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Sent: Thursday, January 20, 2022 8:15 PM
To: DCOZ - BZA Submissions (DCOZ)
Subject: 20603 – Opposition

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January 20, 2022

Board of Zoning Adjustment
Frederick L. Hill, Chair

I strongly oppose case 20603. Please deny this application.

I'm Aaron Landry, the prior Commissioner for SMD 2B04, where the subject of this application is located. I have a lot of experience with the properties, residents, and businesses on this block and am very privy to the neighborhood dynamics. I have met with neighbors on this block, including the applicant for 20603 and adjacent neighbors on numerous issues over the last few years. I also directly worked on behalf of the ANC 2B to examine BZA case 20042 in 2019 for 1637-1641 R St NW (adjacent to the property in 20603) to help ensure no neighbors were negatively impacted, and to make sure that applicant received and applied neighboring concerns.

When I was first made aware of 20603 in October 2021, I became personally interested because I knew how much work has gone into improving this block and the work that has gone into creating new units of housing in a historic neighborhood. I'm also intimately familiar with how a small cabal of controversial personalities have sometimes stymied responsible progress by using government processes and legal mechanisms to stall and abuse those who invest in their properties, and frivolous enforcement complaints that serve to harass neighbors and ultimately make the neighborhood a more expensive place to live.

Unfortunately, I know how some of these dynamics are intertwined with aspects of this case, and it was very clear in the ANC 2B meetings that the applicant was flagrantly dishonest and derogatory about the neighboring property they have a clear disregard for, which would be clearly adversely impacted. I became strongly interested in making sure the truth of this case is elevated.

I am thankful for the time and work the ANC 2B spent in understanding application 20603. I know firsthand it's hard work, and I can attest that the majority of the commission dug deep into this case by hearing the kinds of questions and scrutiny they gave it. I'm thankful Dupont has a strong ANC that takes zoning cases very seriously.

I completely agree with the ANC 2B's resolution in opposition.

I would like to add upon ANC 2B's opposition:

This project is not at all in harmony with the intent of the zoning in this SMD. Nobody is allowed to fill in their entire rear yard with a permanent multistory structure, and if for some reason this were to be approved, it could spur a chain reaction on this block of cases to replace rear yards with commercial structures. It is a bizarre application that I know

would be opposed if any other neighbor on this entire block would attempt to do the same thing.

This project adversely impacts neighboring property. I visited the site multiple times between November 2021 and January 2022, in effort to understand the application in its context. There is no question that this negatively impacts the 1637-1641 R St NW property. This is incredibly disappointing because 1637-1641 R St NW is one of the very few great projects in the neighborhood that is both a historic restoration and a restoration of housing units in an area that is incredibly difficult to add new units of housing. I fully support more housing in Dupont, and application 20603 would basically erect a wall against some of that housing being developed, basically destroying the light, air, and privacy of some units.

I believe **the applicant fails every test for special exception approval**, and I hope the Board of Zoning Adjustment is able to spend the time to scrutinize this case appropriately.

Thank you for considering my testimony, and thank you for your work for the District of Columbia.

Aaron Landry
Commissioner, SMD 2B04 (2019-2020)
Former Chair, ANC 2B Zoning, Preservation, and Development Committee