

BELLA VISTA

NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

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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. – 11th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1687

February 8, 2016

Re: RCO Meeting Summary Form
ZBA Calendar No. 26514/ Zoning Application No. 647354
615 S 9th St/ ZBA hearing date: February 9, 2016, 9:30 am

Applicant: Justin L. Kirk, Esq.

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

Position:	Opposition
Date of Meeting:	January 5, 2016
Location of Meeting:	Palumbo Recreation Center, 10 th & Fitzwater Streets.
Participating RCO:	Bella Vista Neighbors Association (BVNA) Zoning Committee
Number of Attendees:	Approximately 67 excluding zoning committee members

Reason for Position:

The applicant seeks to legalize a recently installed rear yard off-street surface parking space and 10 foot tall steel roll down security gate to access South Schell Street just north of Kater Street. The applicant offered no apparent hardship (apart from the fact that this work had been completed without proper permits) that would warrant relief from the code.

Both South Schell Street (10' R.O.W.) and Kater Street are exceptionally narrow. The portion of sidewalk opposite and just south of the installed driveway is obstructed by a hydrant and power pole. The applicant has admitted to requiring multiple back-ups and repositions with their vehicle that cross both sidewalks in order to gain access to the parking space.

The adjacent yard walls perpendicular and parallel to the street are quite high (between 7 and 10 feet) which obstruct a clear sight line view of the street while backing out of the driveway. BVNA as well as a majority of neighbors raised significant concerns about the dangers posed by crossing both sidewalks with a vehicle relative to the safety of pedestrians. Even though there are several preexisting rear access driveways on this block, they predate the current zoning code. In addition, they may not have the same overly high yard walls, sight line or sidewalk obstructions present.

Additional concerns were raised about further desecration of the aesthetic quality and pedestrian experience on this block from the removal of a mosaic tile mural that had been set upon the preexisting rear yard wall. This tiny block is known as exceptional in the community for its numerous tiled rear yard wall and building wall faces.

More than half (4 vs. 2) of close by neighbors in attendance expressed opposition to both the parking use and fence gate. Of the remaining general audience, 2 were opposed, 10 were not opposed. **BVNA therefore opposes both the use of the off street parking space and the excessive height of the roll down steel security gate**, which is far taller than a majority of the existing walls or gates along this block.

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

cc: The Hon. Mark Squilla, BVNA Zoning Committee, rco.notification@phila.gov, wardleader@philadelphia2ndwardgop.com, RCOZBA@phila.gov, Greg Phillips <gap023@gmail.com>

encl: Zoning Meeting Poster, Zoning Meeting Sign-in Sheets