



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1A

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September 13, 2018

Catarina Ferreira, AIA
ARCHI-TEXTUAL, PLLC
3421 ½ M St., NW, Suite A
Washington, DC 200007

Re: Letter clarifying position of ANC1A Regarding 3324 Sherman Ave., NW (BZA 19796)

Dear Ms. Ferreira,

Thank you for contacting me regarding BZA case #19796. I am happy to supply this letter in response to the case. Due to the short amount of time in which you request this letter, the full Commission is unable to consider and vote on the matter as our next public meeting is on October 10, 2018, so therefore this letter can not be considered to have “Great Weight.”

I have reviewed my notes, the documents filed with the case, and watched the video of the hearing held on September 12, 2018. As you correctly state during your testimony, you did present before ANC1A – not once, but twice. You first presented the project at 3324 Sherman Avenue, NW, on May 9, 2018. The Commission was unable to take a vote at that time as we no longer had a quorum by the time you presented. However, we did give you direct and honest feedback, including our concerns that we would want 3-bedroom units if possible and that the residence had been the home of Charles Drew and was on the African American Heritage Trail.

You returned at the June 13, 2018, meeting of the Commission where you presented again. The outcome of that vote was 4-3-0. I believe I am accurately describing a significant portion of the opposition to the project being grounded in the architectural aesthetic of the proposal rather than pure zoning issues that were before the Commission. As you shared that you had consulted the Historic Preservation Office on the matter of the property’s association with Charles Drew, and reported back that the HPO advised that the building, by itself, did not meet the standards of the preservation law, that aspect of the project ceased to be an issue.

In terms of zoning relief, the ANC only considered the property from the perspective of adding a third unit in an RF-1 Zone. I understand that additional conditions have since been identified, including from a side court and increasing the rear addition from 10’ to 18’. These aspects were not discussed before the Commission as zoning issues, nor did we know that relief would be needed in June.

My sense is that the additional relief you seek would be supported by the Commission for the following reasons:

Side Court Relief: While the ANC did not consider this issue from the position of needing relief, it was clear in your presentation that you intended the new construction at 3324 Sherman to abut the property at 3328 Sherman. In other BZA cases the ANC has considered, including one that will be on our October 2018 agenda, this type of relief is generally considered a minor aspect of a project. We are far more concerned with parking requirements, building height, number of family-sized units, number of affordable-units, or other aspects that will either benefit the greater community or, at least, not have a negative impact on the community. This aspect of the project will not have a negative aspect to the community.

18 ft. Rear Addition: Personally, I concur with the Office of Planning that overall the additional 8 ft. you are seeking for the rear addition is a small deviation considering the large size of the lot – *provided* that you have support from the abutting neighbors to the north and south of your property as that would be the expectation and question you would be asked by the full Commission

As an example, ANC1A reviewed a similar case at 753 Morton Street, NW, in October 2017 (BZA 19617) in which the home owner proposed a 12' addition to the rear of their property. While this was only 3' beyond the abutting property to the north, it extended their from 20 ft. 1 ¼ in. to 32 ft. 1 ¼ in. with the abutting property to the south. Because the property owner had support from the impacted neighbors, ANC1A voted unanimously to support the rear addition.

Lastly, one thing ANC1A has been very clear about is that we want more 3+ bedroom units when possible. Based on the conditions that led to our support for the rear addition on Morton Street, if similar conditions and support exist at 3324 Sherman and the additional 8' in the rear will result in 3+ bedroom units, that would be an additionally persuasive argument in this case.

Thank you for contacting me and ensuring that I am aware of current developments on this case. It is appreciated, and I am happy to answer any additional questions you may have.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kent C. Boese', written in a cursive style.

Kent C. Boese
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner 1A