

LETTER OF OPPOSITION

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

Case No. 21361
Property Address: 1253 Morse Street NE
Hearing Date: October 29, 2025

Members of the Board,

I am writing as a concerned neighbor in the Trinidad community to oppose approval for BZA Case No. 21361 for 1253 Morse Street NE.


While I support thoughtful investment and responsible development, I believe exceptions to zoning regulations must remain the exception—not the rule—if those regulations are to have any true meaning.

The proposed relief would allow construction that is significantly larger than what the RF-1 zoning district intends, raising serious concerns about scale, character, and precedent for the broader community.

Morse Street and the surrounding area are defined by modest two-story rowhouses and duplexes with consistent spacing, green space, and rear setbacks. The proposed addition would extend far beyond this pattern, disrupting the rhythm of the block and setting a precedent for more oversized projects. Because the property is part of a duplex, any relief granted here would likely lead to similar changes next door and across the block—gradually eroding light, air, and open space for everyone.

The RF-1 zoning regulations were created to preserve the moderate density and livable scale of neighborhoods like Trinidad. The DC Comprehensive Plan calls for “context-sensitive infill,” not overbuilding that changes the feel of the block. Granting this request would undermine those goals and diminish the neighborhood’s character and quality of life.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Board of Zoning Adjustment to deny the requested reliefs in Case No. 21361. If the Board does not deny the case outright, I ask that the hearing be postponed until the applicant provides full documentation—such as shadow, privacy, and design studies—so that ANC 5D and the community can properly review the impacts.

Name: Robert A. Mann-Thompson 

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Date: 26 OCT 2025

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Name: Anthony D. Leonard Jr.

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Date: 26 OCT 2025