

Memorandum

To: District of Columbia Bureau of Zoning Adjustment

From: Kevin Latner
21 Quincy Place NW, Washington DC 20001

Date: December 10, 2014

Re: BZA Case 18865 - 21 Quincy Place NW: Variance request to expand the DCRA approved one car garage to accommodate 2 cars.

This is a request for support for a variance for my two-unit home on 21 Quincy Place NW, Washington, DC 20001. I live in the upper unit and I have a tenant in the lower unit.

The gist of the variance request is to increase the size of a 9' x 18' carriage house approved for construction by DCRA to approximately 16.7' x 19'.

There is no question as to the benefit to the public good or any harm to the zoning regulations (see Office of Planning Report). My two immediate neighbors, the Bloomingdales Civic Association and Advisory Neighborhood Commission have all supported the variance request.

My house is built on a narrow lot and I am in the process of rebuilding the carriage house. I am requesting that the size of this carriage house be large enough to accommodate a modern vehicle and that the garage be large enough to accommodate two mid-sized cars.

There is a confluence of factors that make this relief appropriate.

- 1 21 Quincy Place NW is an exceptionally narrow lot (16.6'). These lots are narrow by any measure and when put on standard depth lots, the result is that the lots are smaller and narrower than the minimum zoning requirements for R-4 zoned housing. In addition, most houses on such narrow lots, including this one, exceed the allowable lot coverage. Thus, any change forces the owner to seek a zoning variance.
- 2 DCRA has approved, as a matter of right, to rebuild a pre-existing carriage house, or garage. The replacement carriage house will be located at the rear portion of the lot where there is currently a parking pad that accommodates two mid-sized cars.
- 3 The size of the DCRA approved carriage house, based on historic records, is 9' x 18'. The approved carriage house would accommodate a mid-sized car.

However, the remaining space, with a width of 7.6', would not accommodate another car.

This situation results in to practical difficulties.

1. The first is that without the variance the DCRA approved carriage house does not accommodate many modern vehicles.

The benefit of the parking pad is that while it accommodates two mid-size vehicles, it also provides the flexibility to park a full size, SUV and even mini-vans. The size of the approved carriage house harkens back to the early 1900s, when vehicles were smaller. When the original carriage house was built there was few vehicles, horse drawn or horseless, that wouldn't fit in the original carriage house. Thus, without the variance, I have been approved to rebuild a garage that is not large enough to accommodate many standard sized vehicles, including, a Toyota Sienna, an Infiniti QZ80, or even a Nissan Maxima. In other words, without the variance I have been authorized to build a garage that is not large enough to be used as a garage.

2. The second is that without the variance the DCRA approved carriage house will reduce off street parking.

The width of the lot is 16.67 feet. The carriage house as approved is 9 feet wide. The remaining space is 7.67 feet. Even a Smart Car would be a tight fit, making any other vehicle a practical impossibility. The result is the guaranteed loss of one off street parking space. This would be a lost not only for the homeowner, but also for the community. Bloomingdales neighborhood is a community that has benefited from Washington DC's revitalization efforts. One of the practical impacts is to reduce available parking. From experience, street parking is not available after about 7 PM. This is, in part, because none of the Quincy Place NW houses on the south side of the street have any off street parking. Thus, without the variance, not only will 21 Quincy Place NW lose off street parking, but it will be to the detriment not only the owner, but also to the community.

Finally, a full width garage is consistent with the alleyscape. In addition to the 17 garages, there are 22 fenced areas parking areas, four carports and 12 patios. Most of the patios extend out close enough to the property line abutting the alley that they provide covered parking. In all only 13 spaces are unimproved open parking pads similar to the subject property.