Nov. 12, 2001

re: BZA Application #16710

Ms. Sheri Pruitt
Secretary
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 16710

Dear Ms. Pruitt:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2001 at Sibley Memorial Hospital. A quorum of at least four commissioners was present at all times.

The commission wants to thank the Board for giving the Commission time to view the scaled architectural drawings for the porte cochere for which Vinay Pande is asking for a special exemption so he can have it built in the backyard of his residence at 5210 Klingle Street NW. At the direction of Harold Ross, Mr. Pande's attorney, the drawings–the same presented to the BZA at its initial public hearing on the case–were supplied to the commission on the day of its meeting. Unfortunately, neither Mr. Ross or Mr. Pande was able to attend the meeting, so it was not possible to have the discussions suggested by Chairman Griffis that might lead to an agreement between the contesting parties.

The commission members studied the scaled drawings at some length, and the examination of the proposed structure and its location but reinforced the commission's opposition to construction of the proposed porte cochere (or car port). Reaffirming its earlier position, the commission voted 5-0 in opposition to the granting of a special exception for construction of the structure.

In part, the commission's objection were based upon the location of the porte cochere. On examining the drawings (sheet no. 1), we discovered that the long, southeast side of the porte cochere is located right on the property line where normally an eight-foot setback would be required. The result is that the side and the 10-foot, 10-inch-high roof of the porte cochere visually intrude into the front yard of the next door neighbor, John Kennedy. We were further disturbed to find on studying the drawing that on the Hawthorne St. entry, the porte cochere is set back only two feet from the property line, where a 25-foot setback would be required under the zoning provisions for a rear yard..

These findings contributed to the larger conclusion that the proposed structure is intrusive upon its neighbors on Hawthorne, incompatible with the neighborhood which has no garages butting directly upon the sidewalk, and that it would stand out like an eyesore on a quiet residential street.

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The commission also found it important that collectively the neighbors on Hawthorne oppose the proposed building, as they did the existing awning, as you will see in letters sent by neighbors to be found in your file on the case. At our meeting on Nov. 7, one resident on Klingle Street stood up to volunteer that not all neighbors on Klingle have no objection to the structure–an impression left by the applicant at your hearing. When it comes to such serious variations from zoning setbacks as presented in this case, we believe the objections of neighbors become of ever greater importance and should be given serious consideration.

We leave it to you to decide whether under zoning law, the case should be considered as as a special exception under #3104 of the zoning code rather than as a variance under #3103 of the code. But whether it be by special exception or by variance, we strongly urge that neither be granted for a structure that is not in harmony with the neighborhood, would adversely affect use of neighboring properties and would significantly intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the street. We also renew our request that the board order the dismantling of the existing awning, which was built without a permit and in violation of zoning requirements.

We urge the BZA to give our recommendation the "great weight" to which it is entitled under law.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Roberts Lewis (for)

Eleanor Roberts Lewis

Chair, ANC3D