

Veronica Letelier
1713 Hobart Street NW
Washington, DC 20009

Marnique Y. Heath, Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200-S
Washington, DC 20001

April 26, 2016

Re: BZA Case 19256

Dear Chairperson Heath and Board Members:

I am co-owner and resident since 2001, with my husband Leonardo Corral, of the house and property at 1713 Hobart St. NW. I live across the street from the house at 1716 Hobart St. NW. requesting the zoning variance in Case #19256.

We join with 35 of our neighbors who have asked that the Board of Zoning Adjustment (the "BZA") **deny the Request for Area Variance Approval** at 1716 Hobart St NW submitted by Kerry Reichs (the "Applicant") which would allow a third-floor pop-up to be added on top of the two-story house.

I understand that 1) a variance is required for any addition to this property because the house, garage and deck together currently occupy 74% of the lot, whereas the maximum allowable lot occupancy in this neighborhood is 60%; 2) the variance may only be issued if the applicant has demonstrated that there are "extraordinary" conditions inherent in the property that present "exceptional practical difficulties;" and 3) the public interest must remain unimpaired.

With respect to point 1), the circumstances cited by the Applicant (steep topography, location in a historic district, presence of a large tree, non-conforming structures) are not unique to the property in question. The opposite is true, these circumstances are common to most of the properties on the south side of Hobart St. and much of Mt. Pleasant generally. But more importantly, I moved into this community having full knowledge of its Historic District designation, its trees and character. These were positive reasons for me to join this community and strongly reject the Applicant's use of these reasons to justify changing the character of my street.

With respect to point 2), I understand that the Applicant believes her situation pertaining to the number of people who will be living at 1716 as “extraordinary condition” and pose “exceptional practical difficulties.” A quick walk up and down our street demonstrates that most of us have been able to remodel our homes to accommodate growing family needs without having to change the character of our street. For example, we remodeled our home to convert it to open floor plan with large windows to add light and space. The applicant could address her needs through internal changes.

Finally, with respect to point 3), I feel that the public interest is impaired by the introduction of a pop-up – and the precedent it creates. My neighborhood Mount Pleasant is a very special place. We have Porch fests and Halloween parties every year. We close our street and enjoy time with each other. We know who we are, the names of the kids playing in the street and the names of our dogs. We have been able to do so because we have beautiful porches where we sit to share experiences with each other. Right now, I can enjoy the view of the open sky on top of the 1716 house from both my porch and my living room. If the zoning variance is granted, I will instead be looking at the Applicants bathroom’s window. And The applicant will have full view into both my porch and my living room invading and denying my privacy.

For all these reasons, we urge the Board to deny the requested zoning variance and help us maintain the character of our precious street.

Sincerely,



Veronica Letelier