

Greetings, Chair person Heath and Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment

Regarding Case #19133

As a former President of the Dupont Circle Conservancy and one whose apartment windows (9th floor south side of Dupont East condominiums, 1545 18th St.) directly view the proposed St. Thomas parish church and residential development, I support the current plan and the request for variance to the zoning regulations. The proposed buildings will bring newly constructed residences where the city needs them and a new church that has long languished in too small a space to provide community services its new iteration will allow for. The 1,100 sq. foot variance request would be fine support from the city it will enhance.

Those in opposition to the variance request forget that the development runs along 18th St. where the height is in line with its neighboring structures ( well setback and gradually goes down to the residential structures; height) for 4-5 blocks from Mass. Ave. through Corcoran St. and that the residential neighbors on Church St. will not be harmed. The will loose no sun, parking will be contained in the new building, traffic changes will be minimal as most resident will use public transportation for all but weekend travel if they follow the use of their neighbors. The alley between Church St and Q St. is comparable with a 196 unit apartment building on 18th St. and there have been no traffic problems for that building or its neighbors since it was built in the 1960s. The light and air concerns are moot as the current Parish Hall already blocks the sun view shed that would be included in the current plan. The facades of the new building are sensitive to the form of the older buildings along Church St. while bringing in a contemporary feel that it should rather than a mimic. In a city with a goal of more residences in close in/Metro accessible neighborhoods, this would be an ideal development.

In short, the small variance requested will make possible a new urban space and community where a shambles of a park used as a dog poop site currently mars one of the city's prime neighborhoods. Those in opposition are not members of the church, have long wanted to effectively drive it from the neighborhood, and have been rude and threatening to those who do not act in lock step with them. Those of us who want to see a vibrant historic neighborhood ask that you to support the project's request.

Thank you for your efforts.

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