

Katrin and Robert Boorstin  
3708 Yuma Street NW  
Washington DC 20016

November 7, 2018

Board of Zoning Adjustment  
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  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 2005 Washington, DC 20001

Subject: BZA Case No. 19823  
Sunrise Senior Living and Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church Project at 3920 Alton Place

Dear Chairperson Hill and Members of the Board:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the Sunrise Development / Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church development application on 3920 Alton Place NW. We are residents of Yuma Street NW, just down the road one-and-a-half blocks from the proposed development.

Our objections are three-fold:

**1. Traffic Impacts.**

Our street and property would be greatly and negatively impacted by the increased truck and visitor traffic that the facility would generate.

In a recent letter to the BZA, a resident, a Ms. Carolyn Long claims that “Trucks of every size—even large moving vans—can and do travel into the neighborhood when they have business here. This has never been a problem. The trucks making deliveries to Sunrise will travel on designated truck routes on Wisconsin and Nebraska avenues, go a short distance on Alton Place, enter the loading dock to the underground garage, exit on Yuma Street, and go a short distance to Nebraska Avenue.”

In fact, there are daily violations of the through-traffic prohibition of delivery traffic from Connecticut to Wisconsin multiple times a day through clearly marked as “no through truck routes” and on the DC restricted truck map. Currently, there are large trailer trucks illegally passing through these streets daily in direct violation of the no-through truck rule.

This rule very clearly states:

*Section 18-2505.6 of the DCMR states that: “Whenever authorized signs are erected indicating a truck restriction, no person shall operate the type of truck prohibited on the*

*street, except that the prohibited truck may be operated on the street or portions of the street for the sole purpose of making a delivery or pickup and then only by entering the street at the intersection nearest to the destination of the truck and proceeding on the street no further than the next intersection after the delivery or pickup has been completed.”*

Residents have recorded and documented the daily through truck traffic violating this rule, and there have been multiple neighborhood complaints submitted regarding this truck traffic to DDOT, complete with evidentiary photos and license plate numbers. Based on data collected of truck traffic from similar Sunrise facilities in Northwest DC, we believe that this illegal traffic will increase significantly.

Even the shuttle bus used by Sunrise facilities nearby is a Type A shuttle bus that weighs 11,500 lbs or 5.5 tons and would be restricted from traveling down Yuma Street, Alton Street, Albemarle Street, Van Ness Street or Upton Street – all restricted to exactly this kind of through traffic. (See restricted truck map at <https://ddot.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddot/publication/attachments/TruckandBusThroughRouteandRestrictions.pdf>.)

Traffic would also be generated by the staff working at the facility. The residential streets in Tenleytown are already greatly affected by Maryland and Virginia commuter traffic. Parking on all streets in the Tenleytown neighborhood east of the site are restricted to residents. Additionally, the proposed 250-seat church generates traffic, for which parking has not been clearly designated or explained. We note here that the church has a history of renting to tenants that generate a lot of traffic without providing adequate traffic guidance to these tenants.

The zoning regulations require 103 parking spaces for the proposed development of the 250-seat church and the 86-unit assisted living facility. Sunrise wants to reduce this requirement to 66 spaces in the underground garage – wholly inadequate to the number of residents, church goers, facility visitors, and staff. The 75 daily staffers plus other caretakers, medical personnel, visitors to the Sunrise residents, and church participants are likely going to park illegally on the adjacent residential neighborhood streets.

Additional traffic generated by the facility – both truck and commuter traffic from the staff - without any significant traffic calming measures would overwhelm the neighborhood, seriously jeopardize pedestrians safety, and significantly reduce property values.

## **2. Deceptive Occupancy**

According to the most recent plans, Sunrise's facility would occupy 85% of the building. This means that Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church would only occupy a mere 15% or 12,000 square feet of the 80,000 square feet building.

Yet, Sunrise is proposing to have the building occupy 58% of the lot, citing the 60% that churches are allowed to occupy. This is highly deceptive given that Sunrise, a commercial entity, would occupy the vast majority of the building. Under the regulations, such an entity would only be allowed to occupy 40% of any lot – not 58%.

Using the mantle of the church to take advantage of that churches' 60% occupancy limit when the church is only in a tiny part of the building strikes us as shady, and is not acceptable in an R1-B zoned lot.

### **3. Widespread neighborhood opposition.**

Contrary to Ms. Long's assertion in her recent letter to the Board that there isn't widespread opposition to the project in the neighborhood, there are now more than 200 people who have expressly shown that they are opposed to the plan.

We have daily petition sign ups with 33 additional signers since September. There are close to 100 yard signs on personal properties highly visible all over the neighborhood from Reno to Warren to 42<sup>nd</sup> Streets NW, put up by people in September and October of 2018 who are clearly and visibly opposed to the development and are willing to say so by putting up a sign in their yards. The mailing list of parties is hundreds long.

This opposition is real and it is deep and it is only growing.

Attached is a list of addresses that have yard signs in their yards or have signed the petition, opposing the development plan in the last weeks. The complete list of all petition signers since October 2017 has been submitted to the BZA separately.

We would welcome another church, affordable housing, or any other appropriate development for this R1-B lot, and strongly oppose this commercial development on a lot that is neither appropriate nor zoned for such a plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

  


The Boorstin Household

Enc.: Attachment

Addresses of recent petition signers / expressing their opposition with a yard sign on their personal property (Sept 9-Nov 8, 2018)

4415 39th St NW

3905 Windom Pl NW

4000 Massachusetts Avenue NW #826

4403 Harrison St NW

3003 Van Ness St. NW Apt. W826

4122 Military Road

3825 Porter St NW

4309 37th Street, N.W.

4001 Van Ness Street NW

4303 38th Street NW

4303 38th Street NW

3806 Alton Pl. NW

3806 Alton Pl. NW

3729 Cumberland Street NW

2939 Van Ness St NW

3812 Windom Place NW

3732 Alton Place NW

4422 Garrison Street N.W.

3905 Alton Pl. NW

3905 Alton Pl. NW

5242 Nebraska Ave NW

3728 Yuma St NW

3800 Windom Pl NW

3908 Jocelyn Street, NW

3712 Yuma Street NW

4000 Cathedral Ave

3654 Upton St NW

2820 Albemarle St NW

4400 Massachusetts Avenue NW

5125 Upton St NW

4422 42nd St NW

6155 31st St. NW

4303 38th Street NW

3700 Albemarle St NW

3812 Windom Place NW

3905 Windom Place, NW

4422 42nd Street NW