

Board of Zoning Administration Case #20615  
January 2022

To the Advisory Neighborhood Commission / BZA / HPRB –

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter of concern. My name is Mira League and I, along with my partner are residents at 747 10<sup>th</sup> St. I am writing today to speak against the proposed rear addition project next door as is currently configured at 751 10th St.

In looking over the proposed rear addition project, I feel very strongly that it should not go forward, at least in its current conception. The proposal for the home addition includes extensions to meet the property line, abutting it directly to our outside wall, an additional floor in the back, raising it to two stories, and further towards to the back of the property. Beyond that, there is a proposed two-story accessory structure in the back of the property that would function as a garage and carriage house.

Ours is a really beautiful, unique early 20<sup>th</sup> century apartment building with a great deal of character. 747 10<sup>th</sup> St. was built in 1912 with unique massing and window columns that run the height of the building constructed deliberately to allow for airflow and light throughout the living spaces, rather than only at the front and back of the apartment like in a row house. One of the main appealing features of our apartment is this light streaming into each of the rooms in the late morning and into the afternoon making the hardwood floors glow and giving a sense of serenity.

With the proposed additions to the neighboring home, as configured, the columns of windows will be completely walled off and blocked on both the first and second floor. The living circumstance is that the appeal and beauty of the historic building with its natural light and airflow will be completely truncated. With the proposed additions, the building next door would essentially enclose the window columns with the effect of looking out of a window into a concrete box. I cannot express how demoralizing that would be to live somewhere with little access to natural light, especially in this time of continuing to work from home. The second bedroom turned home office would have the charm of a windowless cubicle without the natural light and airflow allowed by the unblocked window columns, and a bedroom without sun or the ability for a breeze when sleeping would have little appeal at all. Blocking these natural attributes would make the apartments less appealing and certainly devalue the property and the living spaces within it. Four apartments are at risk here, not just for us, as current tenants, but for the rest of this lovely buildings existence. Overall the rear addition to the neighboring home in its current iteration would deeply and unduly affect not only the air and light available, but the use and enjoyment of these incredible historic apartments.

The proposed addition of a two story accessory building in the back of the property as a garage and carriage house will also be detrimental to the privacy of those neighboring these new additions. The building will have multiple large windows facing their yard and will sit only a couple of feet from the rear decks of our building, decreasing the availability of privacy and enjoyment of the space. The structure will tower over the rest of the back yard and block sunlight to it and the decks as well. Necessary to construction of the accessory building would be cutting down the trees that grant further privacy along the side of the stacked back decks, which would again, decrease privacy and use of these outdoor spaces.

The Burden of Proof document submitted states that the proposed addition to the 751 10<sup>th</sup> St. property “will not have a substantially adverse effect on the use or enjoyment of any abutting or adjacent dwelling or property”. Unfortunately it does not seem as though consideration of the neighboring property was part of the design to understand what would be lost, especially what such an addition would do to the unique livability of the apartments at 747 10<sup>th</sup> St. It is a relatively unique thing to have a row home right next to a low-level apartment building such as ours and thus special circumstances should be considered. The privacy afforded by such an addition would mean very little if it meant we were looking at a blank brick wall enclosing the entirety of our window columns with no natural light or airflow. The accessory addition is greatly preferable to cutting off airflow to our main building and the apartments within them. There is no reason that the L addition proposed cannot extend further back into the yard, maintaining the square footage requested, but not blocking off the sunlight, the airflow and the enjoyment derived therein from our apartments. The impacts are great to us as neighbors for such an addition that abuts the outside wall of 747 10<sup>th</sup> St; even preserving just the existing two foot pathway between the buildings would greatly reduce the burden and preserve our light, airflow, access and enjoyment. Please consider redesigning the rear addition so that space is still left between buildings. A wider and deeper L portion would maintain light and airflow. I invite the architect and owners to visit our apartment to see what will be lost by this design.

The unique livability of our historic building and apartment is at stake with this proposed addition. I can only express that the light and airflow within 747 10<sup>th</sup> St. would be irrefutably and negatively affected by building directly up to the property line as planned and sealing off the window columns, even into the very small courtyards proposed by the latest plan. There are other options available that would benefit all parties, allowing the 751 10<sup>th</sup> St. property owners an addition, while preserving the natural light, the movement of air, the enjoyment and the safety of our building.

I hope you will consider this letter of opposition to the proposed addition fully, and keep this wonderful historic apartment building full of light.

Thank you for your time.

Mira League & William Hankins  
# 3 747 10<sup>th</sup> St. SE