

Dear Board of Zoning Adjustment Members,

We previously submitted testimony (exhibit #133) and maintain opposition to BZA Case 19377: The Boundary Companies and the Missionary Society. In this testimony, we will follow the lead of other neighbors in providing images to illustrate what exactly is at stake here. As you will see by the images provided, the very enjoyment of our property and our community will be adversely affected if this variance is granted.

We are the happy owners of the first stone unit facing the beautiful trees and greenspace that is threatened to be replaced with yet another dense townhome development. When we bought our home, this was without question the biggest selling point. A corner house, with 4 windows facing magnificent trees and an untouched land to be enjoyed by our growing family and neighbors – Our dream home right in DC. It is noteworthy that we bought believing that this land could not be further developed because the Chancellors Row development was approved with such density precisely because so much untouched land remained --and so were we told by an EYA representative.



What feels like a natural reserve in the middle of a rapidly growing neighborhood has proven to be a fundamental space for our enjoyment and that of our neighbors, and of the children attending the Lee Montessori Charter School, who constantly explore in this space and enjoy the beautiful mature trees, including the one in the curb in front of the school pictured above. Children run, play, and sled down the very steep hill during the winter. Friends from other parts of the city have visited us just to enjoy Brookland's own "ski resort" after snow storms. This is so much more than a dog park. This is a community space that our very urban environment needs.



The view of this magnificent oasis from our window on the 4th floor



Last year, when we heard that progress was being made to further develop this site, we were so upset that we – reluctantly— put our house on the market. We are very urban people. We love the city, we take the metro and bikes to work and take walks in the neighborhood to enjoy the growing supply of restaurants. Yet, it seemed that the time had come, as we had been warned by many, to move to the suburbs in order to ensure that our children had sufficient open and common space as they grew up.

This was a decision we didn't want to make. And we finally didn't. After looking at our options we decided to pull the house from the market. This is exactly where we want to live. We want to stay in the city, and raise our children in the economically, culturally and racially diverse community that is Brookland. I hope we can do this while continuing to enjoy this magnificent open green space.

If the city wants to ensure that growing families, like us, stay, natural spaces like this one must be preserved. This is particularly important in an area with limited parks and green space, which is why we present our full opposition to this project and ask the BZA to deny this petition. In the event that it is approved and the Paulists are allowed to build a second property, it should be agreed and documented that the surrounding land will not be further developed in the future nor should the new building be sold to another entity or for non-institutional use, particularly now that the land has a historic designation.

We also propose, as some of our neighbors have, to limit the development to 20-30 homes built on the South side of the property to limit tree loss and impacts on all neighbors (Chancellor's Row, the schools, and U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops). The proposed 60 homes and an institutional building are just too much. Our community already struggles with lack of parking and heavy traffic, which will get worse as the schools become fully occupied. This amount of homes will also result in a long construction period, a tremendous influx of people and vehicles, and doesn't leave enough undisturbed space for trees to survive –considering that in the long run, trees may decline as a consequence of damage to their root structure, something that we have seen in our own community. Limiting the number of homes to no more than 30 would reduce the negative impact of this new development on the use and enjoyment of our neighborhood.

Should the townhouses and/or Paulist construction occur, the BZA should mandate that the developer meet the following requirements:

- Provide the following to the schools and the 3 CR rows of homes that face the proposed development (this is highly important for us as owners of a stone home facing the development):
 - Preconstruction and post-construction surveys (in case of construction damages) and associated repairs,
 - Power washing the walls, sidewalks, and roads throughout construction and once the development is completed
- Provide long-term tree protection and 100% preservation of heritage trees
- No construction vehicles will use CR streets at any time

- Provide robust plan for visitor and additional parking for the new townhomes and Paulists that does not utilize the school lot or CR street parking
- Provide adequate parking for the schools at their full planned capacity
- Publish and adhere to a plan to limit the environmental and noise pollution during construction
- Provide public access easements for streets and sidewalks

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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