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October 4, 2021

Kathleen Byrne
Board of Municipal & Zoning Appeals
417 E. Fayette Street, Suite 922
Baltimore, MD 21202
kathleen.byrne@baltimorecity.gov

RE: BMZA Appeals # 2021-219

Ms Byrne:

Reservoir Hill Association (RHA) is writing in opposition to the bulk and yard and off-street parking variances requested by the applicant, Adam Carballo. Representatives for the applicant, Darien White and Eddie Colson of Kemetec Capital Management, have articulated that the driving force for the applicant to increase the number of dwelling units in the building is for the minimum financial viability for themselves and their investors. RHA has not heard reasonable arguments outside of personal financial gain for granting any variance to the current lot size or parking restrictions.

Parking

According to the parking requirements for R-8 zoned buildings, the building should provide one off-street parking spot per dwelling unit (Table 16-406). Currently the building has zero off-street parking spots. Granting this variance would cause undue burden to nearby residents, who are already experiencing difficulty parking. The applicant has not provided alternative parking plans to off-set that burden.

Lot Size

According to Bulk and Yard regulations in the Baltimore City Code (Table 9-401) a building in the R-8 district would require 750 sq ft per dwelling unit. The petitioner's request for 12 units would require a lot size of 9000 sq ft. The building is currently zoned for the maximum number of units that it already contains. RHA does not see a good reason beyond the financial gain of the petitioner to grant a variance for an increase in lot size.

Other Considerations

Sanitation

Increasing the dwelling units to 12 requires the use of the building's basement for additional dwelling units. The applicant has not created a plan for refuse disposal containers or refuse storage areas. Representatives for the applicants have proposed storing refuse at the front of the building in its current courtyard. This plan seems to be in violation to §15-515 in the Baltimore City Code, which requires storage areas to be located to the rear or side of structures. We recommend that the applicant make use of the basement for the storage of refuse rather than convert the basement to additional dwelling units.

Work Quality

Community members have been impacted by the past work of the applicant's representatives. Neighbors have voiced concerns about sub-standard work by representatives of the applicant. Applying this level of work to 2201 Brookfield would impact the historic structure of the building and the enjoyment of the neighborhood. The RHA supports our members' dedication to thoughtful restoration of our neighborhood's historic buildings. The current shared projected cost of restoration that has been presented by the applicant's representatives, indicates a misunderstanding of the level of quality of work that is expected by the community for the proper restoration of the building.

Additionally, neighbors have voiced concerns about the integrity and honesty of the applicant's representatives and feel uncomfortable entrusting them with work that seems to be beyond their level of expertise and capacity.

For all of these reasons, RHA is in opposition to the appeal put forth by the applicant.

Sincerely,
Committee Members
Planning and Development Committee
Reservoir Hill Association

CC: Councilman James Torrence