STATEMENT OF EXPLANATIONS AND REASONS

SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION TO THE BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION

PURSUANT TO SECTION 223.1 and 3104.1 OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ZONING REGULATIONS

2021 Hillyer Place, N.W.

(SQUARE 93, LOT 105)

BZA Case No.

BZA
Case No. 17247
Exhibit No. 5

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17247
EXHIBIT NO. 5

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INTRODUCTION

This is a Statement of Explanation and Reasons supporting the application of Drs. Michael and Marion Usher (hereinafter "Applicants") for a special exception under Section 223.1 of the Zoning Regulations to permit lot occupancy of 69.6%.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICANTS

The Ushers have lived in DC for 27 years and have been living in the house on Hillyer Place since 1985. Michael Usher is a radiologist on the DC Community Health Board. Marion Usher is a Clinical Professor of Social Work at the GW Medical School and a founding member of the Board Clinical Social Work Institute.

THE SUBJECT PROPERTY

A. Location and Description of the Property

The property which is the subject of this Application is located at 2021 Hillyer Place, N.W., Square 93, Lot 105. It is a single family dwelling with parking in the rear accessed by a public alley. They plan to enlarge the kitchen to accommodate a dining area and space for grandchildren to play and be cared for. The addition will take up much of the space of an existing deck and a rear yard of 19.96 feet will remain. No addition is contemplated for the other floors.

B. Area Surrounding the Property

The Property is on the North side of Hillyer Place, N.W. midblock. The neighborhood is mostly residential with a mix of single family and multifamily dwellings. It is in the D/DC/R-5-B zone and in the Dupont Circle Historic District.

C. Zoning History and Use History

The area is zoned D/DC/R-5-B. This calls for moderate density general residence with Dupont Circle and Diplomatic Overlays. The Ushers purchased this house in 1985. It had been configured and used as two living units which they converted into a single family dwelling.

REASONS IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION

No Adverse Effects

Neighbors are supportive of the change requested here. Several have been approached and are pleased with the proposed plans. There is not expected to be any impact on neighboring houses.

1. The light and air available to neighboring properties is not expected to be unduly affected. The addition will be well back of the rear lot line and will not deprive the neighbors on either side of available light.
2. The expansion of the kitchen will not impair the privacy of use and enjoyment of neighboring properties.

3. The addition will not be visible from the street. When viewed from the alley at the rear, it will not substantially visually intrude upon the character, scale and pattern of houses along the alley. In fact it will exhibit a proper respect for the historic ambiance of the neighborhood and the Dupont Circle Historic District.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. Appropriate Residential Use

This single family house fulfills the objectives of the R-5-B District and the Dupont Circle Overlay regulations:

1. It observes the directive to maintain "a scale of development consistent with the nature and character of the Dupont Circle area in height and bulk..." 11 DCMR §1501.4(a)
2. It protects the integrity of 'contributing buildings'. 11 DCMR §1501.4(b)
3. It enhances "the residential character of the area by maintaining existing residential uses and controlling the scale, location, and density of commercial and residential development. 11 DCMR §1501(c)
4. It preserves space planned as open gardens and backyards and protects the light, air and privacy they provide. 11 DCMR §1501 (d).

B. Historic Preservation

Section 1319.19(b) of the Comprehensive Plan calls on the District "to preserve and reuse historic landmarks and buildings in historic areas in Ward 2" There are numerous other exhortations in the Comprehensive Plan to preserve the historic character of designated neighborhoods all of which are faithfully fulfilled by the Usher's addition plans.

The Ushers are very supportive of historic preservation efforts in the city. They have already granted a historic easement in the front façade to the L'Enfant Trust.

CONCLUSION

The Applicants should be granted a special exception to enlarge their kitchen and to add a small deck in the rear yard. Such a use will be in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen N. Gell, Esq.