

5 March 2015

Matthew McDonald, AIA
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Bethesda, MD 20814

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Washington, DC Office of Zoning

Re: Special Exception for 1338 Fairmont Street, NW
DCRA File Job #B1502128
DCRA BZA Case

To Whom it May Concern:

- ① The owner of this property, Eric Piersma is applying for a Special Exception from section 401.11 to increase the number of dwelling units without providing the minimum lot area required for the units (specified in section 3104.1) The building currently has an occupancy permit for two units, and we are requesting a Special Exception to allow for 4 units. Unlike many similar row dwellings on Fairmont Street, NW, this property has onsite parking for up to four vehicles.
- ② Mr. Piersma purchased the property in 1989, occupying it until 2000. During that time, he was instrumental in stabilizing the neighborhood during its "developmental" years. He kept the property renovated and maintained helping to stabilize and raise the property values. He currently resides in the neighborhood, only two blocks away from the subject property thus having an on-going and personal interest in the well-being and maintaining the current character of the neighborhood.
- ③ Through his efforts as an early resident of this neighborhood in keeping his property to a high standard, many neighboring properties were able to be sold and later converted into even higher density housing:
- ④ 1304 Fairmont is a five unit building with no parking
1308 Fairmont is a four unit building with now parking
1335 Fairmont is a five unit building
- ⑤ As the popularity and therefore property values in this neighborhood continue to increase, this Special Exception would allow Mr. Piersma's property to better accommodate the needs and wants of the new residents and their desire to reside in the Columbia Heights neighborhood. Many of the properties (other than those mentioned above) are single or two family homes, effectively preventing the younger or lower income residents from affordable living options in this neighborhood. Allowing a conversion of this property to a four unit building will allow a more affordable option for

- Ⓐ potential residents who would be otherwise unable to live in Columbia Heights. The scope of work calls for maintaining the existing roofline when viewed from Fairmont Street as well as the existing footprint of the building; therefore the character of the neighborhood is maintained throughout this project. While many proposed projects of this scope are "pop-tops" or expansions of the footprint, we are instead choosing to work within the footprint of the current building.
- Ⓐ In addition, Mr. Piersma is anxious to bring his property up to current building codes and standards. As part of this work a sprinkler system will be added as well as renovations to the electrical and mechanical systems of the building to comply with the 2012 International Building Code.
- Ⓐ Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working together with the District of Columbia to further enhancing the Columbia Heights neighborhood.

Regards,

Matthew S. McDonald, AIA
Principal
McDStudio

Ⓐ I support Mr. Piersma's Sain Renovation of the
Property at 1338 Fairmont St NW DC 20009

Eric S. E

1335 Fairmont St NW 20009