

January 11, 2016

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B

C/O: James Loots, ANC 6B03

RE: Community Impact Statement involving Construction of a Treehouse in the Public Space, DDOT Tracking Number 118910, 516 Archibald Walk SE

Dear Commissioners:

The District of Columbia's Department of Transportation has afforded the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6B (ANC) the opportunity to make a recommendation as to a Public Space Permit Application for an encroachment into the public right-of-way at 516 Archibald Walk. The undersigned neighbors, representing the entirety of Archibald Walk neighbors as well as several homeowners on adjacent F Street Terrace, strongly oppose the grant of this Public Space Permit. The Applicants' July 2015 annexation of Public Space, for which they now seek permission, resulted from construction of a treehouse that was built above and extends well into the narrow 10-foot alley that is Archibald Walk SE. Residents in the vicinity are strongly opposed to this intrusion into the public space and will be adversely impacted if this permit were to be approved. Despite this residential alley's off-street location, Archibald Walk is beloved by both the immediate residents and the community at large, is an important part of the neighborhood's history and the walking cityscape, and its unique character is worth preserving. The intrusion into the alley by the Applicants' structure disrupts and impairs the public use and enjoyment of the space, both by immediate neighbors and by others, including those taking the historic walking tour in which Archibald Walk is included.

We believe that this treehouse is an inappropriate use of public space for the following reasons:


- The treehouse is located at or adjacent to the entrances of several residences and is in the direct line of sight of anyone walking down Archibald Walk as well as those of us who live on Archibald Walk;
- The object of the requested permit is to sanction the private use and occupation of public space for the sole and exclusive benefit of the Applicants. There is no benefit whatsoever to anyone else or the public at large;
- The protrusion into the public space is large in relationship to the size of the alley itself. Although we believe the exact measurements submitted as part of the DDOT application are understated, even by the Applicants' drawings approximately 14 square feet and 30% of the available width of the alley is impacted;
- The "castle-theme" style of the treehouse is highly personal, incompatible with the rest of the neighborhood and therefore antithetical to the historic nature and existing streetscape of the neighborhood;
- The permit, if approved, will impair our enjoyment and/or use of homes, yards, and the community space adjacent to the alley, and diminish the quality of life for nearby residents by disrupting the integrity and visual beauty of the alleyway;
- The permit, if approved, will impair the general public's enjoyment of the Barrack's Row "Tour of Duty" Neighborhood Heritage Trail and other neighborhood walking tours which transit Archibald Walk and the adjacent F Street Terrace;
- A permit for use of public space as a balcony, which is what the structure's building permit states it is considered, is specifically prohibited by DCMR 3202 *Encroachments into the Public Right-of-Way*, section 3202.10, which states "Balconies, bay oriel or show windows, or towers shall not project into or over an *alley*."

For these reasons, the public space permit should not be allowed and the ANC should submit a letter in opposition to the permit to the Public Space Committee.

Signed, the following residents in the immediate vicinity of 516 Archibald Walk SE:



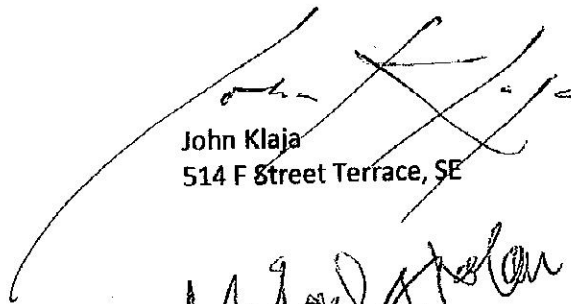
Loraine Heckenberg
520 Archibald Walk, SE



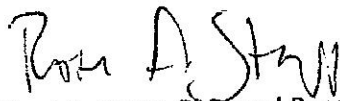
Will Fleishell
647 Archibald Walk SE



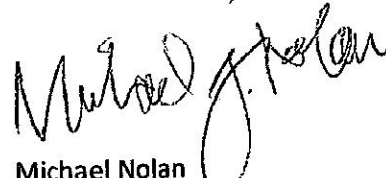
Mindy Turbov
512 F Street Terrace, SE



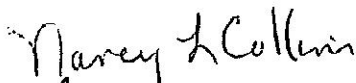
John Klaja
514 F Street Terrace, SE




Carol B. Stapp, PhD, and Rose Stapp
522 Archibald Walk, SE



Michael Nolan
518 Archibald Walk SE



Nancy L. Collins and Michael J. Hoare. 
530 F Street Terrace, SE

In absentia
See attached - 

Donna Gambrell
532 F Street Terrace, SE



John Gieseke
633 F Street Terrace, SE