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September 28, 2008

Government of the District of Columbia
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 Fourth Street, NW
Suite 200/210-S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: VARIANCE APPLICATION NUMBER 17837

To Whom It May Concern:

I have lived in the Hillcrest area for the past forty years and was happy to discover that in the local media this area was recently identified as one of the better areas to live in located in Washington, DC.

I would like to begin by insisting that the application for variance hearing filed by the Hillcrest Homes Association should have been filed with the Office of Zoning as a total rezoning of the twelve-acre tract noted in the application. Because they are requesting the right to place two or more homes on a minimum-sized lot is in effect requesting a rezoning, which should be a complete rezoning of said property.

The developer has the audacity to claim the fifty-four houses that he would like to build are comparable to current homes in Hillcrest. He is asking for lot sizes ranging from 1900 to 3700 square feet, with a front yard set-back of fifteen feet, a side yard set-back of four feet nine inches, and a rear yard set-back of five feet. The houses will be twenty-four feet wide, thirty-nine feet deep and forty feet to the ceiling height of the upper story plus the additional height of the attic and roof, making them nearly fifty feet tall. In actuality these are quasi townhouses. He also offers bay windows as an option. Can you imagine two houses with bay windows where neighbors can reach out and shake hands. And with a fifteen-foot front set-back, how can one pull a seventeen foot SUV in the front driveway without it overrunning the front sidewalks.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 17837
EXHIBIT NO. 22

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The lots in Hillcrest range from 5000 to 40,000 square feet with large front, side and rear yards, and many of the houses have more than 1900 square feet of floor area.

Additionally the developer intends to construct a private road that is called Southern Avenue with an entrance from Branch Avenue. As of now during the morning and afternoon rush hours Branch Avenue is gridlocked. A new entrance with another traffic light will cause more confusion and exacerbate the traffic problems.

Environmentally there will be problems because of the steep slopes involved. The developer intends to remove over fifty large ancient shade trees, which will then cause serious erosion and drainage problems.

In my research and in speaking to various government agencies I have been made aware that in the Commonwealth of Virginia these lot types are referred to as "patio lots" and are being fought by the fire and rescue departments because of fire hazards, the inability to get equipment and ladders into the narrow confines between houses, and that many places are banning the development of this type of lot.

Because of the extreme height with such small side property lines, there will be areas on houses where no sunshine will be able to reach. This has led to mold, algae formations, rotted wood and huge problems for re-paint contractors and ladder placement, which leads to unkempt property in previously built communities.

In my opinion the developer should not be building these types homes on this tract. He should be filing for a complete rezoning of this twelve acre tract instead of going through the variance hearing.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I as well as the majority of the homeowners in Hillcrest are vehemently against the variance application being submitted by Hillcrest Homes Association. We ask that you decline this application.

Thanking you advance for your fair and just consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'J. Fleischman', written in a cursive style.

Julius Fleischman