

Bill Bonstra, FAIA, LEED AP
Managing Partner

bbonstra@bonstra.com
202.328.5711 direct

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

RE: JC Development project at 1514 Q Street, NW – BZA Appeal No. 19374

Dear Sir or Madam,

It has come to my attention that an interpretation by the Zoning Administrator for a project at 1514 Q Street, NW, has been challenged by the Dupont Circle Citizens Association (DCCA). I am writing in opposition to the appeal put forth by the DCCA regarding the classification/use of cellar designated space as occupiable residential space.

I have been a practicing architect since 1986. I have designed, permitted, and completed hundreds of projects that have occupied space in zoning designated cellar areas below grade (with finished ceilings no greater than 4 feet above the adjacent grade). Their occupancy for residential use has never been questioned by a DC code official, nor should they in my professional opinion. In fact, they are counted for residential uses when determining parking and loading requirements for a multi-unit residential project in most zoning districts in the city, specifically R-A-8 (formally R-5-B). From a zoning perspective these spaces have been correctly classified as cellar floor areas AND at the same time are in full conformance to the Building Code designation as 'occupied spaces' allowing all uses that make up a typical residential unit. These lower level 'cellar' areas do not count towards the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of a building but as habitable areas are treated like other levels of any building from an egress and other building code standpoints. I suspect that if this interpretation were changed, that tens of thousands of these lower level units would be deemed 'uninhabitable' in the District of Columbia.

Please feel free to contact me directly at the number shown above should you have any questions on this matter.

Sincerely,
Bonstra | Haresign ARCHITECTS LLP



William J. Bonstra, FAIA, LEED AP
Managing Partner
Licensed in DC, Virginia and Maryland
DC License 4031

1728 Fourteenth Street, NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20009-4309

www.bonstra.com
Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
202 588 9373 T
CASE NO. 19374
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