

5322 Colorado Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20011
May 28, 2015

Lloyd Jordan, Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairperson Jordan,

I am writing in opposition to the application of Buddhist Congregational Church of America for a special exception from the SSH-1 Overlay requirements (Application #18967). I live across the alley from the entrance to the Church's parking lot. For many years I have had trouble with members parking on my yard, traffic in the alley, and noise. If an exception to the Overlay is granted, these problems will become worse and will adversely affect the use of my home.

I have tried everything I can think of to keep Church members from parking on my yard. Instead of gardening or cooking on Sundays, I often spent my days trying to get an out-of-state car off my property:

- At first I went to the Church and made an appointment to speak to the Church's leader about a possible solution. No one showed up for the appointment.
- I put up a "No Parking" sign, and Church members parked in front of it.
- I put cinder blocks around my yard, and they moved the blocks and parked there.
- I even put up a chain across the back of my yard, but children from the Church came and broke it. I saw this from my kitchen window. When I reported this to Church members, I received no apology, no offer of help, nothing.
- I called the police a number of times to come and ticket the cars on my yard, but they never came.
- One time Church members completely blocked the alley. The police came that time and made them move, but once the police car was gone, the members came right back and parked the same as before. This shows a disregard for the police.
- As I have been doing for years, I still have to go to the Church and ask that the owner move the car. Sometimes someone comes, sometimes not.

Neighbors have had trouble too. An elderly neighbor told me that when she asked a driver to move from in front of her garage door, the driver swore at her and refused to move. Residents of a nearby apartment building have expressed their anger to me that Church members take the building's parking spots. Such actions show disregard toward the neighbors. They also show that off-street parking is inadequate for the needs of congregants.

There have been other problems as well, for example noise. The Church has set off firecrackers during the night without notice. They also hold festivals outside in the parking lot with amplifiers and mikes so powerful, the noise reverberates inside nearby homes.

The Church has not tried to work with the neighbors on these issues, and they have not contacted the neighbors about the expansion. When they submitted their application for an exception to the Overlay, the Church said in a document to the Board of Zoning Adjustment that

they would contact "...adjacent property owners to discuss the application at the earliest time practical and no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the scheduled public hearing/meeting." They have yet to call or come by, even though I live right across the alley.

I have lived in my home for 25 years and have never had a complaint about any of the many churches nearby until now. If this exception is granted, there will be more illegal parking, more traffic in the alley, more noise, more trash. The use and enjoyment of my property will be negatively affected. I urge the Board to deny the requested exception to the Overlay.

Sincerely,
Lenore Sek