

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Pugh, Allison J (ap9cd) <ap9cd@virginia.edu>
Sent: Friday, September 13, 2024 11:56 AM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Case #21163: 627 A St. NE

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To the Board of Zoning Adjustment:

I write to register my strong opposition to the proposal #21163 for a 3-bedroom, 3-bath new carriage house on the property of 627 A St. NE. My name is Allison Pugh, and I am the co-owner of 629 A St. NE, which shares the north-south alleyway with the proposed project. There are five main points why the proposal is not a good idea:

1. **Precedent:** There is **no** precedent for such a large expansion on the north side of the alley; **all** of the taller carriage houses are on the south side of the alley. The petitioners are trying to make it sound like it is not an unusual proposal, but even an ANC6c PZE Committee member called the proposal “piggish,” or greedy in its reach. If the regulations are waived for this project, we could certainly expect to see a number of similar changes on the north side, which would drastically alter the light, air, and character of the area.
2. **Privacy:** The proposed second floor windows (both the large window facing the main house, and the smaller windows looking out onto the alley) would look right into our kitchen, which currently is protected from view by our fence. While the main building at 627 A St NE does have windows that face our house, those do not affect our privacy significantly, because they mostly face a stairwell. The new access would dramatically change our privacy.
3. **Light and Air:** The shade cast by the house does reach across the alley into our backyard – as shown by the petitioner’s own sun study – in the winter months. This could affect the health of our trees, which currently provide shade over the alley, contributing to the green space and lowered temperature of the area.
4. **Safety:** The proposal includes plans for two parking spaces perpendicular to the north-south alley. The plans do not allow for enough room for residents be able to maneuver their cars into these spaces, without backing into/damaging our wooden fence that forms the other side. In addition, the parking spots replace soil with pavement, further reducing the capacity for drainage and contributing to increased temperatures.
5. **Special treatment:** The regulations are there for a reason – to protect light, air and privacy in the District – and I don’t understand why the petitioners should be granted special treatment to have them waived. What is wrong with renovating the existing garage to turn it into a single story 1-Bedroom house? There is no urgent hardship that justifies waiving the standard protections; if these regulations were waived every time someone wanted to build a 3-bedroom 3-bathroom new carriage house, we would be living with much less green space on Capitol Hill.

Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully yours, Allison Pugh

Allison Pugh
Professor of Sociology
Johns Hopkins University
allisonpugh.com
@allison_pugh

New book out in 2024:
[*The Last Human Job: The Work of Connecting in a Disconnected World*](#) (Princeton University Press)