

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Cyrus Levesque <cyruslevesque@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 1:35 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: Letter in Opposition - Case 21220 1154 Morse St. NE

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To the BZA,

I am writing in regards to Case 21220, particularly to express my opposition to the request to grant a variance for the number of units. Granting variances like this harms the character of and quality of life on the block for no good reason.

We can say that with some confidence, because this is not the first such development in recent years. We have seen many single-family homes converted to condos, airbnbs, or other multi-unit buildings. There were numerous problems with shoddy construction, and they all increase the burden on other residents. I want to highlight two main problems.

1. Greater density of people on the block without more resources for them. Any individual doesn't matter, but this isn't the first multi-unit conversion and probably won't be the last, unless you stop it at some point. Parking is the obvious problem. There are only so many on-street parking spaces, and many residents of the block don't have space for dedicated parking spots as it is. If the incoming residents prefer to take the bus, that will be a problem too; bus service to the neighborhood has DECREASED in the past five years (D4 shortened during the pandemic and never restored to its previous route). And so on; those are just the most visible of many different common resources being pulled in more directions.
2. The track record of previous developers. Their work doesn't match the character of the other houses on the block at all and was visibly shoddy. One new three-story eyesore completed last year was stark black and had flooding in the basement unit while it was staged for sale. Another, only a little older (4-6 years?), had paint peeling and bricks breaking off the facade already. I don't have any reason to assume 327 Upshur is any better. Houses like this result in transient neighbors, unplanned emergency repairs, and houses simply being used as airbnbs from the start, which isn't good for anyone but the landlord.

Zoning with unit limits exists for a reason. Ignoring those reasons to increase the number of units may be better for the developers' bottom line but doesn't help anyone in the neighborhood. The setbacks are relatively minor issues, but please don't grant a variance for a third unit.

Cyrus Levesque

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.21220
EXHIBIT NO.24

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