

District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
Office of Administrative Hearings
441 4th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

BZA Order No 18991
RE: Appeal to Deny for 1521 Varnum St NW
Appellant: John Stokes
Hearing Date: September 15, 2015

Letter of Support for Appeal

11 September, 2015

To the Board,

I respectfully voice my support for Mr. Stoke's appeal to revoke the building permits for the redevelopment of 1521 Varnum Street, NW. My opposition is driven by at least three key aspects:

- 1) The extant structure will be completely demolished, rather than modified. The structure lot coverage as planned, shall exceed the allowable ratio in R-4 by at least 20 %. This new structure and the increased density of population will place a considerable burden on infrastructure that was simply not designed for a project of this magnitude. It is very concerning to contemplate the further environmental effect this will have on the neighborhood.
- 2) The project does not conform with the purpose and regulation of side yards and alleyways. The western property boundary is shared by two separate owners, one of which is St. George Church, in the rear. To the immediate west of the line is a functioning parking lot, which was once part of the alleyway. While a survey of the lot in question might be clean, the plans do not address if the project shall be built inches from a city alleyway. If that is the case, then the representation that a side yard shall be maintained is incorrect and misleading.
- 3) The third concern is one of economics and quality of life. Unlike many areas of the District, this immediate neighborhood did not experience a significant decline in the 1960s-1980s. To say that the neighborhood is re-gentrifying would be a misstatement, in that it didn't de-gentrify. As such, the neighborhood does not require extraordinary development investment. Several generations of families, along with more recent arrivals have enjoyed living in an area that defines the R-4 designation. By altering this and allowing this project to proceed, it is likely that the ideal neighborhood intended by the zoning regulations (which exists currently), could very well be sabotaged.

I ask that the Board of Zoning Adjustment revoke the current permit for 1521 Varnum Street, NW.

Joe McCall
1517 Webster St NW

100 feet from construction site