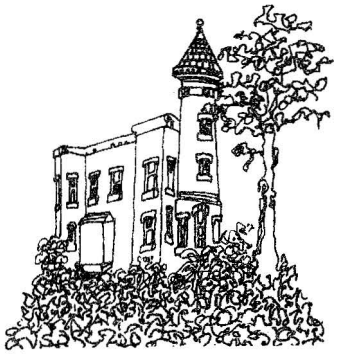


Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc.

741 Eighth St. SE / Washington, DC 20003-2802 / (202) 675-9340 / Fax (202) 675-9358

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Jerrily R. Kress, Director
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, D.C. 20001

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEC 5 P 3:32

Re: BZA Application No. 16622

December 4, 2000

Dear Ms. Kress:

I am writing to request that a decision on our application not be delayed as per the ANC Commissioner's letter of December 1st because there has been a community assessment and numerous occasions for Commissioner Fields to be apart of or lead this effort but he has chosen not to do so.

Sometime during the last week of September, we received a call in our Administrative offices from a person who described themselves as a representative of Commissioner Fields inviting us to a meeting on October 11th to discuss our BZA application to the ANC. We immediately agreed. On either Monday or Tuesday, October 9th or 10th, in conversation with a member of Planning Department, we were informed that Commissioner Fields had expressed dissatisfaction with our not being in touch with him. Vera Johnson called him the same day and when he called back, he stated that we had not been invited to the meeting, that we couldn't have because he has a log of who his Assistant calls and he had not authorized her calling. We said we would very much like to have the chance to make a presentation. He said that this was the wrong meeting as this was a meeting of the Zoning Committee and we really should meet with the

A United Way Member Agency

Case No. 16622
Exhibit No. 48

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.16622
EXHIBIT NO.48

entire ANC. He continually insisted in this conversation that no one had called to invite us and that our claim that we had been called was "hearsay". He also said his office had tried to call us several times and we had not responded. I called him the next day to say that I could not understand how we would have missed his calls and he insisted his efforts to reach us went back two years. I told him I had checked at the Sasha Bruce House and the log at our Administrative office and could not find his call and that I was the person he could contact in the future. He told me it was fine to attend the meeting and I could present but that this really was not the right meeting to attend.

I did go to the meeting on October 11th and made a presentation but was informed that the ANC would not take a position on our application since the whole ANC had not had a chance to hear about it. I arranged with Commissioner Fields on that day to attend the larger total ANC meeting which was scheduled for November 1st.

He called me in the week before our first scheduled BZA hearing and asked that we delay the hearing to give the ANC a chance to meet first. I said that we wanted to go ahead with the hearing but would support keeping the record open if the BZA chose to allow more time for the ANC 's comments. As it turned out, the original BZA hearing on October 24th was postponed to November 8th and allowed us to address the ANC at the next meeting. Commissioner Fields called me after the BZA hearing on October 24th and I reiterated that we would be attending the ANC meeting on November 1st . It was my understanding that he would be assessing public opinion of the issue, invite interested parties and that we should come prepared to respond to any neighborhood concerns we had not already heard.

We did present at the ANC meeting on November 1st but only Mr. Halpern was there prepared to discuss the Sasha Bruce application. For everyone else, it was a new issue and most people did not seem to feel directly effected. Commissioner Fields did not attend and there was not a quorum. But also, the other Commissioners there informed us that we should have first gone to the

Zoning Committee which brings a recommendation to whole ANC. Since Commissioner Fields is the Chair of the Zoning Committee of the ANC, they said he should arrange this. We informed them that we had gone to the Zoning Committee meeting but no review of our case was made there. The other Commissioners also asked if Commissioner Fields had organized a community meeting about the issue with the clear implication we thought that they had expected he would. We informed them that to our knowledge, he had not.

We then had our hearing with the Board of Zoning Adjustment. In the course of this process, we learned that there were significant community problems with our operation and in a effort to correct mis-impressions and build better relationships, we did a number of things including inviting our neighbors to a meeting on November 19th.

Commissioner Fields called me the week after the hearing on November 8th and I told him we were calling a community meeting and that I would be sure he was invited. I did call him on either Wednesday or Thursday before the meeting, the same days we invited all the other neighbors. I left a message and asked him to let me know if he could come. Since I did not hear from him, I attempted to call him at the ANC office (his other number was at my office) on Saturday. I could not reach him and so got his number from my office early Sunday morning to remind him of the meeting. He called at the Sasha Bruce House just as the community meeting was beginning to say he did not get my earlier message but would come by a little later. He never arrived.

I called Commissioner Fields after the November 19th community meeting to inform him that it went well and asked him to serve on our Community Liaison Committee. He said that he wanted to visit the program and I urged him to do this. A few days later, he did go to Sasha Bruce House and asked for the list of attendees and the other materials we had sent to the BZA. George Johnson, the Program Director, asked him if he wanted to wait to get it then and he said he didn't and wanted to come back for a tour which he would call us about and get the materials at that time. He has not yet come back but his Assistant called on

December lst and asked for the list and the materials we have given to BZA. George drove it to his office within an hour of the call. About one-half hour later, Commissioner Fields called to say we had left out the list of attendees and George went to his office again and showed him that it was, in fact, included.

Later that same time, we received his letter to the BZA which characterizes so much of our interaction with Commissioner Fields utterly differently.

We believe as the person who represents our Single Member District and the Zoning Committee chair, he has had ample time and numerous opportunities and forums since our application was filed to assess the community. Communication with him has often been contradictory and baffling to us but we have responded and communicated regularly nonetheless. We also have done our own assessment of the community as outlined in our numerous communications with the Board and feel we have begun a positive process with neighbors. He has invited us to attend the next ANC meeting and we will do so and any others but sincerely feel that the decision on our application should not be delayed for it.

Thank you for your consideration. I will await your reply. Until then, I am

Sincerely,

Deborah Shore

Deborah Shore
Executive Director