

Ms. Monica M. Yin
Ms. Paoro Yin-Blair
1719 Riggs Place, N.W.
(Sq. 153 Lot 106)
Washington, D.C. 20009
May 3, 2005

Delivered by Hand

Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
Attention: Ms. Jerrily R. Kress, Director
Re: Application # 17319 – 1723 Riggs Pl., N.W.
Sq. 153, Lot 104
441 4th Street, N.W. – Suite 210-S
Washington, D.C. 20001

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Honorable Members of the Board:

I write on behalf of myself and my daughter, both residing at 1719 Riggs Place adjacent to the subject property. We have lived here for over 30 years and we are profoundly disturbed by the potential negative impact upon our home life this application proposes. It is with thoughtful consideration to the history, the character, and the future of our residential community that we OPPOSE the defacement of the north elevation of this row. Such a protrusion would obstruct air, light and view and irrevocably alter the preexisting charm of our cohesive neighborhood community.

It is true that the new owner, Mr. McKeever desires to expand his kitchen and add a room to his third floor, ostensibly because 3600 square feet is not enough space for two people. He also makes clear that he is "extremely private" and has announced up front that he will decline social contact with his neighbors and will not attend any neighborhood parties. (See copy of letter Mr. McKeever wrote to the neighbors). Recently, his architect Mr. Middleton verbally assaulted me for lauding the historic character of the surrounding and its famed architect: Schneider. All of which leads me to believe that he must not value the preexisting architectural vernacular nor the intentional element of propinquity contained in its 100 plus years design. It also leads me to believe that he has made an honest mistake in not purchasing a free standing property elsewhere, where his desire for greater space and privacy would not impinge upon the lives of others.

"To square off the footprint," is in our opinion, not as trivial as it sounds. The architect gives a distorted view in his zealous pursuit of profit, not design. He is *persona non grata* in this neighborhood. He erected a visual assault and a neighborhood nuisance at the end of the alley, ignoring all pleas and objections from neighbors. He did so while he was ANC commissioner some twenty years ago. In short, his ability to discern visual, aesthetic, or spatial issues is a proven abomination.

BZA

Case No. 17319
Exhibit No. 25

Board of Zoning Adjustment
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CASE NO. 17319
EXHIBIT NO. 25

From my own house, standing on the space Mr. McKeever proposes to “square off” you will see that no one, no one in over 100 years has broken that line of sight, that spatial range because doing so would be right in the neighbor’s face and obliterate his/her view with this protrusion. Moreover, the only precedent that has been established over the years is the building of rooftop decks on that level.

In summation, we oppose the granting of either request, because we are certain that we do not want a precedent established on this issue of random additions. The excuse that he wants to have his disabled sister come live with him is a transparent device to enlarge the property and its investment value. Such an “addition” would “subtract” at our expense and will no doubt have a deleterious impact upon our property.

We urge the Board to deny this request.

Respectfully,



Monica M. Yin


Paoro Yin-Blair

6 April 2005

Dear Neighbors:

Some of you know me; most of you do not. I am Bill McKeever. I bought 1723 Riggs Place on 29 November 2004 and moved-in a week later.

I recently had my architect file with the city for purposes of gathering the required permissions to square off the "wedding cake" of the third floor of my home.

For those of you unfamiliar with the structure, the footprint of the top (3rd) floor only covers the front 2/3 of the footprint of the second floor. It is the back 1/3 that I desire to add to and square off.

I also asked the architect to seek permission to expand my kitchen about five feet into the "dog leg" space separating my residence from that of my neighbor to the east (1721 Riggs Place). With regard to this small kitchen expansion: I do not foresee any impact to, and hope I receive no objection from any of my neighbors. Consequently, the rest of my remarks will be directed toward the subject of the 3rd floor expansion.

I apologize to all of you for being ignorant of the methodology required to gain approval for the modifications. I had thought it was a simple black and white matter of zoning. But, my ANC Commissioner, Rob Halligan, recently informed me that things are somewhat more complex than I'd assumed, and that I would need neighborhood assent to my plan.

He also told me that some of you might regard the proposed modification as depriving you of air and/or sunlight to the decks some of you have erected on top of the second floor in the rear portion of your homes.

In this regard, I've conducted a study of sunlight patterns to our Riggs Place residences. Please see the attached study before you read further.

I desire to expand the top floor of my home, because I want to have my disabled sister come and live with me. Her bedroom, bathroom, and living space would be on the second floor, and mine on the third. The current, truncated layout of the third floor, however, would be insufficient to my needs. Hence, my desire to fill out the final third of the top floor footprint.

Mr. Halligan and my architect have advised me that my very raising of this subject has brought consternation to some of my neighbors...and that I am likely to become unpopular with some of you for merely *asking* the question. Moreover, my architect advised me that I should go on a public relations campaign to "schmooze" my neighbors toward supporting my petition. This is not going to happen. I am a pretty private guy. I am

not about to start inviting neighbors in for tea, on the eve of the pending ANC vote. Any such move would be patently transparent and insincere. In time, as you get to see me around the neighborhood, you will realize that I am an extremely nice and generous guy, but also a private and somewhat shy one. This means that you should not expect me to be throwing neighborhood parties, and that if you throw one I am likely to respectfully decline attendance. This is just me—it is in no way an indication of a negative attitude toward any of you. I am by no means anti-social--just a tad asocial and private.

But, if you should need a cup of sugar, just knock on my door. If you need help with a computer problem, give me a call. If you should have an out-of-town houseguest who needs to get his or her car off the street, I'd be glad to allow him or her to use my parking space. If you need help moving a piece of furniture, I'd be happy to lend a hand. And, even if you need a ride to the airport, let me know.

I like helping people, I like saying "yes," and 99.9 percent of the time I am in the "yes" mode on virtually anything you might ask of me; and I like to think that others are like me in this regard. But, I fully understand that some of you might have some concerns about my proposal. All I ask is that you fairly consider my petition, and that your vote be principled and well thought-out.

This may or may not be of concern to you, but I can state right now that I would bear no ill will toward any of you who might cast negative votes. And, so, in line with my "99.9% yes" philosophy, unless you want to erect a discotheque on your roof, and even if you vote against my proposition, you can still count on a "yes" vote from me on any of your own potential alteration plans...and you can still use my parking space ☺.

If, in the end, you, my neighbors, do not agree with my position regarding the filling-out of the third floor, I respectfully request that you consider the proposed expansion of the kitchen as a completely separate matter, and inform the ANC Commissioner, Mr. Halligan of your lack of objection to it.

I thank all of you, in advance, for taking the time to read all of this, and for your favorable consideration of my petition.

Sincerely,



William J. McKeever
202-387-6934
wjmckeever@aol.com

*Please pass this to any other interested parties
Thank you.*