

Board of Zoning Adjustment
BZA Application No. 19572 (SIM Development, LLC)
Re:

I'm writing this letter in regards to the matters regarding BZA Application No: 19572 (special exemption & relief). The Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) previously postponed a hearing on this case to allow SIM Development, LLC (SIM) to perform a traffic pattern study, and to address many outstanding concerns of local residents in Anacostia regarding the quality and character of the proposal.

SIM development, and its representatives, appeared before the October 3, 2017 meeting of the Ward 8A ANC, and residents of Historic Anacostia to plead their appeal for the above-mentioned application regarding 1916 15th St. SE, Washington, DC 20020. At this meeting, a motion of support for the special exemption was introduced by ANC 8A05, Travon Hawkins. This motion was introduced without supporting documents made available to community members. There were no architectural plans, indications of the changes in the height of 1916 15th St. SE after construction is complete, independent studies on the impact on local parking and traffic patterns or other related documents available for the public to review on-site or to take home for further analysis. Additionally, several representatives from SIM attempted to explain the proposed changes to the building located at 1916 15th St. SE, but were unable to provide enough detail to satisfy members of the community or the Ward 8A ANCs. As such, the Ward 8A ANC members moved to postpone a vote in support of application 19572 until November 7, 2017 under the assumption that additional information about the impact on traffic, parking, the height of the building after construction, and other quality of life matters would be made available to local residents and the Ward 8A ANC members.

In the interim, I believe ANC 8A05, Travon Hawkins, met with several homeowners along the 1900 block of 15th St. to hear numerous concerns about the project. This meeting took place on October 9, 2017, after the Ward 8A ANC moved to postpone the vote on application 19572. It's my understanding that ANC 8A05, Travon Hawkins, heard from many local residents who all expressed opposition to special exemption requested in application 19572. Specifically, they expressed concerns about the limited availability of parking if this exemption is granted, an increase in traffic congestion due to the addition of 16 multifamily housing units in a building that is currently zone for 9 units, and also requested that a traffic pattern study be made available for review before ANC 8A voted on the special exemption. It's my understanding that at this meeting with local residents ANC 8A05, Travon Hawkins, promised to vote against the proposed application for special exemption (19572) before the BZA on November 15, 2017.

At the most recent meeting on November 7, 2017, ANC 8A members once again took up the matter of support for SIM's request for exemption. Once again, community members expressed opposition to the application because no relevant materials were made available to the public in a timely basis. Audience members had no access to architectural plans, indications of the changes in the height of 1916 15th St. SE after construction is complete, independent studies or the impact on local parking. Additionally, SIM only made a traffic pattern study available to Ward 8A ANCs on November 6, 2017, one day before the proposed vote. The representatives from SIM development didn't present these findings to audience members during the meeting, and members of the public are still unaware about the local impact upon traffic, parking, and quality of life if this application for exemption (19572) is approved. At this meeting, ANC 8A05, Travon Hawkins, moved to vote in support of the aforementioned exemption (application 19572), and despite the opposition of audience members, other ANC 8A members, and residents of the 1900 block of 15th St. SE, along with a clear lack of information about the impact of this exemption, the vote passed.

I'm writing in opposition to the proposed application for exemption (19572), and to express my opposition to the recent vote in support of the application by ANC 8A.

Best,

Oliver Spurgeon III
202-225-0614
2210 16th St. SE