

**BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
REQUEST TO TESTIFY AS A PARTY**

MATTER: BZA APPEAL NO. 18991 (John Stokes/ANC4C)

HEARING DATE: 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 in the above appeal relating to the permits issued for 1521 Varum Street NW. The information requested to participate as a party includes:

- (a) My name is Grace Mills and I live at 1526 VARNUM STREET, Washington, D.C. 20011.
- (b) I wish to participate as a party in Case No. 18991 as a proponent of the appeal requesting that building permits issued for 1521 Varum Street NW ("1521 apartment") 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 St. NW to an apartment building:
 - a. I am the owner of the residence at 1526 VARNUM, which is approximately 200 yards from 1521 apartment;
 - b. The 1521 apartment will substantially impair the privacy and quietude of my home due to the greater density inherent in a 7-unit apartment building, the noise from the balconies planned on the back and sides of the 1521 apartment, and the noise from an increased number of cars using the alley abutting my home;
 - c. The planned parking lot for four vehicles will use the service alley that I share. The cars using this new parking lot will increase my exposure to car fumes and other related chemicals and the increased congestion in the alley will significantly increase the risk of accidents and property damage;
 - d. Parallel to and between the 1521 and 1523 lots, the 1521 apartment creates a new, unfenced walkway that allows visitors and residents of the 1521 apartment to enter the building. This new public walkway terminates in the service alley that I use and will facilitate some of the existing criminal activities in the neighborhood, such as burglaries, armed robberies. Essentially, the plan creates a new alley in the neighborhood;
 - e. The 1521 apartment will increase the number of lights near my home and may interfere with my ability to sleep and relax at night;

- f. The 1521 apartment will create a fire hazard for the neighborhood because the third floor will be close to a working chimney at 1519 Varnum St., NW. I understand that such close proximity violated the International Fire Codes because it is an unsafe condition;
- g. The addition of above ground power-lines to supply electricity and other services to the 1521 apartment may increase the noise and safety risks in the service alley that I share;
- h. The large size and height of the 1521 apartment will intrude on my current enjoyment of the residential, quiet ambiance of my back yard. The 1521 apartment building simply does not fit aesthetically with the nearby lots which are zoned R4 and R1;
- i. The ease with which I and my visitors can park on the street will be severely impaired by 1521 as it will substantially increase the number of residents who will be routinely parking their vehicles on Varnum, Webster and 15th Street NW. Parking on 16th St. NW is prohibited at most times because it is a major north-south commuting street into the downtown area; and
- j. Due to the above negative impacts of the 1521 apartment, the resale value of my home may be impaired or it may take longer for me to find a buyer of my property because my home will abut a development typically located in a commercial R5 district.

Finally, I request that the Board notify me of the location and time of the hearing and of any materials that I must bring to the hearing to testify as a party. You may contact me at the above address or by email at GRACEPMills@Gmail.com

Thank you.

Dated: 8-26-2015

Sincerely,

Grace Mills