

Ilir & Cynthia Salihi
28 W St NW
Washington, DC 20001
ilirsalihi@gmail.com; cynthiasalihi@gmail.com
June 17, 2025

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street NW, Suite 200S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Opposition to BZA Case No. 21313 – 30 W St NW

Dear Members of the Board:

I am the owner and full-time resident of 28 W St NW, the property immediately adjacent to the subject property at 30 W St NW. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the special exception relief requested by the applicant in the above-referenced case.

The applicant seeks relief to construct a substantial rear addition plus third story and roof deck to the existing rowhome and a new two-story garage studio apartment at the rear of the property. As the adjoining neighbor sharing a party wall with the applicant's property and whose yard directly abuts the proposed garage structure, I will be directly and negatively impacted by this project if approved.

Under Subtitle X § 901.2, the Board may grant a special exception only if the proposal:

1. Is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Maps
2. Will not tend to adversely affect the use of neighboring property
3. Satisfies any specific conditions set forth in the zoning regulations.

I believe the proposal fails to meet these criteria for the following reasons:

Adverse Impacts to My Property

- Loss of Privacy

The height and placement of the two-story garage create new sightlines into my property, compromising the privacy I currently enjoy. Exhibit 8 (Applicant's Statement), states that the applicant is not proposing windows on the east or west side of the accessory building, so there is no compromise to the privacy/use/enjoyment of neighboring properties. This statement is factually incorrect. The windows proposed (see Exhibit 6) face north and south – in other words, the windows face directly into the homes of neighbors on V Street, and directly into the bedrooms and main living space of my home, not to mention my yard.

Additionally, the applicant indicates in their application that this building is a studio for use of the owner; in the 6/17/2025 Bloomingdale Civic Association meeting, they indicated that this is a separate rental unit.

- **Stormwater Runoff and Flooding Risk**

My yard is already susceptible to pooling and water retention during heavy rainfall.

The main structure proposes adding a third story and extending its rear footprint, which results in a bigger roof area to collect rainwater, and therefore more water will flow off the rooftop in a short period during heavy rainfall. This puts additional pressure on gutters and rainspouts. This could likely lead to water pooling at the base of my home, and seep toward my foundation, not to mention soil erosion and basement seepage.

The proposed garage apartment introduces a significant increase in impervious surface along the rear lot line. Without a drainage or stormwater mitigation plan, there is a real risk that runoff will flow or be redirected toward my yard, leading to flooding, erosion, or damage to my foundation and landscaping.

This constitutes an adverse impact under Subtitle X § 901.2(b) and must be addressed prior to approval. I requested a storm water management plan and sediment and erosion controls, which have not been provided.

- **Structural and Construction Concerns**

The excavation and construction along the shared party wall pose risks to the structural integrity of my home. No engineering report has been submitted to address this risk, and no construction management plan has been proposed to mitigate the disruption that would result from heavy equipment, vibration, and access issues during construction.

Not in Harmony with the Character of the Neighborhood

The scale, massing, and intensity of the proposed development—particularly the two-story rear garage structure—are inconsistent with the character and form of our block, which consists of modest, uniform rowhomes with limited rear extensions and open yards. The project threatens the architectural and spatial rhythm of the area and introduces unnecessary density that the RF zoning regulations were designed to limit.

