

April 30, 2015

DC Office of Zoning  
Board of Zoning Adjustment  
441 4<sup>th</sup> St., NW  
Washington DC 20001

To Whom It May Concern,

Attached please find application and documents to support our request for variances for a proposed two-story rear open deck to an existing nonconforming single family row dwelling at our private residence, located at 1375 Massachusetts Ave., S.E. Washington DC 20003.

We wish to propose a rear structure which better suits the nature of our home which is located in the historic district on Capitol Hill, and is visible from the street. As such, prior to meeting with architects, we were aided in the design for this open, two-level, wrought iron sleeping deck, by the very helpful team from the Historic Preservation Office located at the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs- who were very patient with us and met and discussed the project over the course of several meetings and emails.

The intended use for this structure is three-fold: First, to extend the usable living space behind our home; second, to beautify this area and return it from a 1950's aluminum porch, and subsequently a larger screened in porch, to an open, and more historically appropriate structure; and third, to bring the structure in line with construction on adjoining properties.

We seek a variance from 3103.5 R-4 residence district requirements, rule 404 (minimum rear yard requirement), 406 (minimum open court requirement) and 403 (maximum allowable lot occupancy) based on the following factors:

- Physical size of rear of property is unusually small given unusual shape of lot (properties are aligned facing north on Massachusetts Ave., SE, but lot size behind home structures decreases as block forms a triangle with smallest point at 14<sup>th</sup> & Massachusetts Ave., S.E.). Per current zoning rules, minimum rear yard depth of 20 feet is required. With existing lot coverage of 88%, our back yard area is exceptionally small and the layout

makes most of the space unusable. There is a concrete structure that covers the basement door and steps but currently provides no other use. The rest of the space, which borders the public walkway, is paved concrete that has no real use other than trash storage. Adjacent properties with similar sized/shaped lots are at 100% lot occupancy (or greater) with rear deck additions. Nearly every home on this block has an addition or privacy fencing enclosing their property line at 100% (or greater) lot occupancy. We do not wish to be isolated from our neighbors- allowing us to build a historically appropriate structure, in kind with regard to lot occupancy, will relieve us of the undue burden of otherwise unusable rear space (as our small plot resides in the shadow of their structures, and/or in the midst of their trash receptacles).

- Additionally, there is currently no exit door from the first floor of the rear of our home, which every other house on this square has. Adding a door and back porch would provide a second emergency exit from the house, making it much safer. In light of the exceptionally shallow dimensions of our back yard and the practical difficulty strict enforcement of this regulation would present, we believe a variance from the minimum rear yard depth rule would give us a safer, more useful backyard area.

We will proceed with due diligence to ensure compliance with both neighbors as well as the groups which oversee our neighborhood (Capitol Hill Historic Society, the ANC, the OP, as well as our adjacent neighbors). We intend to document our efforts therein and will keep the BZA apprised of the outcome of those efforts.

We thank you, in advance, for your thoughtful consideration of our application. We look forward to working with you towards our goal of home improvement which will better suit our needs as homeowners, help to align us with our wonderful neighbors, and aesthetically appeal to our neighbors and officials alike who seek to retain the historic sensibilities of our unique neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer and Derek Mattioli', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer and Derek Mattioli  
1375 Massachusetts Ave., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20003