

Charlie,

We have not questioned the parking variance or asked for concessions regarding parking. We did not question it in our written summary to the Board or bring it up at the BZA hearing. After the approval of total relief for 60 spaces with the SB Urban project, we calculated it would be useless to argue it. We bring it up now because the 50% increase is substantial and was not discussed or approved by the ANC.

The project reviewed by the ANC included relief for 14 spaces. We noticed the ANC letter did not specify the number of parking spaces it approved for relief, but the number was 14 when they approved it last December. At the March 10 BZA hearing, we asked the Applicant to inform the ANC of the recent increase to 21. A letter was sent to the ANC at the end of March as promised. It was our assumption that a formal letter from the developer's attorney stating this change would have been acted on immediately by the ANC. It was not and so now we are formally asking for ANC review.

The CDC meets on the 22nd, almost a week before the BZA will rule on this on April 28. This issue should be on the agenda for that meeting. The CDC and community need to know of this change since the effects of parking relief for one project after another is having a cumulative effect on the area. Two projects alone, side by side in Blagden Alley, now account for 81 parking spaces. It needs to go on the record that a change was made after an official vote was taken. It is our position that the official record must be correct and complete, and a letter of clarification to the BZA from the ANC is necessary.

With regard to the many other issues you brought up: we did not contact Douglas Development with a list of concessions because we did not have any. The issues of properly using the public roadways in Blagden Alley is an issue DDOT will address. A valet stand in a public alley roadway will not be allowed, so we mentioned it. Having the restaurant entrance on the public alley and all foot traffic on a 10 foot wide alley road is also not a good idea and would likely not be allowed by DDOT. The same with ABRA liquor license and operating hours, which is an entirely separate set of procedures with different oversight and a formal settlement agreement. These are not issues for private citizens to negotiate with a developer.

You mentioned the idea of permanent parking spaces. As I recall, leased parking spaces were discussed but these arrangements are not permanent and are difficult to enforce, as pointed out by the developer. If the ANC could have negotiated seven permanent parking spots in return for ANC approval, it should definitely have done that because it's better for the neighborhood. Perhaps a missed opportunity.

We have appreciated your willingness to become involved and address our concerns, especially after our previous experiences. However, our interest is in seeing the BZA do a thorough job of reviewing this project and making certain it meets their requirements. The only way we can have a voice in this is to be an opposition party. We also think thorough, open and accurate ANC oversight is crucial.

Best regards,

The Opposing Party representatives Ahmed Ait-Ghezala and Barbara Schauer