

# BELLA VISTA NEIGHBORS ASSOCIATION

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[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.*

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

April 10, 2017

**Re: RCO Meeting Summary Form**

ZBA Calendar No. 29952/ Zoning Application No. 753007  
705 Fulton St/ ZBA hearing date: April 11, 2017, 9:30 am

Applicants: Philip Katz & Leah Greenberg

Dear Ms. Tinari:

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

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Opposed</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	April 4, 2017
<b>Location of Meeting:</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>	Approximately 23 excluding zoning committee members

**Reason for Position:**

The current applicants previously obtained a building permit to erect a fully conforming 3<sup>rd</sup> floor addition and 4<sup>th</sup> floor roof deck and pilot house in 2013 with an 8' front setback. They now seek to fill in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor front 8' setback which requires a variance. During their presentation, the applicants made no justification for a hardship but offered that the proposed design was aesthetically preferable to the existing set-back 3<sup>rd</sup> floor structure.

BVNA appreciates the aesthetic efforts of the applicants but also recognizes that this single block of Fulton Street has a unique standing in the Bella Vista community. Bella Vista is a 19<sup>th</sup> century neighborhood largely comprised of three-story homes; while in contrast, this is the only block within our community that was historically constructed of all two-story homes on both block faces. Within the past several years three homeowners have built conforming third floor additions with front setbacks as required, and last summer two homeowners (709 & 711 Fulton Street) obtained variances for third story additions, against BVNA's objection, with ZBA approved 1'-6" front setbacks. These recently completed additions, as well as those approved in the past few years, are all situated on the north side of the block and already demonstrate an impact upon the daylight and openness of the street.

BVNA is very concerned that any minimal, or no front set-back, variances granted on this block of Fulton Street will inevitably lead to further deterioration of the sense of light and openness of this special and singular block. Should the ZBA allow this proposed addition without any front setback, this will allow adjacent "as-of-right" no set-back 3<sup>rd</sup> floor additions in the future. Of the immediate neighbors present for the discussion, five were in favor and none opposed. Three members of the wider neighborhood also expressed support and none were opposed. While BVNA recognizes the support expressed by the neighbors; because of the cumulative effect of these additions, as well as future ones on the street, and the failure of the applicant to present a hardship to justify the variance, **BVNA opposes this application.**

As always, we thank you for considering our report of the meeting discussion, and of our opinion in the matter.

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](mailto:rco.notification@phila.gov), [RCOZBA@phila.gov](mailto:RCOZBA@phila.gov),  
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