DATE: September 8, 2000

TO: Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

BZA 16597

SEP -8 P1:14

FROM: Helen M. Edwards
Grady Edwards III
617 Mellon Street SE
Washington, DC 20032

SUBJECT: Application of Elaine Carrera; pursuant to 11 DCMR 3103.2 for a variance under Section 404 from the rear requirements for a proposed second-story addition to and existing accessory garage with a above grade connection in a R-5-A District at premises 623 Mellon Street, S.E. (Square 5984, Lot 37)

We are responding to the notice received, from the Government of the District of Columbia, Board of Zoning Adjustment, concerning the addition to be built on the garage of my neighbor, Ms. Elaine Carrera.

We are apposing the request for that addition to be built above her garage.

The reasons that we are apposing her request are listed in the following three incidents. Also, other reasons are explained concerning our property and specific reasons concerning her business at 623 Mellon.

INCIDENTS

1)

In the month of June 2000, Ms. Helen Edwards (Co-Owner, of 617 Mellon Street SE, Washington, DC 20032) discovered that Ms. Elaine Carrera (Owner, of 623 Mellon Street SE, Washington, DC 20032, and Neighbor of 617 Mellon Street SE, Washington, DC 20032). Had a wrath iron fence welded to the fence of 617 and that the Ms. Carrara had moved her fence 7-foot wooden fence 10 inches on our property. My mother informed me of the situation and the following day went to Ms. Carrera's business at 623 Mellon, to asked for her, her daughter answered the door and informed me that she was having in and out surgery. I inquired about the fence that was welded to our fence and the movement of the 7-foot fence on to our side of the property. She told me she knew nothing about it and that she would tell her mother when she returned. I asked that her mother get in contact with me during the weekend to discuss this situation. I also informed the daughter that I was calling the authorities to make a formal complaint for the record so that there would be no question that she would have been notified.

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A couple of hours later, my sister (Ms. Sharon A. Evans-Edwards) stop by the residence (617) to check on our pet and the mail, when she arrived there was a contract welder, welding on our fence and shaking it violently along with the Carrera family members. My sister inquired to what was going to the welder and the Carrera family members they told her none of her business and then started using profanity and threatening remarks, she called my mother and she told my sister to call the police. She call the police then call me at my place of employment on her cell phone, she informed my of the situation and during my conversation with her I over heard Ms. Carrera and her daughter, Saundra using profanity towards my sister and making threatening remarks. I told her, that I would be there in a few minutes. During that time, my sister was waiting for the authorities and myself to arrive at our residence. She asked the welder to stop working on the fence. He did not have authorization to weld on the fence from no property owner at 617 Mellon. He ignored my sister's request and Ms. Carrera told the welder to continue to weld on the fence and repair the fence so that no one can tell that it had been welded and connected her fence, and not to pay attention to my sister, he in turn did so. Meanwhile the police arrived, OFC. C.L. Whittington, Badge #4218, 7th District, and his partner (Female did not get her name, or badge no) my sister explained the situation to the officers. By that time, I arrived, to the residence, and informed the police of the events that occurred early that morning with the first pair of police officers. Ms. Carrera was to telephone me concerning this situation, so that we could discuss the matter and come to a agreeable solution for both parties involved.

As I explained to Officer Whittington, Ms. Carrera started using profanity and the officer Whittington's partner instructed her to be quit and told the welder to stop working on the fence. After I explained the situation to the officers, they asked Ms. Carrera did she get permission to weld on her neighbor's fence, she responded, "No, I did not! Then Officer Whittington, asked the welding contractor did your or your company authorization from of the owners of the fence to weld or connect Ms. Carrera 's fence, he responded, "No, I did not. The officer told Ms. Carrera that she needed permission to have her fence connected or welded to her neighbor's property, first, before any work or welding could be accomplished. Officer Whittington, explained to Ms. Carrera and the welder that without authorization from the property owners that they have put themselves in a very vulnerable situation to have legal action taken against them by the owners of this property (617). I then showed the officer the property line were our original fence was situated on the property line and that the contracted that replaced our old fence did not put the new fence on the property line as instructed. I informed Ofr. Whittington, that, I had been in contact with them to have the fence moved to the property line.

Then Officer Whittington and his partner discussed the situation with Ms. Carrera, and myself, and asked that we should try to work the situation out peacefully. Ms. Carrera continued to be uncooperative with the situation.

Ms. Carrera and other family members waited until the officers departed the area and started taunting me with abusive language and threats. I did not respond in any of the remark or threats.

As of the date of this letter Ms. Carrera has never discuss the situation concerning the fence and we so far do not intend to take legal action against Ms. Carrera for her actions.

INCIDENT 2

During the Year of 1996, Ms. Carrera put up a 7 foot wood privacy fence around her property from the front to the back on both sides, I don't know it she has a permit for this or not, it was never discuss with us. This fence does not comply with the neighborhood she is the only property owner with a privacy fence in the front yard. This type of fence in our neighborhood poses a danger to the innocent people walking up and down the street passing in front of her residence. Anyone can hide behind the fence with intent to assault, rob, abduct or shot a potential victim.

