

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

Re: Letter in Support of BZA Appeal No. 19106

Dear Members of the Board:

I live in Mt. Pleasant, and I have been a resident in the District for 10 years. I support the above-referenced appeal brought by ANC5E, Katelijn van den Berg, Richard Alan Seutter, Jr., and Susan T. Seutter.

As a prospective homebuyer, I understand the need for new development and new housing. Yet a balance can be struck that accomplishes both increased housing options, while maintaining neighborhood aesthetic, community focus and most of all, safety. With 'pop-up' remodeling, I am most concerned with the safety of converting something designed for 2-3 stories into something dramatically larger. I am also concerned with the sustainability, an additional facet of safety in many ways, of the increase of water/land use with the concentration of persons 'pop-ups' allow, without proper accommodation for services.

67 V Street NW is currently being converted into a three-unit apartment building with a 45 foot-long rear addition ("pop-back") and an added story to the original structure ("pop-up"). The new building footprint doubles that of the original single-family home. The approved plans for Building Permit Nos. B1505056, the Main Permit issued on June 19, 2015, and B1510351, the Second Permit issued on July 21, 2015, conflict with several sections of the District's Zoning Regulations. DCRA rushed the permit approval process for the Main Permit to so that it would not be subject to the new zoning regulations, ZC 14-11, passed on June 8, 2015 and published/in effect on June 26, 2015. In its haste, DCRA improperly approved permits with errors.

The Zoning Administrator erred in allowing a non-compliant Closed Court on the Third Story in the Original Permit (June). The Closed Court reveals a court area of 198.06 square feet, which is less than the minimum requirement of 350 square feet for a Closed Court. The Zoning Administrator further erred in issuing a Second Permit (July) with revisions to the Closed Court where a trellis was added. The Trellis that was added as part of the Second Permit does not provide sufficient coverage of at least 51% to constitute a "roof" in order to meet Zoning Regulations for a building. The mere existence of the Trellis next to the chimney of the adjoining property at 65 V violates the Construction Code which prohibits any portion of 67 V from being within a horizontal distance of 10 feet from the 65 V chimney, unless the 65 V chimney is taller than that portion of 67 V by at least 2 feet, which it is not.

DCRA may not knowingly approve non-conforming plans in anticipation of their later improvement. By doing so, DCRA causes substantial detriment to the intent, purpose, and integrity of the Zoning Regulations for R-4. Pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan, the already low supply of single-family homes, along with the character of the neighborhood, must be protected in areas such as the R-4 zone consisting primarily of row house dwellings. The Zoning Commission voted to have the new Zoning Regulations effective immediately with the intent of saving neighborhoods from the detrimental effects of the very type of construction at issue in this case.

The conversion of 67 V is dramatically out of scale and character with the existing row homes in the neighborhood. The personal and property interests of the surrounding homeowners in ANC 5E have been, and will continue to be, adversely affected by this conversion of 67 V, including but not limited to negative impacts to their air, light, privacy, and property values. For all of these reasons, I ask that you carefully review the claims and not allow any variance or interpretation of the zoning code to the detriment of the public.

Sincerely,

Signature: 

Date: 11/16/15

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia

Printed Name: Ty Hansen

Address: 3636 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20010
EXHIBIT NO. 3