

3203 38th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016
September 4, 2014

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW
Room 220
Washington, DC 20001

Subject: 3203 38th Street exception 220.10 for accessory apartment, Detailed statement of existing and intended use of the structure:

To whom it may concern:

When I purchased my property at 3203 38th Street, NW, it already had an accessory apartment in the basement, with a fully functioning kitchen, bathroom and separate bedroom. The prior owners of the house rented the apartment out for several years, and even in the house advertisement the prior owners mentioned that the apartment had passed DCRA inspection and was thus able to be legally rented. My intention is to utilize the apartment for rental purposes, in a manner which has already been established.

After purchasing the house in 2009, I applied for a renewal of the certificate of occupancy online with the DCRA, and rented out the apartment to a young woman, Ms. Laura Rheinhauer. I did not have further contact with the DCRA about this matter, filed a Schedule E each year to declare the rental income, and maintained the rental apartment with the same renter for 4 years. I maintained the apartment in good and safe condition, attended to any needed repairs or issues quickly, and created a trusting, congenial relationship with my renter (I have attached a letter from her to this effect). From the perspective of a *conscientious neighbor*, I took efforts to ensure that the person to whom I rented the apartment was responsible and trustworthy (with access to my home) and unlikely to have any detrimental impact on the neighborhood environment or living conditions. I chose to rent the apartment to a young, professional woman who worked for Kipp DC, a network of high performing, college-preparatory charter schools in Washington, DC., after having interviewed more than a dozen applicants. Ms. Rheinhauer had access to my house when I traveled. In short, picked a renter with whom I could have 100 % security. I did not raise the rent on the apartment for her 4-year tenure, in part because it was more important to have a renter whom I trusted than to increase the revenue stream. At the same time, as a single mother, the rental income has allowed me to maintain occupancy in the house. With regard to additional traffic, my renter was given a parking spot in my driveway (which accommodates two cars side by side), creating no additional burden on street parking.

During the rental process, I became aware that the former owners had obtained a business permit for the apartment, but had not gotten an exception from the zoning commission for its use. My own application for the certificate of occupancy never moved beyond the application stage (the check was cashed but nothing further was done, and I was never notified further).

With the awareness that I need to ask for an exception to legally rent out the apartment, I am thus applying for the special exception for an accessory apartment under zoning code 202.10. I intend to rent out the one-bedroom apartment to a professional and trustworthy individual who has demonstrated in prior rental relationships a history of good character and civic and personal responsibility. In my own capacity as a landlord, I intend to maintain the apartment and the exterior environs in good condition, to ensure that the rental does impinge on neighborhood traffic (which can be ensured through my ability to provide a parking spot to the renter) or the overall environment of the neighborhood. I have exceptional relationships with my neighbors and would not rent to anyone who would detrimentally impact the quality of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Keller