

The submitted plan effectively closes a public alley.

The alley for square 195 is unusual, and already difficult to navigate:

The alley makes a loop around a carriage house in the middle of square 195, with only a single point of ingress/egress, which is on P Street.

The segment parallel to O Street must exit by turning the corner behind the subject property. It is not possible to turn around on the O Street segment and exit the other direction.

The subject property currently has no wall near the alley, but does have a pole near the corner where cars turn. The pole is set back 8 inches from the alley, making it difficult, but possible, for mid-sized cars to maneuver with several forward-backward motions. This still requires using the open space next to the pole, so an equal 8-inch setback of a gate would make the turn far more constrained.

The neighboring apartment building, the Gatsby, set back their fence 12 inches on the 15th Street side adjoining the subject property, and nearly 6 inches along the O Street side.

The O Street segment is 10 feet wide, but a utility near the corner constrains it to 9 feet for cars making the turn.

The current corner configuration, constrained by the subject property's pole, closes the alley to larger cars and all service vehicles. A gate abutting the alley would close it to all vehicles.

Closing the alley would not only affect the eight units on O Street, but would cause significant problems for cars that frequently pass through as drivers assume there's an exit. This is particularly difficult when 16th Street is closed for presidential transportation, which is frequent, and lines of motorists enter the alley seeking an alternate route.

If the O Street alley segment is closed to permit the requested gate location, it will be vital the city post signs designating that portion of the alley as a dead end to avoid serious damage to vehicles and the newly erected gate.

Submitted on 2/5/2019 by:

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