



United States Department of State

Office of Foreign Missions

Washington, D.C. 20520

January 16, 2025

REF 25-84

Ms. Sara Benjamin Bardin
Director
DC Office of Zoning
One Judiciary Square
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: **BZA Application No. 21252**
Embassy of the Republic of Cuba
Square 2575 Lot 843
2630 16th Street, NW

Dear Ms. Bardin:

The Department of State hereby provides its comments concerning the application submitted to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) by the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba regarding its desire to construct a retaining wall, fence, and screening to its chancery, located at 2630 16th Street, NW. The application was submitted pursuant to 11 DCMR § 1002.66 and Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act (22 U.S.C. §4306.) This case is scheduled to be heard on February 26, 2025.

On behalf of the Secretary of State, and pursuant to the Foreign Missions Act (22 U.S.C. §§ 4301-4316), particularly sections 4303 and 4306, we hereby convey to the BZA the following comments and determinations concerning the subject application. These comments and determinations relate to the statutory criteria governing BZA determinations that lie within the purview of the Federal Government, namely 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d)(1), (4), and (6), as well as the pertinent portion of (d)(3).

First, with respect to the criterion set forth in 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d)(1), we have determined that favorable BZA action on the present application would fulfill the international obligation of the United States to facilitate the provision of adequate and secure premises for the Government of the Republic of Cuba in Washington.

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.21252
EXHIBIT NO.16

Second, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d)(3), after consultation with Federal agencies authorized to perform protective services, we have determined that there exist no special security requirements relating to parking in this case. I have also determined, after similar consultation, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d)(4), that the subject site and area are capable of being adequately protected.

Finally, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. § 4306(d)(6), there is a federal interest in this project. The Government of the Republic of Cuba has been helpful in addressing the United States' zoning and permit needs required for the construction of a new fence at the U.S. chancery in Havana. Such cooperation was essential for successfully achieving the Federal Government's mission of providing safe, secure, and functional facilities for the conduct of U.S. diplomacy and the promotion of U.S. interests worldwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn Kobb", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Shawn Kobb

Assistant Director

Property and Special Projects

cc: Embassy of the Republic of Cuba