

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

REQUEST TO TESTIFY AS A PARTY OR IN THE ALTERNATIVE AS A WITNESS

MATTER: BZA APPEAL NO: 18991

HEARING DATE: September 15, 2015

Pursuant to Section 3106.2 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure, I hereby request to participate as a party or in the alternative in the above appeal relating to the permits issued for 1521 Varum Street, NW. The information requested to participate as a party, or in the alternative, as a witness includes:

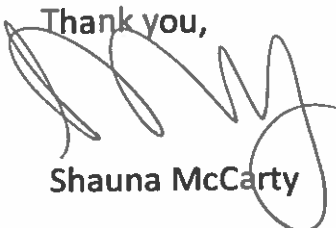
- (a) My name is Shauna McCarty and I live at 1529 Varum Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011
- (b) I wish to participate as a party or in the alternative as a witness in Case No. 18991 as a proponent of the appeal requesting that building permits issued to 1521 Varum Street, NW ("1521 apartments") are revoked or substantially modified.
- (c) I will appear on my own behalf at the hearing.
- (d) For the following reasons, I and my property will be uniquely affected by the planned conversion of the single family row home at 1521 Varum Street, NW to an apartment building:
 - a. I am the owner of 1529 Varum Street, NW which abuts the proposed 1521 Apartments.
 - b. This apartment building will dwarf my home making it feel enclosed and dark. Presently, my home and 1521 are similarly situated on the lots so that the backyards are open with a nice flow of air and light.

- c. The development will greatly diminish my family's privacy inside my home due to the large number of people with the entrances and the balconies planned on the side of the building. They will directly face my bedroom as well as my teenage daughter's and young daughter's bedrooms.
- d. The development will greatly diminish my family's privacy in our yard. We have a small herb garden and we grill in our backyard year round. We spend time there as a family. With this new development, we will likely often have strangers within feet of our family, overhearing our conversations and adversely impacting the quality of our time spent in our yard. Having safe and quiet outdoor space for our daughters was a consideration of ours when selecting our house.
- e. The planned parking for four vehicles is completely insufficient. I have one of only driveways on the street and it already gets blocked by cars parking across it on a regular basis. This has cost us money, caused us repeated inconvenience and much frustration. My husband has been late to work, my children have been late and have even missed school while we wait for the police, and I have also been late or missed work because people park blocking my driveway. I have called the police many times about this. They simply issue a ticket. They call the tow truck but because the car is on the street, only the DC police tow truck can take it. Only once has a DC tow truck been available to actually tow the car so I could leave my house. This has left me with knocking on doors in my neighborhood looking for the car's owner. The District has added signage to the bottom of my driveway because they recognized that this is a repeated problem. Unfortunately, people disregard the signs and still block my driveway. The potential addition of fourteen cars, with parking for only four of them will directly and adversely affect me. There is not enough parking as it is. This would only compound the problem.
- f. The increased volume of traffic will cause additional congestion and increases the likelihood of accidents. This is particular concern for me because I have a young daughter who likes to be outside.

- g. The apartment building plan will add an alley that will give criminals easy access to my property that they have never before had. With two daughters, this causes me great concern.
- h. The development will increase the number of lights which will likely interfere with our ability to sleep and relax at night, particularly since it is so close to our bedrooms.
- i. The development will increase the noise in and outside my home interfering with our use and enjoyment of the property.
- j. The apartment development's large size and height do not fit in with this quiet, well established, diverse, and family focused neighborhood which consists of R-4 and R-1 zones.
- k. The development consists of two bedroom units, thus these units will not add to the stock of housing for families. Instead, we will have roommate/ group housing rather than families who have a long term vested interest in the neighborhood. This development more appropriately belongs in a commercial R-5 district.
- l. We spent a year looking for a house in a quiet, tree lined family friendly street in NW DC to raise our two daughters. We did not consider buying in Columbia Heights due to its development and now, this development will bring Columbia Heights right next to our home.
- m. This development may decrease the value of my home and increase the amount of time to sell due to the negative impacts of the development. My home is designed for a family and this development makes it less appealing, in my opinion to families for the reasons I expressed above.

Finally, I request that the Board notify me of the location and time of any hearings and anything I may need to bring in order to testify. You may contact me via mail or at shaunalynnemccarty@gmail.com

Thank you,



Shauna McCarty

Date: 9/1/15