Dr. Alan C. Mitchell
Dr. Julia A. Lamm
1301 33rd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

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April 24, 2001

District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW
Suite 210-S
Washington, DC 20001

To Whom It May Concern:

We the undersigned, District of Columbia residents of 1301 33rd Street, NW, write to register our objections to the proposed zoning variance filed by Mr. & Mrs. Craig Goodman, application 16696, to modify an existing garage into a three-story residential structure on their properly at 3254 O Street NW (Square 1230, Lot 809) in the R-3 district. Our objections are based on two serious concerns regarding 1) public safety and 2) the changes the proposed zoning variation will bring to our neighborhood, including additional residential congestion and an increased limitation of on-street parking. Beyond that, we are further concerned about the imposition and inconvenience the construction of such a structure will occasion, as we foresee possible noise and debris pollution and the additional drawbacks presented by the presence and activity large construction equipment in a neighborhood where parking space is already at a premium and pedestrian traffic often compromises comfortable and easy access. In registering our objections to this proposed zoning variance, we add our support to the considered, measured, and reasonable objections already filed with the Board of Zoning Adjustment, in a letter of April 5, 2001, by Dr. Mary R. Carter of 1317 33rd Street, NW. As Dr. Carter's property is adjacent to the site in question, any modification of the existing structure will have a deleterious impact on both the quality of her life and the value of her property. We recognize, however, that Dr. Carter too shares our concerns for public safety and the changes to the neighborhood that residential development along the alley between 33rd and Potomac Streets will naturally bring.

Regarding public safety, we believe the residential development of existing garages and non-residential properties along the alley in question poses an increased risk of fire hazard in our neighborhood. Any proposed residential development in an area not as yet zoned for it will set a dangerous precedent, perhaps prompting other property owners to develop additional residential sites. While our concern has immediately to do with the Goodman proposal for the structure situated on the alley between 33rd and Potomac Streets, it extends beyond that to the alley between 33rd and 34th Streets, as well. These alleys are already lined with garages housing motor vehicles, that pose potential fire hazard. Adding

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residential structures with heating and cooling apparatuses, stoves and kitchen appliances, all powered by natural gas, electricity, and/or oil, only increases the possibility of fire hazard. Given the restricted space in these alleys, fire fighting equipment may not be able to be proximate enough to bring a fire under control, to contain it, and to prevent its spread throughout the adjacent properties. Were the Goodmans allowed to vary their existing structure into a residential building, what would prevent future property owners from doing the same to their garages and non-residential structures along these alleys? On what basis might the Board of Zoning Adjustment argue against the proliferation of residential structures along these alleys? In the interest of public safety it seems to us that the best interest of the neighborhood would be served if the precedent were never set that might allow for the modification of existing garages and structures into residential properties, which will only add further public safety hazard to the one that already exists from the number of garages located along the alley in question and any other alleys proximate to it.

Regarding changes to the neighborhood that will result from the modification of the Goodman's property into a residential structure, we believe any increase in the number of residents and the potential for further increases that will result from the precedent mentioned in the above paragraph, will only add to the congestion of the neighborhood and bring further limitations on the availability of on-street parking. As it is now, we often find it difficult to find on-street parking. Sometimes it is necessary for us to drive around for as many as thirty minutes to locate a parking space, and frequently that space can be as far as seven blocks away from our residence. In the evening and on weekends, with the amount of activity in the businesses along Wisconsin Avenue and M Street, is it especially difficult to find a place to park. Any increase in the number of residents and their guests, with the possibility of one or more additional vehicles will only add to the problem. Therefore, we believe it is in the best interest of the neighborhood and those residents who do not have the convenience of a garage space, not to increase the number of residents and vehicles in our neighborhood, either through the zoning adjustment petitioned by the Goodmans or by any additional ones that will naturally result when other property owners will wish to develop their properties in kind.

Beyond the two serious and immediate concerns we have already registered, we are naturally concerned for the kinds of inconveniences and impositions construction along the alley in question will bring to our neighborhood. The alley in question does not afford adequate space for large construction equipment, dumpsters, and the like. Doubtless this equipment will have to be parked and located on the streets of our neighborhood, further adding to the problem of congestion and restricting the available parking for as many months as it will take to complete the proposed modification project. Were any such equipment located in the vicinity of our residence at 1301 33rd Street, we would have to strenuously oppose such a plan, since the movement of refuse and debris and the transport of construction materials would impede easy and comfortable access to and from our residence. The pollution from debris and noise would be, in our judgment, unacceptable, not to mention the further public safety hazards to pedestrians walking up and down 33rd Street that would result from the construction activity itself.

These are our concerns regarding the proposed zoning variance filed by the Goodmans, and, in good faith, we submit them to you for your consideration and

deliberations. Given the consequences to our neighborhood that would result from the petitioned zoning adjustment and the precedent that it will set for future zoning adjustment, we sincerely believe that the increased risks to public safety and the additional residential congestion that will naturally bring with it further limitations in available on-street parking are sufficient to warrant a denial of the proposed zoning adjustment. Were the proposed zoning adjustment to be approved our neighborhood would suffer lasting deleterious effects, placing its residents at increased risk for fire hazard and diminishing the character of the neighborhood and its quality of life. We, therefore, respectfully request that the proposed zoning adjustment be denied and that no precedent be set for yet further residential development along the alley in question and others proximate to it.

Sincerely,

Alan C. Mitchell

Alan C. Mitchell, Ph.D

Julia A. Lamm

Julia A. Lamm, Ph.D

cc: Mr. Justin Wagner
Ms. Maxine Brown Roberts
Mrs. Bonnie Hardy