CHERYL RENEE' GORDON, MA

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April 9, 2004

c/o Jerrily R. Kress, Director
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

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D.C. Office of Zoning
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RE: Application Number 17150

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am very disturbed by First Baptist Church's request for a permit as described in the enclosed correspondence. In no particular order, my concerns are as follows:

Firstly, it is more than seemingly irresponsible for the church to press for an expansion of its facilities without first curtailing the pervasive dangerous illegal parking activities of its parishioners. Without fail, every Sunday parishioners create a barricade with their vehicles along the median strip from the 3800 block to the 4000 block of New Hampshire Avenue. This causes loud noise pollution heard deep within the homes on either side of New Hampshire, as car alarms are tripped by cars speeding by them.

Of greater concern, drivers wanting to make U-turns will squeeze between gaps in the barricade of vehicles and dangerously enter traffic going in the opposite direction. Also, parishioners needing to reenter traffic have to wiggle out of the space in which they are hemmed-in and make precariously sharp U-turns for which I have personally contacted parking enforcement. Cars are also parallel parked in double rows and virtually all parking within two blocks of the church on Randolph Street in either direction are perpetually occupied by church attendees, who carelessly hem-in the cars of local residents. Worse yet, cars are dangerously parked in front of crosswalks and fire hydrants. The disabled must finagle wheelchairs over curbs alongside traffic, their access to ramps cut-off, and I hope we do not have to wait for a death-by-fire from a local resident to appreciate the true hazards of cars being recklessly parked directly in front of fire hydrants.

Moreover, cars bearing Maryland and Virginia tags or permits from other zones are parked in front of houses occupied by elderly residents, forcing those with difficulty in ambulating to be inconvenienced even further. Also, when I have confronted thoughtless individuals whom have directly identified themselves as being church members, I have been debased with profanity and humiliated. On a more memorable occasion, a weekday afternoon, a gentleman yelled curse words at me as I parallel-parked in front of my house because he thought I "was going to hit" his vehicle, which was also parked in front of my house. After parking, I emerged from my vehicle and asked the gentleman where he lived (he had Maryland plates) and he boasted that he attended "that church over there." He was pointing to First Baptist.

With the exception of parking on the median and double rows, the aforementioned activities also take place during the week when the church has activities planned. Thus, I am overwhelmed by the lack of regard for safety church members have shown toward local residents and cringe at the idea that monies for

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Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
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EXHIBIT NO. 26

new construction came from persons endangering those whom live in the Petworth area. What an awful possible reality.

Secondly, residents have not been provided with any specific building plans; however, I would certainly hope only plans that maintain the Victorian architecture/aesthetic of the neighborhood are being considered, and not the siding-covered square boxes that are the hallmark of modern construction. Moreover, the brief description of "4-story addition" is enough to connote a building out of place in a historic *residential* neighborhood in which most buildings are no taller than a standard row house. Moreover, the description connotes a potential eyesore that may block views to the eastern side of Washington, DC. What are the church's plans to address this?

More importantly, what are the church's plans to address the needs the sick, the elderly, the disabled, and the otherwise disenfranchised, regarding the ever-worsening parking/traffic debacle.? That is much more important than any new construction. Perhaps the large amount of money amassed for a new building should be put towards a suitable parking garage for church parishioners, so Petworth can remain safe and enjoyable for residents and church members alike.

Sincerely,

Cheryl R. Gordon

Cheryl R. Gordon, MA

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

FEB 2 3 2004

APPLICATION NUMBER 17150
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Zoning Adjustment will hold a public hearing in Suite 220, 441 4th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001 on Tuesday, April 27, 2004. Your attention is invited to the following application:

Application of First Baptist Church, SW, Inc., pursuant to 11 DCMR § 3103.2, for a variance from the number of stories requirements under subsection 400.6, a variance from the lot occupancy requirements under section 403, and a variance from the nonconforming structure provisions under subsection 2001.3, to allow the construction of a four story addition (church offices and classrooms) to an existing church building in the R-4 District at premises 710 Randolph Street, N.W. (Square 3131, Lots 41 and 833).

At the public hearing, all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views. However, you may submit written views about this case. All written views should be sent to the address below, and must be received by the Board before the hearing on the case is concluded. Individuals and organizations wishing party status in any case before the Board must request that status in writing not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date set for the public hearing on the particular application. The request for party status must contain all the information required by 11 DCMR 3106.2. Section 3106 is enclosed for your information.

This case is in Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4C. This case will be heard between 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

If you have any questions about this application, you may call the Office of Zoning on (202) 727-6311, or come to 441 4th Street, N.W., Suite 210, Washington, D.C. 20001.

PLEASE USE THE APPLICATION NUMBER WHEN YOU WRITE OR CALL ABOUT THIS CASE.

Sincerely,

JERRILY R. KRESS, FAIA
Director

(SEE REVERSED SIDE)