

Nyarku, John (DCOZ)

From: Christina Borja <christinamarieborja@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 09, 2018 6:49 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Comments in opposition to BZA Case 19377: The Boundary Companies and The Missionary Society

Hello,

My husband and I are residents of the Chancellors Row community in the Brookland neighborhood.

We are writing you to request that you reduce the density of the proposed development to no more than 30 homes.

Why? All of the issues raised at the hearing are exacerbated by the tremendous density of the project. Sixty homes and an institutional building are too much. We already struggle with parking and we know it will get worse when the school is fully occupied, traffic on 4th Street is going to get worse when the city narrows the roads to add bike lanes, the storm water facility already floods when it rains heavily, there are no local parks for the community other than this land, and so on. Adding 60 homes and a large building will result in a long construction period, a tremendous influx of people and vehicles, and doesn't leave enough undisturbed space for trees to survive. 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.

Next, the BZA should require long-term tree protection and 100% preservation of heritage trees.

Why? The tree survival rate shown by the applicant is wildly overstated, given the significant amount of regrading and underground work included in the plan and practical experience with construction. The testimony given by Barbara Deutsch, an experienced landscape architect, as well as our experience in Chancellor's Row where many trees have declined or died in the last few years, directly contradicts what the developer has promised. Tree root structures extend 2-3 times the size of a tree's crown, and the plan as shown does not limit construction enough to protect the existing trees. The BZA should require that the applicant structure the project to protect the long-term survival of 100% of the heritage trees (whose trunks are more than 100" in circumference) and to protect more trees overall.

In addition, the testimony of Casey Trees should be disregarded until they include heritage tree assessments and can fully address the impact of underground work.

Why? When questioned by the BZA members, the representative from Casey Trees admitted that they are not fully aware of the underground construction planned for the site. The applicant needs to provide Casey Trees with a full explanation of the significant regrading, utility line construction, and storm water management work that they intend to perform so that Casey Trees can provide a meaningful analysis. In the meantime, their testimony should be viewed as pending. Casey Trees also did not account for heritage trees on the site, which is a new DC requirement.

Furthermore, we ask that the BZA should require that the applicant cooperate with the surrounding community, and provide evidence of that cooperation.

Why? The applicant has not made sufficient effort to cooperate, as evidenced not only by the number of concerned neighbors at the hearing, but also by the lack of communication with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. USCCB submitted a letter in opposition at the last minute once they realized the use of their private drive and storm water management system are part of the applicant's plan.

The developer gave the BZA a list of the meetings they supposedly held with the community. Most of those meetings were just presentations where the developer showed slides to the crowd, not discussions where they actually listened to the concerns being raised. Given the numerous issues identified

during the hearing and how long this application has been pending, we suggest the BZA deny the current application and require the developers to work with the surrounding property owners to address all the relevant issues that have been identified before resubmitting their application.

Evidence of meaningful engagement with the surrounding communities (the CR HOA, the specific homeowners' party, the USCCB, and Building Hope schools) in the form of signed agreements should be provided in the developer's amended submission.

Next, we ask that the BZA work to protect our private streets.

Although the applicant's plan does not currently provide for vehicular through traffic on private CR streets, there is pressure from DDOT to connect 4th and 7th Streets through our neighborhood and to change the easements. We strongly oppose such use of our private streets, which were not designed for heavy traffic and are 100% maintained and paid for by our HOA. We request that the BZA prevent any efforts to connect the streets or increase the easements in place.

Last, we want to express concern about an agreement between Boundary/Elm Fourth Street Companies and Mr. John Anderson, Representative for St. Paul's College Neighbors for Thoughtful Development that was submitted as part of the developer's BZA application. In this agreement, a multitude of promises are made by the developer to Mr. Anderson should the applicants application be approved by the BZA. Two items on this list cause concern to many neighbors of CR as only one row of homes has been promised them. These include:

Construction Point 2: A pre-construction survey of homes that immediately abut the construction site, specifically houses number 500, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510 and 512 on Regent place, shall be offered and prepared upon owner consent prior to construction. Following the completion of construction activities a post-construction survey will be completed for the homes previously surveyed, and the Chancellor's Row homes assessed for any construction-related damage, the results of which and any notes damage discussed with the homeowners. Any damages noted which are determined to be the result of the construction activities shall be addressed by the developer to the satisfaction of the homeowner.

Construction Point 5: Powerwashing – The homes, roadways and sidewalks of Chancellor's Row that immediately abut the construction side shall be powerwashed by a third-party contractor as necessary throughout the construction period with a reasonable frequency.

We are asking that all rows immediately facing the proposed development (501, 503, 505, 507 and 509 Regent and those homes immediately facing the proposed Paulist building) also receive these promises and the BZA application be amending to include such language.

Thank you for taking all of these matters into consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina and Dairo Borja

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