

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: North Central Neighborhood Association
Re: Variance requests for 215 Beakes Street
Date: April 21, 2015

We understand that the petition currently before this board is a third request for variances for this property from this petitioner. In February of 2014, the petitioner was granted variances to the requirements for minimum setbacks, lot size, and open space and given approval to build a 5,475 square foot home on a 4,227 square foot lot. The NCNA did not oppose that petition because redevelopment of this site would be an asset to the neighborhood, and the adjacent property owner supported the plan.

In November of 2014 the petitioner sought to increase the home size to over 7000 square feet. We opposed that because it was out of scale with the neighborhood, far too large for such a tiny parcel with virtually no setbacks, and because the February approval demonstrated that any hardships the petitioner claimed were completely self imposed. The ZBA denied that application by a unanimous vote.

The petitioner again seeks a fairly substantial increase to the size of the 5,475 square foot home already approved. We do not support this new petition for the following reasons:

- 1) Given the approval of the previous plan, any hardships or practical difficulties peculiar to the property no longer exist. Without the approval of this new petition, the property owner is already fully able to build a large home on this tiny lot. Any new hardships claimed by the petitioner are self-imposed.
- 2) The request completely disregards the city's Central Area Plan, which specifies that redevelopment in near downtown neighborhoods should respect the "character" and "scale" of existing buildings. The already-approved 5,475-square-foot building is at (if not above) the maximum of what is appropriate for the neighborhood and what would be sympathetic to the neighboring properties. With essentially zero setbacks, the requested larger second floor would create a building that is out of scale for the street and would significantly impose upon on the adjacent properties. This third request again goes too far and granting it would set a dangerous precedent.

Thank you.

The NCNA Area Planning Committee