

Frazier, Mercedes (DCOZ)

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To: Frazier, Mercedes (DCOZ)
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Testimony for BZA Case 19377: The Boundary Companies and The Missionary Society

Good Morning, my name is Bryan Martin Firvida, resident at 510 Regent Place NE; along with my wife and son, we are the original homeowners. As a resident of the District of Columbia for 22 years, I have been excited by the District's growth and investment in our neighborhoods as I have moved from Northeast to Northwest and back to Northeast.

I'm testifying today on Case Number 19377, and fully aware of my unique circumstance that my home today sits upon land that the Paulists previously sold for development, and today I'm testifying about land the Paulists want to sell once again for development.

I am not testifying in full support or in opposition of the proposed development, but to share my concerns with the Board to carefully consider the overall impact of the sale of this land, and the proposed development. And that any potential approval is given in thoughtful manner that addresses all of issues in a comprehensive manner that I and others are sharing with the Board today.

Unfortunately, the development of the Paulists' open space of what was their campus, and the significant change in use of their building – from seminary and religious house to two public charter schools -- has been a piecemeal process over the last decade, and the cumulative impact of these changes is only now beginning to be clearly seen and realized. Even as they have been individually reviewed and approved over the years.

The proposed continued expansion of residential and institutional building and increased usage will continue to increase the quality of life issues for residents, students, and seminarians alike. Many of these issues will not be able to be solved, but will require ongoing management by all to address on an ongoing basis.

The close proximity of this proposed development to the existing homes and schools, presents unique challenges. Infill development projects across the District have had a positive impact on life in the District, but in this case, we see infill development taking place 50 feet and 75 feet from existing homes, on new sublots that are being created to support for this project.

A number of residents have had an ongoing dialog with the development team, and the development team has been willing to listen and respond to the issues that have been raised. There is still much work to be done, as the impact of an approval of this project will not be just the few months of construction, but it will be across decades.

If this development is approved, again, I only ask of the Board, that any approval given takes a complete view of what was the St. Paul's campus, and looks at all usage, current and new, and this proposed development ultimately creates a positive impact for all, current and new residents, students and teachers, and priests and seminarians alike.