

July 25, 2020

To: Mr. Frederick Hill, Chairman, Board of Zoning Adjustment
From: George Idelson, 3035 Newark Street, NW, Washington, DC
Subject: Testimony, BZA Application 20266

I am George Idelson, a resident of Cleveland Park since 1967. I live on Newark Street above the Macklin.

During my seven years as president of the Cleveland Park Citizens Association, the problems that seemed to concern members the most usually came down to “Traffic and Parking”. In my view, granting this parking waiver is unthinkable.

Call it what you will. This waiver is a subsidy to the developer. But it’s not the city that will fund the subsidy. It will be the Macklin neighbors, homeowners who will feel the impact of increased traffic, truck loading and a constant battle for parking on a hilly, narrow, winding street. And it will be the small businesses on Connecticut Avenue, 86% of whom, report that lack of parking is their biggest commercial challenge.

There is a price to be paid for this impact. It will negatively affect the quality of life of families, many well into retirement, who need their cars to get about. In addition, it may well reduce the value of their homes. It will also make Cleveland Park less attractive for small, neighborhood-serving businesses competing with commercial districts that don’t suffer from our dearth of parking.

Building on this treasured site may be a matter of right. But seeking this waiver is asking for a gift. A subsidy. You might call it a “taking”. There is some irony to this request. The developer, having gobbled up all his buildable space, *including existing onsite parking*, for houses, apartments and stores, would now have you believe that providing the required parking is undoable. We know about the child who murdered his parents and pleaded with the court because he was an orphan.

Please. Do the right thing. Just say “No”.