June 21, 2001

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Ms. Sheila Reid
Chair
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
441 4th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: Case No. 16676

Dear Chairman Reid:

Please deny or postpone action on BZA Case No. 16676, a proposal by the Washington Hebrew Congregation to site townhouses on a vacant lot on Missouri Road, N.W. This case is set to be heard by the BZA on June 26.

The developer, Poretsky Builders, has not worked with the community or with Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4A, and the public has not had an opportunity to see or review the proposal. I attended 4A's public meeting in June and was shocked to hear the developer tell the public that he had no exterior renderings of the project.

He told the community that there was "no time" to do the renderings, since he had just submitted revised plans to the adjoining property owners, the Lightfoot family.

This is absurd. The BZA first saw this case in March and gave the developer a continuance, due to the fact that his submissions were incomplete and misleading. The board's chairman asked Mr. Poretsky to work with the ANC and asked ANC 4A's chairman to set aside time on the commission's agenda to hear a new presentation.

Mr. Poretsky knew all of the deadlines and had two months to develop a new proposal and all of the materials for community review. He did not do that.

Several Advisory Neighborhood 4A commissioners noted the lack of information when they voted against the project. The commission voted 3 to 2 to oppose it. ANC 4A also voted to oppose this project in March, prior to the board's first review.

D.C. law gives Advisory Neighborhood Commissions "great weight" in land use decisions, and it is critical that commissioners and the public understand what is being proposed for their community. Mr. Poretsky did not work fairly with them on this project.

BZA
Case No. 16676
Exhibit No. 44

Board of Zoning Adjustment
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CASE NO.16676
EXHIBIT NO.44

I live about two miles from the site, in ANC 4B, and have attended ANC 4A's public meetings on the subject. I was present at the BZA's March public hearing. The first proposal was deceptive and poorly designed, and did not blend with the important and historic Military Road School and the outstanding Victorian home adjoining the townhouse site.

The exterior design of these townhouses is very important to me in evaluating this proposal. I have not been able to see them.

Therefore, I believe the Board of Zoning Adjustment should either deny or postpone a decision on this project.

Thank you for your consideration and for protecting our neighborhoods from inappropriate and poorly designed development.

Sincerely,

Sara Green
7106 Piney Branch Road, NW
Washington, D.C. 20012