

Cochran, Patricia (DCOZ)

From: Boutelle, Dawn <dboutelle@deloitte.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2019 8:29 AM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: BZA Case 20143 - Letter of Opposition
Attachments: 1117 Morse Street NE.jpg

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Dear Board of Zoning Adjustment,

I would like to express my opposition to BZA Case 20143 (1117 Morse Street NE).

I live in the Trinidad neighborhood of Ward 5. I love this neighborhood and want to preserve the character of the architecture and the close knit community of the neighbors. This application is seeking a special exception relief for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), a 3rd unit, and additional footage.

I oppose the request for the special exceptions.

The Trinidad neighborhood has been beseeched with requests for converting single family homes into multiple dwelling units. Neighbors from our neighborhood and others have continued to raise our voices against the onset of overdevelopment. So much so that the Office of Zoning changed the rules governing our neighborhood and others to help protect from overdevelopment.

We have lost many single family homes already to condo conversion development. A place where a family could put down roots and raise their children turned into another multifamily unit. Trinidad is not lacking in multifamily units, with many original 4 unit buildings still in the neighborhood. What Trinidad is losing is the character of the neighborhood and too many single family homes.

This proposal asks to turn the current single family home into a 3 unit property with one unit being an ADU and asking for additional footage to make the ADU work for their purposes. I oppose the request. The current zoning allows for 2 units and that side of that block does not currently have any ADU's or any carriage homes. An ADU would be out of character.

The proposed accessory dwelling being placed in the middle of the backyard is not only completely out of character for the neighborhood, but it would also impact the adjacent neighbors, reducing privacy, light, and air flow. The loss of light would be most felt by the neighbor to the west, but it would still impact the other neighbors in ways that are not easily quantifiable. Less natural light coming in through their windows, loss of light to plants and gardens, and a lack of airflow which would be impeded by the additional structure. Currently there are no accessory dwelling units (or carriage houses) on that side of the street. Allowing this one to move forward would set a precedence that would be duplicated by developers through out this street and the neighborhood. I am not opposed to carriage houses in theory as there are many beautiful historic ones throughout the city, but this proposal is out of character for the neighborhood being set in the middle of the yard and out of character for the block that currently does not have a carriage house. Approving this would set a dangerous precedence.

As you can see by the attached satellite view from Google Maps, there are no ADU's on that side of the block. There is one existing structure across the alley but that side faces Florida Ave and is commercially zoned. The proposal uses this as an example of an existing ADU, but you can clearly see from the picture there is all green in the backyards on that side of the block, no ADU's, and a commercially zoned area is vastly different from a residentially zones one.

Even though I am not the neighbor directly beside this structure (and thus the most impacted) the more of these cases that are put forth and won, the more the developers and their legal representation uses these wins as precedence. It is already difficult enough with them using developments which were allowed under the old rules as precedence. I live on the next block from this proposal which has similarly long backyard that are appealing to developers as a way to maximize their profit. Let me be clear – developers would make a handsome profit just renovating the current structure within the current zoning regulation. Developers are pushing the envelope because

they can, I don't blame them for asking. But just because they ask does not mean the board should grant the exception. The current zoning regulations allow for enough of a change to the house and neighborhood without additional exceptions.

I ask that you please hold to the current regulations, which were recently put in place to protect the character of DC neighborhoods, and do not approve the proposed exceptions.

Please help to continue to preserve the character of our beautiful city.

Thank you for your time.

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