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Washington, DC 20008-1039

02-19
700-444-6111
8:35
OFFICE OF ZONING

Mr. Alberto P. Bastida, AICP
Secretary of the Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
441 4th Street, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20001

May 31, 2002

02-19

Dear Mr. Bastida:

I am writing to you about two points: the Forest Hills Tree and Slope Overlay and zoning in this neighborhood in general.

I think it is ridiculous to add more restrictions to an area when current zoning issues aren't even upheld. In the case of the Tree and Slope Overlay, it seems to be a matter of ever-savvy neighbors preventing the addition of a school in Forest Hills, an area of town which seems to be particularly unfriendly to schools, old age homes, etc. From the letter I received in my mail slot today, there is no mention of the losses to a city when it does not grow to meet the needs of its oldest and youngest citizens, just a plea to "the unique character of our area." I am beginning to think that the "unique character" of this area is its ability to strongarm anyone they want to with their continual NIMBYism and unrealistic resistance to the needs of a vibrant urban area.

Secondly, in my own backyard (literally!), zoning compliances were not upheld, even though they are on the books. This is an A1A zoned area, which calls for 8 feet between house and property line. When my immediate next door neighbors elected to turn their "grandfathered" garage, which stands at less than 5 ft from the property line, into a year round residence by adding a second story, our ANC unanimously voted against it a ANC meeting. The BZA allowed the addition of the second floor BUT only if the building was attached to the main house. Well, more than six years later, that compliance was never met; the building is resided in year-round, and currently further construction is being undertaken at the house which means that new permits were issued without any regard to the fact that these Forest Hills residents snubbed their nose at the Office of Zoning by never attaching the buildings.

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Section 42

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO.02-19
EXHIBIT NO.42

I am sorry the city kowtows to the residents who put themselves in front of the law, community, etc. I feel the city should be leading by example that rules are rules for all, and that the community's needs should be placed before the misguided attempt to curtail development in a city which, until it improves its schools, will lose less aggregious residents and only be left with those whose children go to schools which preach "community service" but are unable to allow the community within them to grow. Rosedale is another incredible example of this nonsense. Okay, I'm sticking with Forest Hills and just want you to know how disappointed I would be, as a citizen, if this Tree Overlay proposal goes anywhere, and how disappointed I am, as a homeowner, that my own property wasn't protected from existing laws so that in fact two independent residences now stand on the property next to mine (3100 Ellicott Street) with the activity, cars, and noise that comes with that.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gayle Weiss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Gayle Weiss