



CAPITOL HILL HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR

July 6, 2015

Sara Benjamin Bardin
Director of the District of Columbia Office of Zoning
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: BZA #19035

Dear Director Bardin,

The Capitol Hill Restoration Society (CHRS) Zoning Committee, at a meeting on June 11, 2015, considered this case. The applicant, International Graduate University of Washington, DC, requests a special exception and three variances in order to build one-family attached and semi-detached dwellings and flats on a 37,500 square foot parcel of land fronting on 13th Street and D Street, SE. A representative of the applicant attended the meeting and made a presentation to the committee.

This parcel is part of a larger parcel that the developer has acquired. For unknown reasons, the property has been split, north/south, into two pieces. On the piece not before you the developer is going to restore a historic school building and build a number on matter of right row houses facing D Street. The applicant is building on the subject property 9 row houses, facing D Street, that have less than 1,500 square feet of lot area. In fact, 7 of the houses will have only 1,048 square feet. CHRS opposes granting a variance for this substantial reduction in lot size. We believe that removing lots 10 and 11 and reconfiguring the balance of the lots will allow for the lots to be 1,500 square feet. This will make all the lots along D Street, in both parcels, consistent with the zoning.

Since this is a large empty parcel it is hard to imagine that the applicant can't plan buildings that meeting the zoning. What did developers know 100-years-ago that they don't know today? The reason's given do not meet the test for a variance because the configuration of the property can be changed so as not to require a variance just as they have done on the parcel next door.

After hearing the presentation by the applicant, the committee voted unanimously to support the request for a special exception, to oppose the variance for lot areas less than 1,500 square feet, and to support the other variances.

Sincerely,

Gary M. Peterson
Chair, Capitol Hill Restoration Society Zoning Committee