



Middle East Institute

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Attn: Chairperson Geoffrey H. Griffis
441 4th Street, NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

BZA #17337

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2005 JAN 11 PM 4:49

Regarding: Opposition to the proposed Boutique Hotel at 1743-1755 N Street

Dear Mr. Griffis:

The Middle East Institute would like you to take our views in regards to this issue in consideration.

To this effect I am attaching our letter to the DC Architectural Historian at the Historic Preservation Office from September 13, 2005.

Sincerely,

Alix Kauffman
Vice President for Administration

Cc:
Mr. Bill Greene
Science Service
1719 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

1761 N Street NW
Washington DC 20036-2882
TEL 202-785-1141
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BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 17337
EXHIBIT NO. 42

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17337
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Middle East Institute

Edward S. Walker, Jr.
President

September 13, 2005

Mr. Stephen Callcott
DC Architectural Historian
Historic Preservation Office
801 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 2002

Re: Opposition to the proposed Boutique Hotel at 1743-1755 N Street

Dear Mr. Callcott:

The Middle East Institute, located since 50 years at 1761 and 1763 N Street, one building over from the proposed project, would be pleased to see the above mentioned buildings developed and used. However we would expect utilization with deference to the existing zoning and historical regulations.

A 100% footprint on the plat and a height of up to 8 stories will have a negative impact on the ambiance of 17th Street and Dupont Circle's historic district where the majority of the buildings on N Street are 5 floors high.

The Middle East Institute has considered building on its property; however it did not occur to us to blatantly ask for this many zoning exemptions.

The planned loading dock and parking garage for over 120 cars will adversely impact the traffic in the alley between N street and Massachusetts Avenue which is only accessible from 17th Street and is not well maintained by the city. Its entrance is less than 10 feet wide and can only be used in one direction at a time. Currently this is not a serious problem as the main traffic flow in the morning is east to west and in the evening west to east. However, increased traffic by 120 cars would have a major impact and could cause back ups in the morning into Massachusetts Avenue as 17th Street is one way between about 7:00AM and 9:30AM. Any car that has to back up has to do so over the pedestrian walkway into 17th Street.

At the moment the users of the alley include, in addition to staff of the Middle East Institute, various associations and embassies, SAIS, the Topaz Hotel, the Tabard Inn, as well as Heldref Publishing and the Palladium condominium complex, which are located on 18th Street.

To conclude, we would appreciate the development of the vacant buildings but we are opposed to the variances that would be required for a project this huge in footprint and heights on this historic part of N street. We are worried about the traffic impact of a hotel of the proposed size on N street and especially on the alley, which accommodates the parking, and waste management traffic for this block including parts of 18th Street, Massachusetts Avenue and N street. And we are concerned about the impact of such a project on the value of the properties in the neighborhood and on the viability of existing zoning regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Walker, Jr.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Edward S. Walker, Jr.
President

Cc: ANC2B, Washington DC