



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

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October 1, 2024

Mr. Frederick Hill
Chairperson
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001
bzasubmissions@dc.gov

RE:Board of Zoning Application by Trustees for Harvard University to permit a nonprofit organization use in an existing, semi-detached, four-story with basement residential building in the R-1B/GT zone at 3100 R Street, NW (BZA #21143)

Dear Chairperson Hill,

On September 30, 2024 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by eight commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-1) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

Community Fabric: A robust residential community is at the core of our community fabric – residents, for example, attend our schools, play in our parks, frequent our stores/restaurants, opt to maintain historic homes, support our local non-profits, and become friends with others who live in our neighborhood. Typically, ANC 2E would not support an Application aiming to convert a residential home in the heart of residential Georgetown block into an office or commercial use, whether the Applicant was a non-profit or for-profit organization. Doing such, as seen with other historic neighborhoods, means a slow chipping away of our residential fabric.

Non-Profit with Large Georgetown Campus: Understanding this about the community fabric, the non-profit Applicant for Zoning Case # #21143 - The Trustee of Harvard University-has been a part of Georgetown since 1940 – via its operation of Dumbarton Oaks. The Applicant already owns a significant amount of property and acreage in our community, some of which is currently under major construction. This new property would be the fourth property the Applicant owns in Georgetown outside its Main Campus of Dumbarton Oaks. The Property has stayed primarily vacant for three years since its purchase. Per the Application, the Property will be used for housing purposes related to its Main Campus, which is located across from the Property. This said, the Application submitted also requested to use the Property for up to four years as an office given competing projects.

COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1 Topher Mathews, District 2 Paul Maysak, District 3
Joe Massaua, District 4 Mimsy Lindner, District 5 Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6
Daniel Chao, District 7 John DiPierri, District 8

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.21143
EXHIBIT NO.47

Community Concerns: Over the past several months, those neighbors who live near the Property have spent considerable time discussing their concerns regarding the Application. Also, neighbors who do not live as close expressed their concerns. Meetings were held with the Applicant, ANC representatives, and neighbors. Some of the concerns raised relate directly to this Application and the Property in question. In contrast, other concerns relate to issues neighbors have with different properties owned by the Applicant and setting precedent for non-residential use in our cherished residential community.

Concerns Regarding the Application and an MOU: Several concerns raised during these lengthy discussions related to this Property and Application in question are addressed in a draft Memo of Understanding (MOU). The MOU outlines conditions that would revise the Application; the conditions would be placed in the BZA Order as well as be voluntarily agreed upon by the Applicant. The MOU would be signed by ANC 2E and the Applicant, plus the two neighbors who hold Party Status in this case, would also sign a MOU with the Applicant separately from the ANC using the same terms. The MOU outlines a set of conditions that speak to the key concerns of the immediate neighbors, those with Party Status and the ANC 2E. ANC 2E will communicate to BZA its support for this Application once an MOU is signed between ANC 2E and the Applicant, and those with Party Status and the Applicant. Highlights of the MOU relate to:

- Office Use by an Educational Non-Profit
 - Two years, not the four years proposed.
 - More limited hours of operations than proposed.
- Scholar Housing by an Educational Non-Profit
 - No parties, receptions or commercial activities such as ticket sales.
- Other uses beyond Office and Scholar housing:
 - Other uses are prohibited beyond the two identified uses.
 - Current uses do not go with land should Applicant decide to sell the Property; Property zoning reverts back to residential.
- Key community relation terms
 - Improved maintenance of the external aspects of the Property.
 - Creation of a construction management agreement.
 - Assignment by the Applicant of a Community liaison who will provide updates.
 - Soundproofing of wall shared with residential property.
 - Very limited use of on-street parking by staff, visitors, and contractors.

ANC 2E names Commissioner Gwendolyn Lohse as the ANC 2E representative in this case. ANC 2E anticipates signing the MOU this week, along with those with Party Status. If the MOU is not agreed upon, Commissioner Lohse will share the neighborhood's concerns with the BZA as an opposing party, and request that BZA address the community requests driving its opposition. ANC 2E would like to personally thank Yota Batsaki, Executive Director of Dumbarton Oaks, who has spent considerable time working on this MOU. ANC 2E appreciates her partnership.

Concerns Related to the Applicants' Other Georgetown Operations: Separate from the MOU and this Application, ANC 2E will formally communicate to the Applicant:

- A request that should the Applicant want to purchase another residentially zoned home in the Georgetown federal historic neighborhood, the Applicant will inform the ANC prior to submitting an offer to purchase.
- Need for better collaboration on the impact the Applicant's Main Campus and their other Property construction has on certain streets, especially given two different large-scale projects that share the same streets used by the Applicant will soon be launching: one project is a multi-million dollar public project (Jelleff Community Center) and one is a multi-million dollar private project (a new apartment building).

Commissioner Gwendolyn Lohse (2E06@anc.dc.gov) is the Commission's representative in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gwendolyn Lohse", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gwendolyn Lohse
Chair, ANC 2E

CC: Thomas Cummings, Director and Professor, Dumbarton Oaks
Yota Batsaki, Executive Director and Co-Investigator, Dumbarton Oaks