust for an identical exception to construct a twin new six (6) unit apartment house in the R-5-A District at premises 3919 Fulton Street, N.W. (Square 1806, Lot 32).

Dear Sirs,

We the undersigned are resident owners of single-family duplexes in the 2800 block of 39th Street NW, one-family dwellings on the 3800 block of Fulton Street NW, and townhouses in the 3900 block of Watson Place NW. We urge the Board to consider the combined impact of these two applications, identical except for the title of the applicant, on our streets.

The two apartment houses will replace two adjacent one-family dwellings, leaving only one remaining on that block at 3900 Fulton Street. The adjacent 3800 block of Fulton is a mix of one-family dwellings and duplexes. Although the zoning appears to allow such a change in the character of the neighborhood, we ask the board to consider mitigating the impact of the proposed apartment units on available on-street parking.

Each of these small twelve (12) apartments has three (3) bedrooms. The proposed twelve (12) on-site parking places will not be adequate for thirty-six (36) bedrooms at this location between American and Georgetown universities. Currently, there are only four (4) off-street parking places for the twenty-one (21) units in the apartment buildings at 3901 (6 units), 3921 (4 units), 3925 (7 units with 4 parking spaces), and 3929 (4 units) Fulton Street, NW. The two single-family houses that would have to be razed for this project have a total of five (5) on-site parking spaces which would be lost. The additional cars that adjacent streets would have to absorb will impose an excessive burden.

Years of experience living near the apartment house at 3901 Fulton Street NW, and group rentals of houses on our blocks of 39th and Fulton Streets NW support our view. We have seen that the number of cars equals—or nearly equals—the number of bedrooms. Even though eight (8) of the sixteen (16) houses in the 2800 block of 39th Street NW have only one car to park, at night the block is full of parked cars. Adjacent blocks of Fulton Street are also full. There is no room for the up to twenty-four (24) additional cars the proposed units would generate.

We ask the Board to consider the configuration of the units together with the variance from lot occupancy requirements. To mitigate the impact of these apartments on nearby residents and already crowded on-street parking, the number of bedrooms per on-site parking space should be reduced.

Finally, each of the two houses that would be demolished for this project has two magnificent trees in the front yard. If the developer cannot protect these trees, we ask the Board to require mitigation of the loss of tree canopy.

We enclose a copy of our corresponding response to Case Number 18765.

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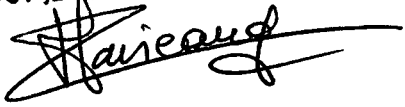
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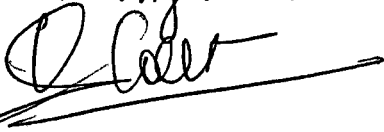
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