

# BELLA VISTA

## NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 63955  
Philadelphia, PA 19147  
(215) 627-0057

[www.bellavistaneighbors.org](http://www.bellavistaneighbors.org)

*Bella Vista Neighbors Association, formerly known as Bella Vista Town Watch, is an independent non-profit neighborhood organization. Our goal is to improve the quality of life for all residents of Bella Vista.*

Ms. Julia Chapman  
Chair, Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment  
1401 JFK Blvd. – 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1687

January 5, 2016

**Re: RCO Meeting Summary Form**  
ZBA Calendar No. 26483/ Zoning Application No. 646364  
601 Christian St/ ZBA hearing date: January 6, 2015, 2:00 pm

Applicant: William Kerr, Esq.

Dear Ms. Chapman:

Below is a summary of our public community meeting held regarding the above referenced zoning application.

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Non-Opposition</b>
<b>Date of Meetings:</b>	December 1, 2015 & January 5, 2016
<b>Location of Meetings:</b>	Palumbo Recreation Center, 10 <sup>th</sup> & Fitzwater Streets.
<b>Participating RCO:</b>	Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) Zoning Committee
<b>Number of Attendees:</b>	12-1-15 Approx. 80, 1-5-16 Approx. 67 excluding zoning committee members

### Reason for Position:

At the first (December) meeting, the applicant presented plans for a CMX-2 District full lot coverage 5 story building with 1<sup>st</sup> floor commercial space plus 4 floors of 3 apartments each, and a roof top deck with pilot house to be erected upon a long time vacant lot. BVNA and community members expressed great concerns about excessive building and pilot house size and height, dwelling density, lack of open space at grade, lack of parking, and an increase in noise, traffic and trash.

The applicant expressed two significant hardships intrinsic to the lot: The first is that it is of a narrow triangular shape with street frontages at all sides, making the management of open space and the practical design of each floor difficult; and second, that the lot was formerly occupied by a gas station that contaminated the soil and that will require a significant cost for remediation. The applicant subsequently presented many design concessions at the second (January) meeting. These include a provision for bicycle parking, a significant reduction in building height and density to 4 floors and 9 apartment units, and a declaration of private agreements made with two local institutions to provide included term lease parking for the apartment residents with optional lease extensions after the first 3 years.

BVNA feels that the revised plans represent a good use of an unusual shaped lot in a way that is consistent with the intent of the zoning code and that ultimately the project will be a positive addition to the community. BVNA has no objection to the reduced number of dwellings or the lack of open space that remain non-compliant. In particular, the configuration of the wide streets that surround the lot, and the communal roof top deck, provide some consolation for the lack of open space on the lot itself. With these concessions and design changes made, documented and honored by the applicant, **BVNA therefore does not oppose the application.** Slightly less than half (8 vs.10) of nearby neighbors in attendance expressed support for the revised project. Of the remaining general audience, 24 were in support, 11 were opposed. There were a few letters of opposition received from neighbors who did not attend our meetings, as well as the presentation of non-sanctioned written and Online opposition petitions with many signatures of non-community and or non-nearby residents. There were several outspoken dissenters who may appear at the ZBA hearing. As always, we thank you for considering our report of the meeting discussion, and of our opinion in the matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Bella Vista Neighbors Association, Inc.



By: \_\_\_\_\_

Lawrence Weintraub AIA  
Co-Chair, BVNA Zoning Committee