

LeDroit Park Civic Association

Meeting Minutes

May 26th, 2020

*Meeting conducted virtually via Zoom.

Recording available at Youtube: <https://youtu.be/7-NfnWbwsJE>

Board Present:

President - Francesca Blanco

1st Vice President - Sarah Bishop

2nd Vice President - Alison Welcher

Secretary - Elliot Seibert

Treasurer - Danielle Lopez-Lezama

Financial Secretary - Elizabeth (Zeba) Floyd

Motions:

- Motion for current board to remain on and delay elections for three months to August 2020, in lieu of curtailed meetings due to COVID-19. Passed by unanimous consent (via poll feature in Zoom).
- Motion for the LPCA to sign a letter of support for the proposed development at 421 T St. including requested variances.
 - Motion for amendment by substitution with new text by Meghann Teague. 27 Aye. 1 Nay. 3 Abstentions. The motion passes.
 - Motion for amendment to address letter to the ANC, Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) and Historical Preservation Review Board (HPRB) instead of "the city." Passed by unanimous consent.
 - Final vote on main motion (letter with amended text). 27 Aye. 1 Nay. 3 Abstentions. The motion passes. Final letters attached at to this document.
- Motion to nominate Francesca Blanco to speak at upcoming June 4, 2020 ANC 1B monthly meeting, where she will read the above letter. 27 Aye. 2 Nay. The motion passes.

Announcements:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 1B Monthly Meeting

Thursday, June 4 -6:30 - 8:30 PM

421 T St NW Developer is requesting: Vote on Zoning Exceptions/ Variances and vote of support to be sent to the Historic Preservation Review Board.

ZOOM Virtual Meeting Call-In Information:

Dial-in number: (301) 715-8592

Webinar ID: 947 5151 0853

Password: 554332

Future LeDroit Park Civic Association Meetings - To be determined based on need. At minimum will return when in-person meetings are again possible.

Agenda:

Membership Announcement

Larry Handerhan (Membership committee chair) and Danielle Lopez-Lezama (Treasurer)

- Call for membership renewal. Annual term runs from May 1 to end of April the following year.
- Visit <http://www.ledroitparkdc.org/join/> or contact ledroitparkca@gmail.com
- Household membership is \$15. Senior and no-questions-asked hardship rate is \$5.
- Members must be paid up in order to vote.

Update on ANC Commissioner's Relationship to Civic Association

Anita Norman, ANC commissioner for 1b01

- Clarification from Anita that, contrary to previous guidance, she is not bound to vote in accordance with the civic association's viewpoint, although it is a factor.

421 T Street NW Proposed Development

Christopher Agorsor, New World Developers;

Emilie Rottman, Square 123;

Marty Sullivan, Sullivan & Barros, LLP

- Proposing conversion of 421 to "apartment" house, adding rear addition for total of 11 units, 4 of which are inclusionary zoning at the 60% level.
- Plans:
<https://app.box.com/s/dhn9muwq7e6fqor5v5v40hn1w7yanfma/folder/112018441845>
- Seeking conversion to apartment house; variance from 900 sqft. lot area/unit rule; variance from height limit (41 instead of 35 feet); and historic approval.

Discussion: Attendees raised questions and expressed concerns regarding:

- Outreach: Concerns with lack of outreach and engagement on the part of the developer up to this point.
- Precedent: Concern that limited engagement sets bad precedent for future developments.
- Size and Height of Addition: Concern that height and mass would shade. Concern about loss of open space or green space in the alley. Concern about visibility from from neighbors' rear windows. Concerns about shading of adjacent lot. Refer to the HPO plans linked above for a shading study. Developer contends new shading will have marginal impact.
- Historic and Aesthetics: Concerns with visibility from surrounding streets through alleys, driveways, green space lots, etc. Concerns with material selections, particularly with regards to the roof. On other hand, one attendee noted that HPRB preferred to avoid exact replica materiality in additions so as not to detract from original historic structure. Concern about covering or destroying rear façade, particularly the chimney. Concerns with size and mass of addition drawing attention from original structure. Concerns with unfair/uneven application of historic requirements, which have been burdensome for residents pursuing renovations.
- Trash: whether appropriate trash storage was provided. That trash location is adjacent to a neighbor's yard. Whether access was possible via narrow alley. Whether there is a way to avoid a truck's beeping. Developer responded he had coordinate with Tenleytown Trash and has assurances that access is possible. Is willing to follow up on beeping question.
- Parking: Concerns that not enough parking is provided, or parking spaces are too small.
- Residential Density. General consensus for some increase in density (i.e. conversion to apartment house), though less than 11 units requested. One commenter against any conversion to apartment house at all. Another supportive of full 11 units.

Other community announcements and updates

Common Good City Farm

Food distribution is starting tomorrow at the Common Good City Farm. This will happen each week on Wednesday from 4-6pm. Here are the details:

- - Produce shares are FREE to anyone who needs one.
- - Shares can be delivered within LeDroit Park and Bloomingdale for those who are homebound but calling or texting 202-681-4343.
- - We will set up outside of Common Good City Farm, facing the Park at LeDroit.

- In order to ensure safety for everyone, we ask that everyone who comes follow these rules:
 1. Please wear a mask.
 2. Do not come if you are sick.
 3. Do not bring your pets.
 4. Stay 6 feet apart as marked on the grass.
 5. Leave kids and vulnerable family members at home if you can.
 6. Bring only one person per family to the market.



Historic Preservation Review Board
1100 4th Street, SW, Suite 650 East,
Washington, DC 20024

May 27, 2020

Re. BZA Case No. 20290 (421 T Street, NW)

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Review Board:

The residents of LeDroit Park are committed to preserving the history and character of James McGill's plan while supporting the District's need for affordable family housing. We would like to see a historically accurate multifamily building with family-sized inclusionary zoning units at 421 T Street NW. We maintain that the applicant can do this within the prescribed limitations of the zoning code and historic preservation guidelines. The current proposal of the applicant, which requests special exceptions and variances from the zoning code, is overbuilt in both massing and height, and was developed without consultation with or input from surrounding neighbors.

Therefore, we make the following recommendations:

1. That, in recognition of the acute need for affordable family-sized rental apartments, the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA), the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB), and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) **grant** the requested special exception to convert the existing single-family dwelling into an apartment building **on the condition that** the first inclusionary zoning unit in such building be a three-bedroom unit, and each additional inclusionary zoning unit be a two- or three-bedroom unit.
2. That, in order to keep the density and size of the project consistent with the zoning regulations and the unique and historic architectural character of LeDroit Park, the BZA, HPRB, and ANC **deny** the applicant's request to combine the record lots underlying tax lots 804, 805 and 807, **deny** the applicant's request to exceed the density limitation set forth in the zoning code, **deny** the applicant's request to exceed the height limitation set forth in the zoning code, and **deny** the applicant's request to construct a further non-historic addition on the back of the existing structure.
3. That the BZA, HPRB, and ANC **require** the applicant to meet with affected neighbors and conform the project plans to their input regarding quality of life issues, such as parking, trash removal and public safety.

Sincerely,

Francesca Blanco
President, LeDroit Park Civic Association



LEDROIT PARK CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Board of Zoning Adjustment
441 4th Street, NW Suite 210S
Washington, DC 20001

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