

From: Wittenberg, Jason W.
To: Armstrong, Diana L
Subject: FW: Appeal of Zoning BoA decision on BZZ-7813
Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2016 2:25:18 PM

FYI. This is the for the item that has been withdrawn.

-----Original Message-----

From: Miriam Segall [<mailto:segal001@umn.edu>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2016 12:28 PM
To: Wittenberg, Jason W.
Subject: Fwd: Appeal of Zoning BoA decision on BZZ-7813

From an "out-of-office" message from Janelle Widmeier, I understand that these comments should be sent to you. - Miriam Segall

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Appeal of Zoning BoA decision on BZZ-7813
Date: Tue, 13 Sep 2016 12:22:09 -0500
From: Miriam Segall <segal001@umn.edu>
To: Widmeier, Janelle A. <janelle.widmeier@minneapolismn.gov>
CC: Goodman, Lisa R. <Lisa.Goodman@minneapolismn.gov>

September 12, 2016

To:Janelle Widmeier Cc:Lisa Goodman Re:Appeal of zoning variance request BZZ-7813 I am writing in support of the request of John Getsinger and Cathy Powell for denial of the variances requested by the First Unitarian Society for its property at 900 Mount Curve Avenue. #1: Variance to reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement (now for a walkway): John Getsinger has documented the lack of need for this variance in his appeal.The original staff report which was provided to the neighbors was based on the request for a driveway on the west side of the 900 Mount Curve property.I have not seen any staff comments on the revised (walkway) proposal, nor any perspective that shows what the revised proposal would look like. However, since the perspective drawing in the original application already shows another walkway from the sidewalk to the building, west of the existing walkway, and there is a route to bring the trash bins to the street, there seems to be no reason for a third walkway. #2: Variance to reduce the minimum front yard requirement from 20 feet to (variously) 9.5 feet, 14.75 feet, and 1.75 feet (as well as the 0 feet for the driveway/walkway). The staff report describes the neighborhood as "a mix of uses in the immediate area". As I have pointed out previously, and as John Getsinger describes in his appeal, we are talking about the building's frontage on Mount Curve Avenue, which aside from this building is a residential street of elegant and well-maintained homes fronting on a park across the street. To the east of the FUS property are two pairs of renovated townhouses, and to the west the 910 Mount Curve house and beyond that other houses of varying architectural styles existing in harmony with these.The one saving grace of the unharmonious industrial "Mid-century Modern" FUS building on the Mount Curve side is that it is relatively unobtrusive. The original staff report states that "The proposed structures would be compatible with the character and scale of the building".The proposed structures might be compatible with the character and scale of the building, but they would emphasize the incompatibility

of the building with the character of the street. The proposal would thrust the whole facade forward and make it much more obtrusive, producing a greatly heightened discordant effect on the streetscape. The original staff report further states that "Chapter 530 Site Plan Review standards . . . encourage providing architectural features, such as canopies, to emphasize the importance of the main entrance." This suggestion is already incorporated in the present structure. The discordant nature of the present structure is at least partially masked by the trees and other landscaping features in the present "front yard", all of which would disappear in the reconstruction. (The "masking" effect is less evident in the late-fall and winter photographs of the current building that are provided in the application.) I am a long-time resident on this street, and I disagree completely with the statement that "the granting of the variances would not affect the character of the area or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity". Considering the unnecessary adverse effect on the immediately neighboring property and the adverse effect on the entire streetscape, I strongly urge the Zoning and Planning Committee to deny both variances. Sincerely, Miriam Segall 920 Mount Curve Avenue