

Honorable Frederick L. Hill, Chairperson,  
Honorable Anthony J. Hood, Chairperson, Zoning Commission  
Honorable Lesyllee M. White  
Honorable Lorna John  
Honorable Carlton Hart, National Capital Planning Commission Designee

**Board of Zoning Adjustment**

441 4th Street, NW, Suite 200S  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Chairperson Hill and Members of the Board

RE: BZA Case No. **19823**

Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church - Sunrise Senior living, 3920 Alton Place, NW

We are writing in **opposition** to the requests being made by the filer of this case.

We own and live in the house at 4412 39<sup>TH</sup> ST NW. Our lot, zoned R1B, shares a property line with the Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church (WABC), whose lot is also zoned R1B. Our back yard fence borders WABC's driveway to its parking lot. The second floor windows at the rear of our house look across at the top floor windows of the side of the WABC building that borders its driveway.

We object to each of the various exemptions and variances that the church is seeking. The proposed project by Sunrise Living is absurdly out of scale for an R1B zoned neighborhood. That it is being characterized as a buffer is wholly disingenuous. A buffer from what? National Park Service land? Tenley Circle? That is what lies beyond the WABC lot, aside from single family homes. Far from being a buffer, it would be a spearhead of commercialism and industrial scale operations into a vibrant, lovely and marvelously livable neighborhood. It would diminish the value of our house.

Eight feet from our back yard fence, this project calls for a concrete precipice ("wall") plunging 13 feet to a concrete truck ramp where there is now a one foot hill down to an asphalt driveway.

Instead of looking out at the top floor windows of our neighboring church, our master bedroom would be looking at the second story of four stories plus a penthouse level – three levels higher than the current structure and much more massive, extending the entire distance from Alton Place to Yuma Street and occupying over 57% of the lot. Our afternoon sunlight would disappear a lot earlier each day.

The church would move out of our view, to the bottom two stories at the far southwestern corner of the lot, obstructed by the many square feet of the 24 hour a day, 365 day per year commercial operation of Sunrise Living. Staff there would come and go three times a day every day – arriving much earlier in the morning and leaving much later at night than most businesses. There

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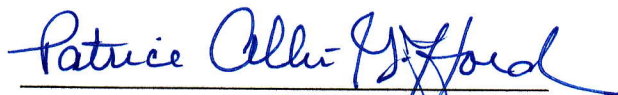
would be multiple regular daily deliveries needed for the well over a hundred people who would live at Sunrise. Several times a week there would be trash pickups. Still, the rat population from the Wisconsin Avenue commercial strip would inevitably spread to the lot. All this taking place eight feet from our back yard.

There would also be the traffic of visitors to see the residents and other visitors to examine the facility. Some would park on our residential streets rather than wait for delivery trucks to clear out of the ramps to the underground parking lot. There would also be an increase in emergency vehicle trips through the neighborhood to and from the facility, given the age of the clientele targeted by Sunrise Living.

There is also the matter of construction. When you live in an R1B neighborhood, you don't expect your neighbor to contemplate construction that requires 60 foot deep exploratory bore holes. That is far beyond a McMansion problem. The scale and duration of the construction that would be needed for the proposed Sunrise project is far more burdensome than single family home construction. Single family homes don't have two basement levels tall enough to allow truck traffic. Aside from the extended duration of noise, dirt, construction traffic and other such inconveniences, there is a real likelihood of damage to our house and other neighboring houses from such a massive project that is so close. Our house was built in 1942 and that is pretty new in this neighborhood.

There is nothing special about this plot of land that calls out for it to be used for assisted living. In fact, Sunrise Living has said that 1.5 acres is a better size for its facilities and the WABC plot is less than an acre. Why try to shoehorn a Sunrise facility that supposedly requires 85 living units to be profitable onto such a small plot that would also need to serve WABC, when it is zoned for single family homes in a neighborhood of single family homes? It needlessly defies logic, common sense **and zoning**.

Yours truly,

  
Patrice Allen-Gifford

  
John Allen-Gifford