

August 28, 2015

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

RE: Support for the Appeal of a 7-unit condo development at 1521 Varnum Street, NW

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment,

Thank you for the opportunity to express our significant concerns about the proposed 7-unit development at 1521 Varnum Street, NW. This proposed development will permanently change the historic character and street facade of Varnum Street, which is an integral component of our street's appeal and thus, home values. Most critically, this proposed development will severely and negatively impact the multiple homeowners immediately abutting the property by drastically blocking light to their homes and yards, increasing noise pollution, increasing foot traffic, and ruining their homes' curb appeal as a result of the enormous, out-of-place structure next to their homes. The height and depth of the proposed 7-unit development will make this building an absolute eye sore in the middle of what is an otherwise uniform street of 1920s federal-style row houses.

Our additional concerns for the proposed development at 1521 Varnum include:

- Based on the current proposed design for the development, the 7-unit building will tower over at least 10 nearby residences, impairing the view and sunlight for homes, yards and patios for these individuals. In some cases, where our neighbors have invested time and resources in their yards and landscaping based on the available sunlight, this may have financial implications.
- As homeowners who recently signed a 15-year lease on solar panels, a similar development next to our home would make our solar panels useless; however, we would still be financially responsible for the 15-year lease with no recourse. Several homeowners immediately impacted by the development at 1521 Varnum Street will not have the option to install solar panels and contribute to Washington DC's efforts to become a greener city, as this development will block light from their homes' roofs and garages.
- The development will significantly increase noise, debris and congestion on this residential street during the construction process, further exacerbating the existing lack of street parking for residents. This problem will continue once the development is completed.

Similar to many long-time DC residents, we are delighted to see the city attracting and retaining new residents, contributing to a new vibrancy in our town. This necessitates additional housing and development in the city, including transforming single-family homes into multi-unit residences. However, this must be done in a responsible, appropriate manner which, at the core, seeks to protect the significant investments of existing home-owners impacted by new developments. We, along with homeowners on Varnum and Webster streets, could have never reasonably assumed that such an enormous development would have been allowed on this street, and we ask for the BZA's assistance in protecting those of us with a vested interest in our homes, street and community. When developers are allowed to move forward with projects like that at 1521 Varnum Street, it irreparably destroys the historical character and façade of the streets and communities that have helped to make Washington DC, and 16th Street Heights, a place that homeowners want to invest in and live in.

We feel the Zoning Administrator erred when he granted the minor flexibility because it was unnecessary and improper to grant the minor flexibility based on the proposed huge apartment project. We ask that you support the appeal of John Stokes and revoke the invalid permit

Thank you for considering our concerns.



Jeff Kuziemko



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