July, 28, 2021

Eleanor Sharpe, AICP, LEED AP
Executive Director
Civic Design Review Committee
Philadelphia City Planning Commission
1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

RE: 1015 South 3rd Street CDR
Date: August 3, 2021; 1:00 pm

Dear Ms. Sharpe and Committee Members,

Queen Village Neighbors Association opposes development of the above referenced project as presented. There are serious concerns about rear egress, neighbor impact, environmental assessment and conflicting information about parking. These concerns can only be addressed by updating the development’s plans and providing information that was not made available at our public meeting.

On June 9, 2021, QVNA convened and recorded a public Zoom meeting at 7:30pm for our Zoning Committee’s review of the project’s plans. The project was described as a 45’ high, four-story apartment building with 67 residential units, 23 interior bicycle spaces, a “green roof” plus small roof deck, and no parking. The elevations indicated brick on the 3rd Street façade and cementitious material on all others. The owner was not present for the meeting; the architect stated that the project was designed per the owner’s wants and that he would communicate the concerns to them.

One hundred fifteen neighbors and interested persons also attended this meeting. Vigorous discussion ensued.

We bring to your attention the following issues and concerns raised which call for updated project plans:

- **Rear Egress.** The development’s plans as presented did not clearly identify or illustrate rear egress either from the top four floors, nor the basement windows. This raises grave concerns for people to exit the rear of the building in case of fire or other emergency. We request that updated plans define emergency egress to 3rd Street, Bodine and American (if feasible).

- **Public Availability of Environmental Site Assessments (1 & 2).** Land use maps from 1962 show the property as commercial. We request ESA reports that no hazard conditions exist below ground level. Attached are screenshots showing historic land use of 1015 S. 3rd St as commercial (both map and legend are provided).

- **Off Street Parking.** During our public meeting, the architect explained that the project would not include off-site parking because it would trigger a variance. However, prior to purchase, 1015 S. 3rd Street had off-street parking and two curb cuts. More importantly, after purchase (November 2019) three zoning permits were issued for a total of five surface parking spaces at this address (#1024363, #1022699, #102436).

Adding 67 dwelling units without providing off-street parking, undeniably impacts nearby neighbors and their quality of life.
While we acknowledge that RM-1 zoning does not require off-street parking, neither is it precluded. Since this address previously had off-street parking and two driveways off of 3rd Street, and is currently permitted for five parking spaces, QVNA requests that off-street parking be included in an updated set of plans for this development.

- **Shadow Drawings.** With respect to the significant increase of the proposed building height to 45', no shadow drawings were provided to assess the building’s impact on neighbors’ homes (many of which are historic homes with height less than 38'). The Committee requested seeing shadow drawings prior to the CDR review. The request was denied.

- **Study the scenario of a lower parapet.** We believe an opportunity exists to reduce the mass of the building by lowering the parapet walls and therefore request that updated plans strive to reduce the overall mass.

- **Inclusion of landscaping behind the building** Trees and landscaping along the back of property will help mitigate the privacy concerns of nearby neighbors on Carpenter, South Bodine, and South American streets, with particular attention to the number of windows in close proximity to nearby neighbors’ homes and yards. Landscaping and trees were asked about by residents, the topic was not adequately answered. We request landscaping plans be included in updated project plans.

In addition, QVNA opposes the conditional zoning permit issued in April for a “lot adjustment to extinguish the alley” between 1013 and 1015 S. 3rd St. We ask that permit #ZP-2021-0026683 be withdrawn by L&I. What this document describes as an alley, before it was purchased in 2019, was part of the driveway, sidewalk and surface accessory parking for the church, in use since before 1996. In addition, the sidewalk extended to S. Bodine and beyond that as a walkway through to S. American. Records from Atlas.gov show the parking, driveway, sidewalk and pathway. Attached are screen shots from 2008 and 1996.

We assure the CDR Committee that QVNA welcomes development and multi-family residences. We want to ensure, however, that new development adds to quality of life in Queen Village. The plans, as presented at our June 9th meeting, do not add to our community’s quality of life. They do represent a starting point for creating a project that integrates the goals of development with the needs of Queen Village. It is our sincere hope that the development team addresses the issues and concerns we have outlined and provide us with updated project plans. Our intention is to work with the developer in good faith. QVNA is proud of our reputation for working cooperatively with businesses and projects to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

We ask that the outlined concerns and requests be addressed by the developer to be presented at a second meeting of the CDR Committee. I will represent QVNA at the August 3rd meeting. When I ask to speak at the meeting, I would appreciate appearing on video. My email address is President@QVNA.org.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Ingerson, President
Queen Village Neighbors Association

Cc: Department of Planning and Development: Ian Litwin, Alex Smith, Jack Conviser, Beige Berryman
Councilman Mark Squilla
Sean McMonagle
Jennifer Slavic
Henry Clinton, Esq.

Attachments: 1013-1015 S. 3rd St screenshots:
Satellite view of property lines from S. 3rd to S. American streets (Atlas.phila.gov-2008)
Land Use Map Geohistory.org-1942 and Legend (identifying use)