

12/9/2021

RE: BZA Application NO. 20594
Variance Application of Neshat & Paul Harrison

To whom it may concern:

We are residents of Forest Hills, within proximity to the Harrison property, and have resided at 3100 Brandywine Street NW for over 20 years. We are writing to express our opposition to their request for two variances from the zoning regulations at 3007 Albemarle Street NW, a property that has been there since the 1920's.

Forest Hills is a jewel of a neighborhood — unknown to many — and with a strong diversity of homes exhibiting numerous architectural styles, we are all fortunate that the neighborhood has not been taken over by developers except in a few cases. Recently on 32nd Street between Appleton and Albemarle, 2 homes were built rather than the original 5 or more that were initially desired. On Fessenden Street & 32nd Street a house that has been on the market for two years is an example of misguided development gone crazy. The scale of the residence and the fact that it probably should be in Potomac are but two examples of a zoning error. On Audubon Terrace a home is being built right to the property line of the 2 neighboring homes.

The Harrison proposal is not appropriate for this neighborhood. In this case a home is being demolished, 2 homes with a large swimming pool are being planned, and a curb cut on a street a full block away are the hopes of the outcome of this appeal based on your approval. We sincerely request that you consider our objections as well as those of many neighbors.

Imagine driving down 31st Street and seeing a 36ft tall home at the end of a new driveway that would result from the requested curb cut. Aside from reducing an already limited supply of legal, on-street parking, the curb cut would contribute to the increased possibility of collisions, and if an official traffic study was undertaken it would show the amount of steady traffic from the two large apartment buildings on Connecticut Avenue, and the many vehicles that use the 32nd>Appleton>31st>Brandywine (and the reverse of that) route both day and night.

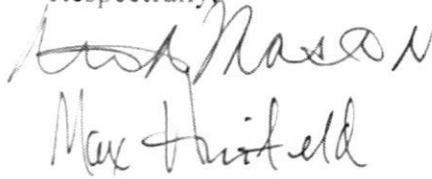
Additionally, the proposed homes are totally out of scale/character in relation to the homes on Appleton and those surrounding on Albemarle, Brandywine, and throughout Forest Hills. Neighbors who have embraced this plan — only two to our knowledge — have been promised things such as plantings of very tall trees in the case of one and shifting the footprint of the home not to be as close to theirs for the second as opposed to the much larger majority of those who are objecting to this development.

The Harrisons have stated that if the zoning does not go through, they will sell to a developer therefore threatening those of us who are against the variances. This is not how neighbors act, especially in Forest Hills that is well known for its diversity dating back to its origins!

We have no problem with renovation or new home construction, and very much appreciate contemporary architecture, but we were told that unless a 2nd home can be built, we cannot build the first one and will indeed sell to a developer; neighbors should not be subjected to the financial problems of the owner. We live in a wonderful, low-density neighborhood that we believe was intended to stay like this. The Harrison's development proposal is a misguided grab for an ill-conceived plan. This neighborhood is not suited for the overdevelopment that these two homes will bring.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in cursive. The first signature is for Nina Mason and the second is for Max Hirshfeld. Both are written in black ink.

Nina Mason and Max Hirshfeld
3100 Brandywine Street NW
Washington, DC 20008