



Opposition to BZA #20144 - 1832 15th St NW Special Exception Request

1 message

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To: Ed Hanlon <2B09@anc.dc.gov>, 2b04@anc.dc.gov, planning@dc.gov, 2B@anc.dc.gov, 2b02@anc.dc.gov, 2B02.ANC@dc.gov

Bcc: brittanybepler@gmail.com

Dear Chairperson Warwick, Commissioner Hanlon, and Commissioner Landry,

First of all, we would like to thank you and the ANC for your service to our community and your patience and fair guidance to all sides as we try to work through important issues on our block.

We are new to our block compared to most of our neighbors – we purchased 1834 15th Street NW almost exactly a year ago – and the main reason that we bought the home was the unique sunlight-filled and airy backyard. We were immediately impressed with the community and welcomed by most of the neighbors. It has been a pleasure to become part of the community and in our first year we've invested in the backyard landscaping, planted a garden and generally love spending time outside. This is a home – and an outdoor space – that we hope to live in and enjoy for a long time.

The massive addition that Lisa Kays and David Barth, who own the adjoining property directly to the south at 1832 15th Street NW, are attempting to obtain a special exception for would change the nature of our home entirely. **We are writing today to express our vehement opposition to 1832's planned addition and request your support in opposition.** We understand that their request for a special exception will be reviewed by ANC zoning subcommittee and the full ANC this Wednesday, October 2nd and Thursday, October 10, respectively.

We will attend both hearings, and the BZA hearing when 1832's project is on the docket, along with several neighbors in opposition to the project, from whom you've also received letters of opposition. We have partnered closely with other homeowners on our block – especially with 1830, who share the other adjoining wall with 1832 and who are also most impacted by this proposed addition. We have all acted in good faith to try to find areas of compromise with 1832, as the ANC historic committee strongly recommended earlier this year (referenced in the April 24, 2019, ANC 2B resolution), but each attempt was ignored or rejected outright.

The more than 17 foot total build out into the backyard (with the 13+ foot addition and 4+ foot elevated deck) and 24+ foot high solid wall in the middle of the block and otherwise open area would severely impact the light, airflow, privacy and enjoyment of our property, as well as that of 1830 if approved. The proposed plans show at least 70% lot occupancy – well above what they can build as a matter of right. All of this is well outside the bounds of zoning regulations. Approval of this special zoning exception sets a precedent for the neighborhood that green space, sunlight and airflow – as well as cooperation with neighbors – are not protected or valued.

1832 have repeatedly mischaracterized, obfuscated or outright lied in many areas of their application for this special exception. This includes everything from citing inconsistent figures and measurements to choosing to highlight our and 1830's support for one aspect of a proposed possible compromise to the project that we and 1830 suggested while completely ignoring our strong opposition to every other aspect.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.20144
EXHIBIT NO.43

Allowing this massive expansion to proceed will grant permission for every house to do so and soon the charming historic alleys, beautiful rear yards of DC row houses will be lost. We understand this cannot be built as a "matter of right" and are opposed to this massive addition.

It is in clear violation to the intentions of the RF-2 Dupont Circle zoning regulations and we would very much appreciate your support in opposition to this flagrant attempt to flout the rules and push through a project without any consideration of its effect on neighboring properties and our quality of life.

Thank you. We're happy to discuss further or host the ANC in our backyard to see the significant negative effect that this addition would have on our property at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Sarah and Taylor Nickel

1834 15th Street NW

202-538-0549 or 949-212-6247