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

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment:

I am a resident of the city and a parishioner of St. Thomas' Episcopal Parish and am writing in full support of our request for a zoning variance for the building project. I have been a member of St Thomas' for over 7 years, worked at the National Trust for Historic Preservation over 10 years ago and spent my childhood in Adams Morgan with my grandmother, who worked at the Sulgrave Club in the late 60s and walked past the original church before it was destroyed by arson.

We have been a presence at 18th and Church St since 1894 and our original structure, which occupied 87.6% of the lot, stood until 1970. We chose to clear the rubble and continue our mission in the Parish Hall. We stayed and became one of the few refuges for AIDS victims. We continue in serving the community by providing a space for Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings and are also a polling place for DC elections.

When we cleared away the remnants of our church we made the decision to use the empty space and create a sacred green space that was open to the public. In allowing the community to use our private property we unintentionally hid ourselves from our long held location on 18th Street. We want to reclaim our visibility and original location on 18th Street. We want to be a church that host our ceremonies that are accessible to everyone, we want a proper space for grand weddings and the ability to hold funerals in the sanctuary. Our current sanctuary was never designed for worship, is not ADA accessible and is in serious need of renovation. It was never designed to be our sanctuary for this long.

Our journey to get to this point has included a careful and considered review of our mission, our program needs, our demographics and how all of those must be served in our new sanctuary. We did not embark on this lightly and we have calculated the space that we need to continue our mission for the next 100 years. This project needs the variance as any lot coverage below 86.7% would result in a direct loss all floors of the church building due to the setbacks that have been incorporated to receive HPRB approval.

For these reasons, I ask that you support the variance put forth by the applicant.

Regards,

Leticia Marquez

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.19133
EXHIBIT NO.132