

Frederick L Hill, Chairman
Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th St NW, Ste 200S
Washington DC, 20001

October 8, 2017

RE:

BZA Case 19629/Request for Zoning Relief for Carriage House at 1665 Harvard St NW
Request for delayed BZA hearing

Dear Sir,

I am owner of and resident at 1702 Hobart St NW, Washington DC, less than 200 feet from 1665 Harvard St. **I am writing in serious opposition to the applicant's plans in Case 19629, and to request a delay in the proposed November 8th hearing.**

Currently the BZA hearing is scheduled for November 8, 2017. **I request that the hearing be delayed for the following reasons:**

- (i) Under Rule 402.1(d), BZA must notify owners of affected properties within 200ft of the relevant property within 40 days of scheduled date. I (and other Mt Pleasant residents we have spoken to) have not received formal notification about this case as of **October 8th, 2017**. If the proposed date is maintained, there will not be time to sufficiently prepare testimony for a case which will have significant impact on residents, especially myself as owner of the house directly opposite the proposed carriage house. The proposed carriage house will impact my home, financial security, privacy and lifestyle in a very significant way.
- (ii) There has not been discussion of this matter at the ANCD1.
- (iii) To the best of our knowledge the HPRB has not reviewed this case, and that institution's perspective on the proposed construction is not currently known.
- (iv) The proposed carriage house will reduce **safety** along the public pass through to Harvard Street, thereby affecting all of those needing to pass through. It will impact adversely those without cars or elderly who would need to walk a long way to get to bus, groceries, banks, Rock Creek Park post office etc. It would impact those of use who use it to take advantage of the access to the zoo and walk across to the red line. Single women and those walking alone would be adversely impacted. Taking away the public access or making it less safe due to a restriction of sightlines is discriminatory in my opinion.
- (v) **Privacy issue:** Building a 2 story structure with roof deck would have serious implications for my privacy, access to my home, and garage and also noise level of activities. I bought my home because of location in a green, quiet and spacious neighborhood, which was protected due to its

Board of Zoning Adjustment
District of Columbia
CASE NO.19629
EXHIBIT NO.13

historic status. Being on an incline meant that I could be on my balcony, bedroom and back deck without looking up at someone else's windows or having someone else look into my windows. Being set back from the alley allows trees and greenery, so necessary for well being, privacy and maintaining the character of this neighborhood. That would change and make it feel more like being in a condominium housing complex and feeling like the neighbors would almost literally sit in my backyard, should this carriage house proposal be approved.

- (vi) **Financial implications:** One of the outstanding features is the privacy and greenery and space in this part of the city. People indicate that this is desirable and want to live here. This would change with a structure so close and so high as is proposed. It could very likely result in a significant impact in current value of my house and those of the neighbors.
- (vii) **Setting a precedent:** Allowing this proposed structure to go ahead, would set a precedent forever changing the structure of this neighborhood. Those choosing to live here, make a commitment to the historic preservation of the character of this neighborhood. Allowing the first precedent of a building right up to the alley and 2 story height without variance would turn this neighborhood into one that is more tight, more isolated with less contact with neighbors in the outside areas of our homes and less green space. There is NO structure on Harvard Street that is built as the proposed structure. It is essential that Hobart and Harvard Streets stay that way.
- (viii) **Noise-level:** Sound travels upward and outward. Having a roof deck as well as a second story so close to my house would have serious impact on my health and lifestyle. Open windows from the second story, conversations on the roof deck would disturb my home office work (I am self employed and count on space to think and speak with clients) and bedroom. Already, the absentee landlord's tenants host loud parties that disturb residents in these streets and those are held at ground level.
- (ix) **Access to my car garage:** Building a garage that is right up to the alley would reduce the ability of cars accessing my garage. Parking is already difficult due to the narrowness of the alley. Turning from the alley into the garage of 1702 Hobart and 1665 Harvard Street requires a turning radius that would most likely not be given if the structure were built as proposed.
- (x) **The owners are absentee landlords.** They are not impacted by the structure they create; however, those of us who live here, hope to retire here and have significant equity in our homes are seriously impacted. The proposed structure, besides housing a garage, would only serve as temporary housing should they come back for short periods of time, possibly as an investment property for shorter term rental during their absence, or as perhaps as added space for guests etc. All of those functions are not enhancing the neighborhood or even desirable for this neighborhood and could be satisfied in different, less impactful ways.

This letter serves as letter of opposition and as a request for delay of the Hearing.

Very respectfully,

Christiane Frischmuth

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1702 Hobart St NW

Washington DC