

To Jonathan Brown: The following are my written objections to the 30th & M Streets Special Use Permit (SUP):

1. Lot square footage: The square footage for each and every lot (not just one of the six lots, but **each and every** lot) is less than 75% of that required by zoning. A variance from the square footage requirement of, say 4-5% *might* be acceptable, but only in the event it was necessary due to some unique aspect of the lot. To grant any variance regarding square footage requires some meaningful justification. The variance sought here of 25% is extreme. And, the only justification would seem to be the developer's profit —hardly a valid justification.

2. Parking: According to the application, “[t]here is ample room for six (six) on-street parking spaces along M Street, and approximately four (4) spaces along 31st street, bringing the on-street parking total to ten (10) spaces for the six (6) units.” In reality, there will be an addition of at least 12 vehicles to the area. That doesn't include guests, nor third vehicles nor (a distinct possibility) one or two commercial vehicles which the new residents use in their business. More significantly, what will happen when the next of the seven existing houses on this block (i.e., the block bounded by 30th, 31st, M and N Streets) is removed and multiple new houses take its place? The SUP not only fails to provide sufficient parking for the current project but ignores completely the parking problems to come if the remainder of the block is re-developed at the suggested higher level of density.

3. Rear yards: Rear yards are nonexistent. This is not at all in keeping with what is in the area.

4. Lot configuration and aesthetics: All the existing houses on this block (i.e., the block bounded by 30th, 31st, M and N Streets) face east or west, with a north-south alley up the center. Thus, it is natural for any new house to likewise back up to the alley. The proposed houses do not back up to the existing alley. Thus, regarding trash cans and recycling cans, the existing alley would no longer be usable by five of the six proposed houses. Consequently, residents in the area will have to drive past ten large green cans every day —*forever*.

5. Bad precedent: This is the most significant objection. On this block (bounded by M,N 30th, 31st) there are currently five houses on 30th (the west side of the block), two houses plus CHAT on the east side (31st). Admittedly, to match the surrounding area, there should be more density than seven houses on these seven lots. However, if Planning allows the proposed six houses on this *one* lot it will be setting a precedent from which will be hard to turn back. It could ultimately mean a total of 18 houses on each of the three corner lots (leaving out the corner Chat building), plus four houses on each of the four inner lots, for a total of 34 houses on this block —where there are now

seven! Thirty-four houses on this block would be a nightmare of parking, of trash cans & recycling cans, of street trash. In this regard, Commission approval of this SUP would establish (or perhaps, would continue to establish) a precedent which will result in a density which is not sustainable and which will ruin the nature of this neighborhood.

6. Pre-existing plat: I understand that a preexisting plat shows six lots on the subject property. But that plat (which I have not seen) appears to be from 1902, more than 115 years ago. There were probably not even indoor bathrooms in many houses when that plat was drawn. Attractive, desirable modern houses are larger and include more amenities and at least some yards. Furthermore, this immediate area has gone toward detached single family homes with lot sizes and yards greater than those proposed or in the plat.

7. Yard requirements: There is no basis whatsoever for doing away with the yard requirement for the corner lot.

8. Overly high density: It is clear from the lack of required yard space as well as the significant deficiency in lot size that the proposed six houses constitute far too high a density for this “medium density” area. In effect, the applicant is building rental apartments. Any “house” which offers no yard, almost no usable front porch, no usable back porch, no opportunity for outside storage for even a rake, snow shovel or bicycle, will not be very livable for the long term. Thus, in effect, these six “houses” have all the earmarks of a rental apartment building.

One final over-arching point: I understand that many houses in Church Hill do not meet current zoning rules. Yet, in fact, zoning rules are in effect and must be followed, at least with regard to new construction. Otherwise, why have rules at all? I believe that variance from the rules should only be granted for specific articulable reasons (for example, an existing lot which, due to its shape, makes compliance impracticable). Further, the reason(s) for a variance must be based on some sort of *necessity*. Otherwise, again, why have rules? The only justification I can discern with regard to this SUP application is the applicant’s desire to increase his profit. Making a good profit is laudable, but should not be the basis for variance from the zoning rules.

There is nothing remarkable about the applicant’s property that should require any variance whatsoever from the zoning requirements.

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