

THE PALISADES CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

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February 24, 2005

Mr. Geoffrey Griffis
Chair, Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW Suite 210-S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Appeal No. 17285
Hearing Date: March 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Griffis:

On Tuesday, February 1, the Palisades Citizens Association (PCA) held its monthly general meeting and considered its support for the appeal of Patrick Carome concerning permitting on the property located at 4825 Dexter Terrace, NW (Square 1381, Lot 806). Both Mr. Carome and Richard Aguglia, representing owners Frank and Dina Economides, provided presentations and answered neighbors' questions.

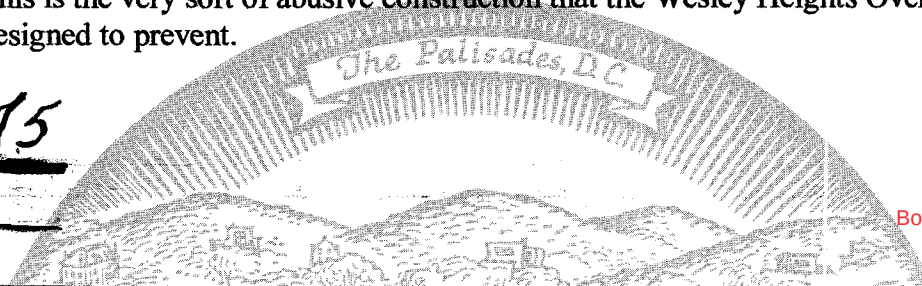
Following this lively discussion, *the Palisades Citizens Association unanimously voted to support Mr. Carome's appeal*, and authorized PCA representatives to make statements orally and in writing to Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3D and the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Accordingly, I am providing you this written documentation attesting to the position of the PCA on this matter. Additionally, a representative of the PCA will make an oral statement when the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) considers this matter on March 1.

The Palisades Citizens Association urges the BZA to promptly overturn and invalidate the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs' (DCRA) decision to permit the erection of the walled platform structure that is the subject of Mr. Carome's Appeal. The PCA urges the BZA to exercise all powers available to it to compel, or call upon other authorities to compel, its immediate and safe dismantling.

Palisades neighbors have raised a number of concerns about the walled platform structure erected by the Economides, including:

- *It has damaged the character of our neighborhood.* Residences along the Dexter Terrace street share a steep ravine facing national parkland, and other residences could follow the Economides example and erect their own structures, turning the neighborhood into cliff dwellings where there was once green space for decades. This is the very sort of abusive construction that the Wesley Heights Overlay was designed to prevent.

BZA
Case No. 17285
Exhibit No. 33



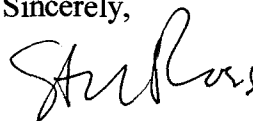
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17285
EXHIBIT NO. 33

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- *It has damaged our parks.* The structure is built almost to (and, according to recent NPS analysis, actually over) the property line shared with Wesley Heights Park. It is an eyesore that saps air and light from the park, and has generated numerous neighbor complaints. Neighbors also complained about sediment and runoff into the park that apparently blocked a stream during construction. Neighbors also claim that water, sediment and other materials continue to run off from the structure, into the park. We also understand that a number of old growth trees on federal parkland were also felled for the construction of this structure.
- *It violates the District's Zoning and Building Codes.* As noted in the Carome appeal, the structure not only violates the Wesley Heights Overlay but also more than a half dozen aspects of both codes. Moreover, there is no evidence that anyone from or acting on behalf of the DCRA or any other city agency has ever performed any inspection of the structure to assess or determine whether it complies with zoning and building codes or whether it poses a danger to public health and safety.
- *It represents a continuing threat.* Neighbors report that parts of the structure are shifting, and as noted, a runoff problem continues. Particularly alarming were the February 2 statements of Mr. Aguglia to the ANC, who said that the fill for the structure came from Spring Valley, a neighborhood with its own soil quality issues relating to the neighborhood being a site for a chemical weapons facility in World War I.

There have been many allegations concerning the permitting and construction of the Dexter Terrace property which are not the subject of this appeal, and the PCA fully intends to raise these issues in other venues as appropriate. However, the damage being done by this structure to our neighborhood and park is clear. A terrible mistake has been made, which can and must be remedied by the BZA.

Sincerely,



Stuart Philip Ross
President