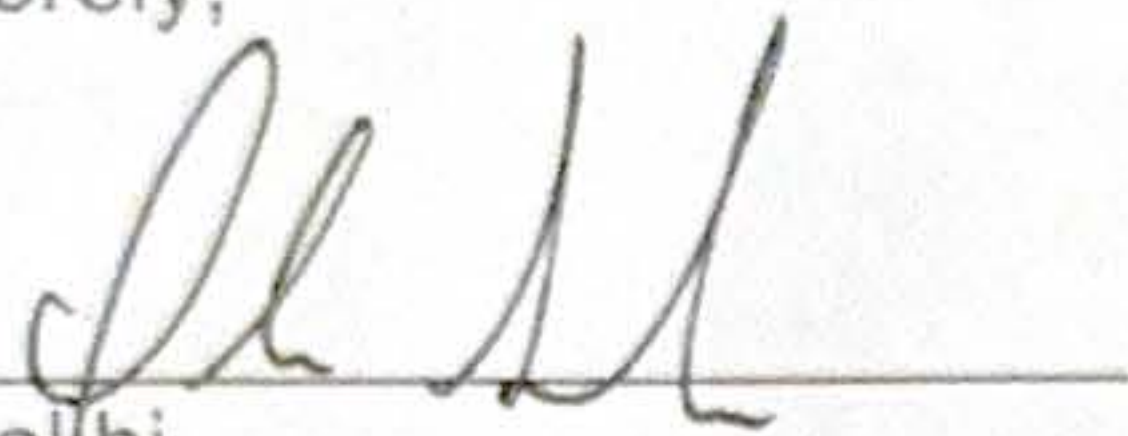
The applicant claims that two story garage/apartment units are encouraged and protected by historical guidelines; in fact, the historical guidelines only state that existing two-story garages should be maintained. The accessory building that exists at 30 W is approximately half the footprint of the proposed structure, and one story, rather than two. While there are three two story garages recently developed on the unit block of V St (2 structures) and W St (1 structure), these are not historic structures being maintained, and they detract from the character of the neighborhood. They are the contemptible exception, not the rule.

Finally, the applicant's statement makes clear that the third story addition is partially visible from the street, which is not in harmony with the character of the neighborhood.

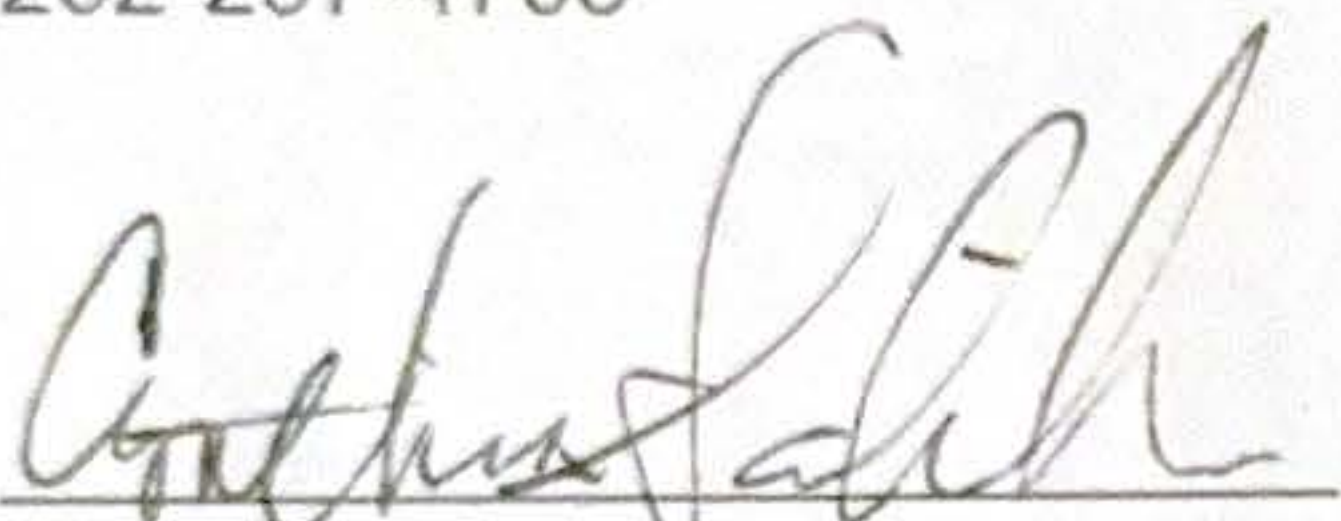
Failure to Satisfy Specific Zoning Conditions

The proposal exceeds the 10-foot rear extension limit for RF zones (Subtitle E § 205.4) and requires several exceptions. The applicant has not demonstrated that this additional length will avoid adverse impacts on my property, or on the neighboring property. No privacy or drainage analysis has been provided to meet the burden of proof under the Zoning Regulations.

Sincerely,



Ilir Salihi
202-297-4708



Cynthia Salihi
202-304-8828