

November 14, 2014

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Government of the District of Columbia

RE: Application # 18790

Jefferson-11th Street LLC
2724 11th Street NW (Square 2859, Lot 89)

Dear Board Members:

I oppose application **18790** for variances from the lot area requirements and from the off-street parking requirements. I live at 1137 Fairmont Street and I am affected by the conditions at 2724. I have lived here for 16 years. Now more than ever, the residents of 1B need our current density and parking requirements upheld by your board because of the amount of existing and projected conversion condos scattered throughout our neighborhood which was chiefly comprised of single-family homes. I fell in love with this neighborhood because of its feeling of spaciousness due to the set back from the street and the intimate scale of the homes; I was especially impressed by its lack of congestion and that it was an established neighborhood of mostly long-time home-owners who lovingly cared for their property. I did not anticipate the burst in population caused by the condo-boom.

I am concerned that renovations that will add additional units to the basement of 2724 in violation of the current density zoning and increased parking, foot traffic, and potential for a blocked one-way alley behind my house if these units are completed will bring greater harm to the neighborhood and diminish my enjoyment of my own property.

I support the 2724 Tenants' Association efforts to improve the living conditions and structural safety of 2724 and the neighbors desire to see the building under responsible new ownership. The current owners of this apartment building who applied for the variances have never been good neighbors. Over the years, everyone on the alley dealt with their burgeoning rat population because of the inadequate amount of trash receptacles and infrequent pick-up employed by their property manager; I regret not considering the well-being of the residents who, as it turns out, were living under terrible conditions behind its shabby façade. I have since heard about and seen photos on Facebook, page *Save 2724*, demonstrating evidence of infestations of bedbugs, roaches, mice, and rats and photos of extensive water damage after decades of neglect. On September 1, the owners raised these tenants' rent by 31.5%, a staggering amount for this building's low-income residents. I must participate in this process because the owners/applicants coming to you with expensive attorneys and unclean hands asking for variances have a history: the owners were granted the rent-hike because they claimed that they cannot afford to make the needed repairs without the said increase and to renovate the basement into market-rate units. This is a strategy they have used before to leverage low income tenants out [in the meantime, these tenants contribute to the upgrades never intended for them to enjoy!] The owners of 2724 have deferred maintenance on this building for 40 years while they have enjoyed the benefits of a continual supply of rent, even mortgaging the building twice. Now they want to transfer the cost of that deferred maintenance on to the tenants and the neighbors by asking for variances on parking and density for their renovations. Many of us living on Fairmont, Girard, and 11th Streets support the residents of 2724, our neighbors, in their efforts to have a brighter future in the place that they live.

Sincerely,

Susan Farris
1137 Fairmont ST NW
Washington, DC 20009

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District of Columbia
CASE NO.18790
EXHIBIT NO.32