Statement of Existing and Intended Use

The property at 1029 Cecil Place NW (Lot 90; Square 1188; W-1) consists of a single-family brick rowhouse dwelling occupying 443.20 square feet of a 554 square foot lot. The second of a group of six built at the end of the nineteenth century along a steep slope leading to the Potomac River, the house has two stories plus a ground level one step below street grade. The twenty foot deep rear yard is approximately eight feet above the street level. Two brick lightwells at the back of the house admit scant light to the ground level below.

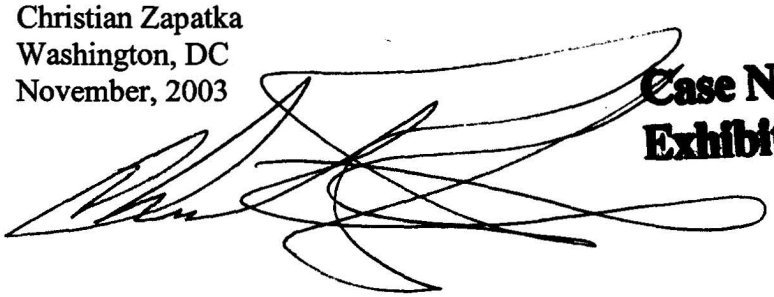
The intended use of the property remains that of a single-family dwelling with no changes to its three level street elevation. At the rear, there would be a six foot, eight and a half inch above grade addition to the two upper stories as well as a below grade expansion of the lower level under the entire existing rear yard. The roof of the below grade expansion would in turn serve as a terrace for the first floor of the house. Light would be brought in to the below grade space with a sloped skylight at grade occupying the full width of the last four feet of the rear yard.

Statement Explaining how the application meets the specific tests identified in the Zoning Regulations for variance

The house is in a mixed-use neighborhood surrounded by much higher apartment buildings and office buildings with much greater density than that of nine hundred square foot single-family dwellings. The proposed visible addition at the rear is six feet, eight and a half inches and the remaining rear yard will conceal the below grade expansion with a paved terrace. The Cecil Place/ Cherry Hill Lane enclave is a unique grouping of historic houses built at the end of the nineteenth century by longshoremen and people working in the neighborhood of the river. By the middle of the twentieth century, however, the area had fallen in to great decay and this group of houses was in danger of being demolished to make way for general large-scale development. Fortunately, in recent years, most of these houses have been renovated and modernized.

Now, unfortunately, given their miniscule size, there is a tendency for residents to abandon their own carefully restored houses in order to find more living space, whether in the surrounding luxury apartment buildings, much more expensive houses North of "M" Street or altogether out of the area. It would now seem desirable to keep at least some of these homeowners in residence in an already highly transient neighborhood by allowing them to expand, with discretion, their dwelling units. The proposal outlined here attempts to provide much-needed additional living space to a house in a unique and historic neighborhood with a strategy that takes advantage primarily of existing topographic conditions while preserving the public appearance of the property.

Christian Zapatka
Washington, DC
November, 2003



BZA
Case No. 17120
Exhibit No. 3

2003 DEC -1 AM 11:30
D.C.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17120
EXHIBIT NO. 3