With her fence posted in front and along our side of the property and infringe a hardship for extra work for us as the owners of 617, for weeks and other plant growth that was not there before. Vine type plants are growing on our black iron fence, which is growing from her property causing us extra expense to control these plants. Weeds are growing her side of the property climbing on our fence and causing the deterioration to our fence and an added expense to control these weeds that were not our problem until Ms. Carrara put up her 7-ft wood privacy fence.

This Fence does not compliment the neighborhood and is a haven for criminals to hide and assault, unsuspecting neighbors and innocent people walking the street.

INCIDENT 3

During the Year of 1997, Ms. Carrera had her son installing a wrath iron fence and wrath iron pieces on top the brick column that would be holding the fence in her front yard during the morning while we were at work. When we returned from work in the evening, of the same day her son installed her fence and wrath iron pieces on top of her brick column and painted the fence white. We notice our brick column next to hers that holds our wrath iron fence was broken and the top of the column was taken off and lad in our front yard with white paint on it. When we went to work that morning our brick column was not broken and it did not have white paint on it. I went next door to Ms. Carrera to inquire to what happen, there was no one to be found to explain the situation. The following day, I asked Ms. Carrera about it, she told me she knew nothing about it. I also asked her about the white paint on my brick column from her son painting her fence. She told me she new nothing about it and

her son didn't do it. I told her that is your paint that you had your son to paint your fence and I want it removed off the brick column. She had her son to remove the white paint off our brick column and denied that he broke our brick column to fit her wrath iron pieces she had put on top of her column.

We have lived next to Ms. Carrera since March 78, and on several occasions she has had projects done to her property were it involves working with her neighbors and has never talk to and/or get proper authorization to get her projects worked on. When projects are connected to neighboring properties they get damage or broken and know one working in connection with the project knows what happened. She has no regard for other people's property as explained previously.

At 617 Mellon Street, we have a family pet that runs free in our yard. If we chain our dog in the yard we will violate a recent law past by the District of Columbia.

If, Ms. Carrera is permitted to build on top of her garage, there will not be sufficient sunlight for my plants and garden to grown. This will cause the value of my property to fall.

Ms. Carrera has a business at 623 Mellon Street; she houses about 16-19 patients from Social Services and/or St. Elizabeth Hospital. This is a residential neighborhood and if she is building this new addition on top of her garage to house more patients and further expand her business this should be question and well looked at. Not knowing the condition of some of the patients living next door and if housed above the garage with and easy access to children anything can happen. With the living quarters built on top of her garage will pose a danger to my grandchildren or even to a family member or friend visiting. I don't know the mental condition of the patients she has living at 623 Mellon or the danger that is poses to my grandchildren and children visiting my home. We have many family functions in our back yard. What kind of impact would this have on our family, pet and the strained relation with Ms. Carrara is too much to bare.

I can not rely on Ms. Carrara to communicate honestly with us concerning her project. During the past years, she has damaged our property and has been clearly responsible for the damage when it is her project is in operation. Ms. Carrera has refused to make amends for this discretion. Ms. Carrera neighborly record with us as neighbors has shown a lack of concern and respect for our property and an unwillingness to communicate with us. As state in the few projects she has work on involving our property she performs these projects when no one is at our home and when we return from work the damage has been done and no one knows nothing of the situation.

In this neighborhood there is a drug problem and a number of murders have occur in the 600 block of Mellon Street. There have been 3 shootings in the alley behind our homes

one directly behind Ms. Carrera's business at 623 Mellon. With the existance of her garage it is a hiding place for drug use, drug sales and sex acts are in clear view of neighbors and their children. This will be a haven for more drug sales and prostitution in the alley behind our homes. With the building of the project will increase the venerability of more crime and another place of drug sales and prostitution.

617 Mellon Street is an historical home, pictures of our home and history has been displaye in the Smithsonian museum. Any changes or upgrades to our property must be compatible to insure the integrity of he property and the value is maintained. We must keep with the decor and and project must compliment this historic property. Projects altering the property and the adjoining properties will have to compliment the property and the neighborhood.

We have a neighborhood watch and Ms. Carrera has not been part of this program to assist in stopping drug sales and prostitution on Mellon Street.

There are only two homes that have garages in 600 block of Mellon Street and they compliment and comply with the neighborhood decor.

With Ms. Carrera building on her garage does not compliment or comply with the existing homes on the 600 block of Mellon Street.

I have enclosed pictures of Ms. Carrera property. She does not have the public hearing posture posted on her property for the public to view. Ms. Carrera has never discussed the addition with us. No building plans have been shown to how this is going to be built. Will this lean over on our property. Her garage is on the line of our property how will this be built with damaging our property and what alerations will have to be done to our propert? Will sewer lines, water overflow, gas lines or what other utilities have to be connected to the garage to provide adequate living conditions?.

As I have stated we are in apposition to this application for second-story addition.

Respectfully,

Grady Edwards III
Property Owner of
617 Mellon Street S.E.
Washington, DC 20032

Helen M Edwards

Helen M. Edwards
Property Owner of
617 Mellon Street S.E.
Washington, DC 20032

Attachement