

February 28, 2017

Dear Members of the Board of Zoning Adjustments:

I am a resident of the ANC 5B03 community since 1995, and I oppose the special zoning exceptions and variances requested by the DC Department of General Services in case 19452 for the 1700 Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. proposed temporary homeless shelter.

I feel the suggested proposal conflicts with why I moved to this lovely neighborhood in the first place. It makes me feel unsafe, that it will lack appropriate security for both tenants and residents. The scale of the project is too large for the single family residents that currently abuts our streets. Your plan is counterproductive to the Upper Northeast Small Area plan, the Friends of Rhode Island and Ward 5 in general.

We pay taxes and purchase property to build a safe haven to live in zoned residential communities. Why not centralized such ideas downtown in the business sector of the city on commercial properties owned by the city downtown? It should be temporary rather than a fixed situation which could develop into an unsafe environment for under aged children and adults.

It is obvious to many residents of the city that our streets are not being cleaned, trash not adequately removed and the Department of Public Works are not held accountable to clean corridors like the Trinidad area (West Virginia Avenue), Rhode Island Avenue and street sweeping in general. Blight, and uncleaned streets breeds crime, prostitution and fear for seniors and residents to feel safe in their own back yards. Building miniature housing projects in residential neighborhoods suggest you are not trying to develop temporary means to assist families in need, but rather permanent and long term living at the expense of the community residents.

I propose you convert one unused school building downtown, and make it your model temporary arrangement for short term emergency families in need. Let this one model serve the city and be the safe haven that you can monitor, provide shelter, security and accountability by the District of Columbia, and not residents . Don't pass the city's problem to the residential neighborhoods. Don't change the zoning laws for communities to accommodate large scale shelters, and create affordable permanent places for temporary residents to live. Don't indicate and encourage people to be homeless with kids, or to have kids that choose to be independent to live on their own because they have problems with their parents.

Thank you in advance for relocating the shelter elsewhere, and uphold the current zoning regulations for the neighbors that reside and pay taxes in Ward 5.

Sincerely,

Michael Gunn