French Street Neighbors Association

July 25, 2003

D.C. BOARD OF ZONING
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District Of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment
Office Of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to advise the Board of Zoning Adjustment of the opposition of the French Street Neighbors Association (FSNA) to BZA Case No. 17035.

On December 2, 2002, Edward M. Johnson, representing the applicant, Howard University Hospital, appeared at the association's monthly meeting to present information on the proposed conversion of a building at 915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, into an apartment building. This building is on the block immediately to the south of a residential block, the 900 block of R Street, NW, in our association's service area.

At that meeting, our members raised a number of concerns about the project, which would require zoning relief in order to proceed. Of these, two issues emerged as being of most serious concern relevant to the operation of the proposed apartment building. Those issues were the impact on street parking in the neighborhood and the potential use of the building as a student dormitory.

Mr. Johnson stated at the meeting that only four parking spaces would be available to tenants in the building on spaces located at the rear of 915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW. When advised of FSNA's concern about where additional vehicles belonging to the residents of the 11 units in the proposed apartment building would park, Mr. Johnson responded that his client was attempting to negotiate the use of parking spaces at Shaw Junior High School to prevent the need for any vehicles associated with the proposed apartment building to park on our already parking deficient streets. Mr. Johnson was advised of difficulties residents currently experience in finding parking spaces for their vehicles, especially on street cleaning days.

FSNA requested that if Howard University Hospital was unable to contract for additional parking spaces for vehicles in excess of those for which parking was available on site, that FSNA would expect to receive written assurances that apartment lease provisions would preclude the rental of units in the building to persons who own automobiles unless on site parking was available for them.

The French Street Neighbors Association also expressed grave concerns that without stipulations preventing the use of the building as student housing, Howard University could elect to use the building as a student dormitory, rather than housing for Howard University Hospital staff, as Mr. Johnson indicated was his client's intention. Use of the building at 915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, as a dormitory would not be supported by our association and the community we serve. FSNA

BZA
Case No. 17035
Exhibit No. 34

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17035
EXHIBIT NO. 34

therefore asked that Howard University provide written guarantees that the building at 915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW would never be used to house students.

At the December 2, 2002 meeting, Mr. Johnson assured FSNA that he would share our concerns with Howard University Hospital officials and that they would respond to our requests for a written agreement. FSNA advised Mr. Johnson that compliance with the aforementioned request for written guarantees restricting tenant parking and use of the building as a dormitory would be prerequisites to receiving the association's support for a BZA application.

Mr. Johnson subsequently advised Alexander M. Padro, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for the single member district where both the building to be converted into apartments and the French Street Neighbors Association's service area are located, that the project had been modified so that no zoning relief was required.

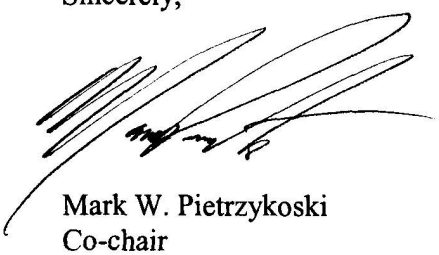
A letter from Howard University Hospital dated January 23, 2003, provided no assurances that parking in excess of zoning requirements would be provided, nor any restrictions on use of the building as a dormitory. Since we had been advised through Commissioner Padro that Howard University Hospital needed no zoning relief in order to proceed, FSNA saw no reason to respond to the letter.

It was only in the past week that FSNA became aware that Howard University Hospital had filed an application for zoning relief with the Board of Zoning Adjustment, and that such relief was indeed required for the conversion of the building to residential use. As a result, FSNA has not had the opportunity to engage in further discussions with the applicant regarding our concerns.

Therefore, the French Street Neighbors Association finds it necessary to oppose the application. We believe that the building at 915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW should be renovated and returned to productive use. However, the applicant must take responsibility for preventing the project from imposing an additional parking burden on the community, as well as ensuring that the building will not be used for purposes not supported by the community. In the alternative, FSNA would expect that some tangible benefits acceptable to the association accrue to the community to compensate for such negative impacts.

If Howard University Hospital is willing to engage in a productive dialogue with the community about how to address our concerns, the French Street Neighbors Association would request that the Board of Zoning Adjustment delay rendering a decision on this case until such time as a potential resolution can be achieved. However, if the applicant is unwilling to attempt to address our concerns, we urge the Board to reject the application and not grant the zoning relief requested.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Pietrzykoski
Co-chair
1712 9th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001