

22 July 2026

District of Columbia Office of Zoning Commission/Board of Zoning Adjustment
Attention: Robert Reid (bzasubmissions@dc.gov)

Re: Letter in Opposition to Proposed Additions to 1413 28th Street NW, Georgetown,
Washington, DC 20007
Case / Permit Application # 21459

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing as a resident and homeowner at 2712 Poplar Street NW to express my opposition to the proposed major addition at 1413 28th Street NW. Poplar Street is an historic alleyway in the Georgetown Historic District. As the proposed project at 1413 28th Street will add a significant amount of square footage visible from Poplar Street and will negatively impact homes on Poplar Street, I am objecting.

The character of our tight-knit, historic street is defined by its human scale. Most of the historic homes on Poplar Street are approximately 700 to 900 square feet and are two stories high. The 1413 28th Street proposal consists of adding an oversized addition to the back of the house, clad with industrial metal siding. The current 1413 28th Street house is already nearly twice the size of the adjacent home at 2726 Poplar Street. The proposed addition will make the 1413 28th Street house at least three times the size of the adjacent 2726 Poplar Street house. The proposed project at 1413 28th Street, with its extended pop-up roof and back pop-out addition, will nearly fill the entire lot, overshadowing the adjacent 784-square-foot, diminutive structure of 2726 Poplar Street. The loss of light, air, and privacy to the house at 2726 Poplar Street—and potentially other homes whose owners may not yet realize the impact—*is entirely objectionable*.

This proposal violates the core tenets of historic preservation and community liveability for several critical reasons:

- **Destruction of Historic Scale and Massing:** The addition introduces a massive bulk and height completely incompatible with the low-density, historic micro-scale of our unique alley street. It sets a dangerous precedent that will erode the architectural integrity of our historic alley. As this home is adjacent to Poplar homes, this must be considered. Also, adding metal siding in such a condensed area, while keeping the host building of 1413 28th Street cool, will increase solar radiation to surrounding properties, increasing ambient temperatures.
- **Severe Loss of Light and Air:** Extending a two-story addition to nearly the property line of the adjacent 2726 Poplar Street's 784-square-foot home will cast the Poplar Street property into permanent shadow, choking off natural light and cross-ventilation.
- **Complete Invasion of Privacy:** The proposed rear extension with windows and balconies looks over the 2726 Poplar Street house and garden, and those of adjacent properties, stripping away the basic privacy that residents on this narrow lane have relied upon for generations.

The strict preservation and zoning rules in Georgetown exist specifically to prevent this type of over-building that degrades neighboring properties and historic context. This oversized project benefits one household at the direct expense of the light, air, privacy, and historic fabric enjoyed by the adjacent homes and our entire alley.

Finally, the need for a bigger house seems to be a personal circumstance rather than a physical property hardship. Personal desires for more space should not grant special exceptions and the right to build out-of-scale additions that permanently damage the surrounding historic neighborhood and compromise the basic rights of nearby neighbors.

Sincerely,
Tanya and John Wetenhall
2712 Poplar Street NW

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 21459
EXHIBIT NO. 25