

From: Laurence Telson, owner of 2630 Brentwood Rd NE, Washington DC 20018
To: DC Office of Zoning
Date: May 13, 2026

Subject: **BZA Case No. 21439**

These comments relate to the above-referenced **BZA Case No. 21439** concerning the request to “raze an existing structure and construct a new, detached, three-story plus cellar, eight-unit apartment house in the RA-1 zone.”

I do not support the requested exemption permitting construction of an apartment building within a single-family zoning district because it would erode the character of single-family neighborhoods and negatively affect surrounding property values. This proposal represents a “**foot-in-the-door**” precedent that could encourage similar developments in the future, thereby permanently altering the character of comparable neighborhoods throughout Ward 5.

Additional considerations supporting this recommendation:

1. **Demographic and Density Considerations**

- a. The proposed development would introduce a relatively high-density structure onto a street currently characterized by low-density, single-family homes. As a result, the project may appear visually and functionally out of scale with the existing neighborhood character.
- b. An important factor in evaluating projected population density and overall community impact. By way of illustration, if existing single-family homes average four (4) occupants and each of the proposed eight (8) units houses two (2) residents, the development will effectively quadruple the number of residents occupying a comparable footprint.

2. **Community and Neighborhood Impact Considerations**

- a. Higher tenant turnover, often associated with multi-unit rental properties, may weaken neighborhood cohesion and reduce the sense of long-term community stability.
- b. Increased residential density is also likely to generate additional vehicle traffic and greater demand for on-street parking, potentially contributing to noise and altering the character of what is currently a quiet residential street.