Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C

March 11, 2004

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

Re: BZA Case No. 17124 -- 601 Massachusetts Ave. NE

To the Board:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C's regular monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, March 10, 2004, with proper notice given and seven commissioners present with five commissioners necessary for a quorum.

We apologize for the delay in submitting this advice to the Board. After the Commission's vote on this case at the February meeting, the Commission became aware that it had been given incorrect information based upon mistakes by the applicant and his architect on what portion of the lot would be 60% of lot occupancy. It is an irregular shaped lot on the angled corner of a street and avenue. On March 9, ANC 6C submitted a letter to the Board on the February ANC action and explained the need to reconsider at the March regular monthly meeting.

The Commission voted 6 to1 to reconsider its February 11, 2004, vote on BZA Case No. 17124 and support the following position with regard to the requested variances:

ANC 6C supports the applicant's request for an area variance from the provisions of Sec 2100.1 to allow zero parking spaces where one is required in the R-4 zone.

The Commission is concerned about parking demands in this neighborhood (see ANC 6C testimony in BZA Case No. 17043), but balances this with the position that redevelopment of this particular property, because of its location and especially the uncharacteristic appearance of the existing structure, with an attractive, historically appropriate structure compatible with the character of the neighborhood would be beneficial to the neighborhood. Such redevelopment cannot occur without relief from Sec 2100.1, because additional curb cuts are incompatible with the historic nature of the neighborhood. In addition, the Commission feels that a curb cut would remove a public on street parking space for a private space (assuming the lot was big enough, which it is not). It is not equitable or just to take away a public space for a private space.

BZA
Case No. 17124
Exhibit No. 28

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CASE NO. 17124
EXHIBIT NO. 28

ANC 6C supports the applicant's request for an area variance from the lot occupancy provisions of Sec 403.2 to allow lot occupancy of approximately 67% according to information from the District Office of Planning. The Commission's motion of support does not contain this number since we do not have confidence that it is necessarily the correct figure. The commission's motion states that lot occupancy of the proposed addition should not extend south of the northern most point of the two parallel side yard lines – approximately even with the adjoining property's (603 Massachusetts Ave. NE) outside corner of the back porch. The motion includes the following limitations and conditions:

1. The lot occupancy (the existing building and all additions including any porches or balconies) shall not extend south of the northern most point where the two side yards are parallel – approximately at the outside edge of the neighboring back porch;
2. The applicant shall remove the existing concrete block shed at the rear of the premises;
3. The applicant shall replace the existing concrete block wall parallel to 6th St. with an appropriately designed fence approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB);
4. No windows are allowed on the east wall (adjoining 603 Mass. Ave. NE) of the building;
5. The ANC and HPRB approve the design of the addition.

The majority of the Commission is very concerned about maintaining the rear yard open space for light and air to adjoining residential homes and in no way should any structure or any projections from that structure be allowed to extend pass the adjoining porch. Should this limit be strictly enforced and an appropriate design including building size and projections be approved by HPRB, the Commission believes there would be no harm to the public or the zoning plan.

We appreciate your consideration of this request in the interest of the public.

Commissioner Bill Crews is authorized by the ANC to present the report to the BZA. The premise is located in Commissioner Crews' single member district.

Best regards,

Rob Hall, Chair
ANC 6C

Cc: Bill Crews
Howard Hue.