

April 12, 2020

RE: BZA Application No. 20256

Comments in Opposition

Dear Zoning Officials:

Our home and my (RS) office are both within 200 feet of 3905 Kansas Ave. NW, where the owners want to turn the rowhouse into a 3-apartment building. We generally think more neighbors is good for the city, good for my business, and more fun. But, after reviewing the plans, we are opposed to the plan.

We believe a 3-apartment building is simply too much for such a small, odd-shaped lot, without access to the alley. It could turn the nice front yard into a parking lot, trash staging area, and a public hazard.

Here are our specific concerns with the current plan and its impact on the neighborhood.

- Where will the trash/recycling go? Without alley access, will they have a private dumpster (where?), or will 3 tenants wheel green and blue cans to sit on the sidewalk for collection? Both are esthetically unpleasing options, and a potential hazard/blockage on the sidewalk.
- If we are looking at it correctly: the 3 garage spaces will be on the front/Kansas side, in the basement (below ground level)? So, the retaining wall and yard would be bulldozed and there will be a concrete sloping driveway from the sidewalk down to the garage, all the way across the house? Quite a disturbance to the beautiful block.
- Drivers emerging from the house would back out uphill (blind) across a sidewalk busy with pedestrians/children going to Powell and Safeway, etc. Our young kids (4 and 6) are trained to stop at alleys, but driveways are different. There aren't other driveways on Kansas, so that seems confusing/dangerous. Corner houses often have a garage/driveway that crosses the sidewalk, but 3 cars coming out one building is a lot.
- The parking space on the right side pokes out of the house, and blocks the door to the pumps. Maybe they don't actually intend to have people park in that space, or in the garage at all? I suspect that they will use the garage as storage and park in the driveway in front, so the front yard will basically be a 3-car parking lot.
- The curb cuts for access to the driveway would remove 2-3 street parking spaces. This defeats the purpose of requiring off-street parking. Would the streetlight and tree also be removed?

- If the driveway does slope down to the cellar level, there will be about a 7 foot drop from the next door neighbor's yard to the driveway. Will there be a retaining wall/fence? Not shown on renderings. Worried about safety and esthetics. It is common on Georgia Ave. to have high-low grading between businesses, but not in a residential area.
- The loss of street parking spaces and the sidewalk safety issues could be especially troublesome for families coming to my (RS) new orthodontic office across the street at 3900 Kansas Ave. NW. Some families drive and park, and others walk, scoot, and bike to appointments.
- The rendering has the number 3907 instead of 3905. Will this plan incorporate both row houses, or just 3905? Maybe it was a typographical error?
- Should there be a set back on the south side of the house?

Due to these concerns, we are opposed to the plan. Please let me know if we are misreading the plans or if changes are being made to address such concerns. We can best be reached at our email below.

Sincerely yours,

Ravi Sawhney and Laura Alexander (homeowner neighbors)
3830 10th St. NW
Washington, DC 20011
Ravi Sawhney cell: 202-236-4339
teamlauravi@gmail.com

and as

Ravi K. Sawhney, DDS, MSD, PhD
Owner and Orthodontist
Tusk Orthodontics PLLC
3900 Kansas Ave. NW
Suite 101
Washington, DC 20011