

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

To whom it may concern:

We are residents of Ward 6 and ANC6 subdivided into 6C01. We respectfully disagree with the BZA Application 19086 and HPRB Staff report case number 15-289 for 215-A Street NE on the recommendation and consent and design approval that the addition will remain in-line with the historic spirit of this block and Terrace Court.

1. **Process Issues:** We have numerous concerns about the process this zoning variance went through before local residents were formally notified.
 - I. We did not hear about the application review process with the ANC and the HPRB until after they had taken place.
 - II. Based on the formal letter we received on this hearing, we reached out to our ANC commissioner for insight and guidance on the process. Our outreach went unanswered for weeks, until late last week. We then learned that another ANC-review meeting had taken place since the time of the letter notifying of this hearing of which no one was aware.
 - III. The log reports cited in the letter we received were posted after the meetings occurred and no schedule or timeline of events was provided.
 - IV. We are very concerned that the review process is reactive and does not reach out to residents most affected early in the process for their concerns to be heard and addressed as appropriate.
2. **The plan sets a critically poor precedent for the other similarly-structured homes on the 200 block of A Street:**
 - I. If permitted, 215 A Street would become the only home in a row of nine to have a third story addition. The precedent set for an exception to the zoning guidelines will allow other homes in the same row to obtain similar building variances, which would significantly impair light, site-lines and property values for many houses on the block, including our home.
 - II. This is of particular concern given that several of the nine row houses on the same side of the street as 215 A Street are rental properties and non-residential owners will be incited to make similar square foot upgrades to generate the most income-producing model for their property.
 - III. Additionally, given our block's proximity to the Capitol and Congressional office buildings, home modifications and build-outs in our area are eventually and more frequently being used for group home rentals and Air B&B's. This has a direct impact to the single family home owners on this block and surrounding blocks, including noise problems and parking congestion that our neighborhood cannot absorb.

3. **Terrace Court is not a typical alley:** We support the Terrace Court homeowners opposing the application and do not believe that the previous hearings by the HPRB or the ANC considered the impact to this unique, charming and historically significant street on Capitol Hill that includes eight single family homes, four on each side. The proposed modification is in direct view of and impacts the site lines of Terrace Court homes.
- I. 215 A Street is situated as an interior home on this block. The proposed addition of a third story will be out of place for the Terrace Court neighborhood and the historical intent of the homes.
 - II. I believe that not including the impact of this overbuild on Terrace Court residents is a huge oversight and simply unfair.
4. **The plan is not in keeping with the integrity of our historical neighborhood:** 215 A Street is one of nine properties in line and encircling Terrace Court, which is a historically significant street representative of a late 1800 community and a significant feature of the Capitol Hill neighborhood. Terrace Court is located in the first residential block from the Capitol and the first residential block directly behind the Supreme Court. There should be a more inclusive process for proposed pop-ups impacting this street and affect the historical integrity of neighborhoods designed over 100 years ago.

Sincerely



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