



Battery Park Civic Association

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Planning Commission
900 E. Broad Street
Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Planning Commission,

This letter is being sent in response to the special use permit for the 309 West Hooper Street property. The permit is requesting to build a single-family dwelling on a lot that was previously a location for a small, neighborhood store. Although this letter is being written in support of the special use permit proposed by developer, Mr. Andrew McVeigh, it is being written with trepidation.

For at least the past 8 years, neighbors have been presented with several proposals on how the 309 West Hooper Street property should be developed. Previous developers have presented plans for a two living unit (i.e., a duplex) or a housing structure that is not aligned with the current character of the neighborhood. By far, Mr. McVeigh's proposal for the property has been the most well-thought out plan presented to us. During our July meeting, members of the civic association voted unanimously to support the special use permit.

The primary reasons given for why members support this permit are the following:

- Mr. McVeigh stated he would provide easement to the alley for property, 2716 Fendall Ave
- The developer has agreed to provide all 3 privacy recommendations made by the Planning Commission to the 2716 Fendall Ave property (i.e., privacy fence, frosted glass looking over the property, and shutters to obscure sight lines)
- Off road car storage
- The developer's house design appears to be aligned in style with the neighborhood
- The developer showed documentation that he spoke with surrounding neighbors about the development and received positive or neutral feedback

Providing easement for the neighbor living at property 2716 Fendall Ave was a key motivator for members' support. As well as, neighbors want this property to be developed and up-kept. With that said, neighbors were very hesitant to provide support for the permit because of the awareness that this development project is not supported by the homeowner at 2716 Fendall Ave. This vote was controversial and it should not be taken as an indication on how other lots within the Battery Park neighborhood should be handled in the future. The

general feeling from the neighborhood is that building a house of this size and closely adjacent to another neighbor's property - particularly in one's backyard - is not a good idea and will not be supported. Mr. McVeigh has demonstrated in his plans that he attempted to be accommodating as much as possible to appease concerns of neighbors and keep the character of the neighborhood - even at the cost of his own expense. We are not convinced that other developers will have the same level of concern and commitment.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to review this special use permit with neighbors and consider our feedback.

Sincerely,

Michelle Brown Harris
President, Battery Park Civic Association