



**Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4A
Government of the District of Columbia
Washington, DC 20011 and 20012**

RESOLUTION #4A-03-01-22-01

**Opposing the Construction of a Dormitory Addition on the Residential Property Situated at
Address 1440 Hemlock Street NW in the Shepherd Park Neighborhood, Washington, DC**

March 1, 2022

Introduced by Commissioner Stacey Lincoln, 4A04 on behalf of the residents of Shepherd Park.

WHEREAS the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (“ANCs”) are the bodies of government with the closest ties to the people and they are expected to advise the city on issues, including fees, taxes, zoning, social services programs, health, emergency preparedness, economic development, transportation and infrastructure issues.

WHEREAS the government of the District of Columbia is required by law to give “great weight” to comments from ANCs.

WHEREAS ANC 4A is an interested party and stakeholder. ANC 4A covers more than 18,000 DC residents and includes the Ward 4 neighborhoods of Brightwood, Colonial Village, Crestwood, North Portal Estates, Shepherd Park, and Sixteenth Street Heights.

WHEREAS ANC 4A recognizes the need to support District of Columbia residents to construct additional housing.

WHEREAS ANC 4A recognizes that DC’s single-family, low-density housing stock that is affordable for middle class families is a scarce resource.

WHEREAS, Ward 4, and Shepherd Park in particular, has an over-concentration of social service facilities, and rooming houses of various types placing disproportionate social and economic pressures on this racially and socioeconomically diverse community. According to a 2021 Washington media article, **“In addition to a study hall, there will be a space for boarders who join the residency program. While the study hall will be open to men and women, the residency program will be men-only until a separate site to house a women’s dormitory.”**

WHEREAS ANC 4A was made aware that the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs granted a construction permit to the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation, LLC to alter parts or portions of a single-family home at 1440 Hemlock Street NW to include a large meeting room, not to exceed one story or level. Upon review several weeks later. it was noticed that an entirely separate structure was constructed.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer was invited to attend a community meeting scheduled on October 24, 2021, to make a presentation about the construction on the property and its use in general. The owner did not attend. During that meeting, residents expressed concerns about the construction of the dormitory and the possibility of further development throughout the Shepherd Park Neighborhood.

WHEREAS, On December 23, 2021, a Stop Work Order was issued due to numerous violations, including “Exceeding the Scope of Work.” A subsequent Stop Work Order was issued as early on January 6, 2022, due to reports of continued violations. These were reported to the police and DCRA.

WHEREAS, On February 24, 2022, a petition bearing the names of over 60 residents who live within a five-block radius of the property was presented to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4A through the Commissioner representing Single Member District 4A02 in which the said property is situated and delivered to members of the Council of the District of Columbia.

WHEREAS the petition's preamble reads: We are writing to make you aware that the undersigned residents of the blocks surrounding the property at 1440 Hemlock Street Northwest OPPOSE the construction of the 15-man dormitory structure currently under a STOP WORK ORDER issued by DCRA. We are opposed for the following reasons:

1. The building will set a precedent for additional commercial structures to be built in the middle of single-family residential homes. There is already talk that a 2nd dormitory is planned for our neighborhood. See attachment
2. With the number of visitors and workers at this facility, there will be an increase in street parking, causing a strain on our senior citizens; and trash and pests in our alleys and around our homes will increase to an intolerable level.
3. This oversized structure will de-value the homes in the entire neighborhood because this commercial structure is out of character block because it is so out of character with the rest of the neighborhood.
4. Many of our homeowners are senior citizens who moved to this quiet and residential neighborhood have lived here for 30 or 40 years or longer, or they are citizens late in their careers. These homeowners are being bullied by developers.
5. Not only is this structure going to destroy the peace and quiet, but it will also destroy the character of the neighborhood and quality of life of the residents here.

We are asking that the application for the dormitory be rejected, and that the current structure be removed and replaced with the "family room" addition that was originally "permitted" in the first place.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation has declined each invitation to a community meeting to address concerns related to the following:

- The transitory implications including increased density.
- The effect of the establishment on real property values.
- The effect of the establishment on peace, order and quite including the noise and litter.
- The effect of the establishment upon residential parking needs and vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Whether the continued construction and subsequent use will contribute to an overconcentration of similar establishments in the neighborhoods and nearby communities; and
- The proximity of the establishment to other establishments currently operating with clients who share similar goals and missions.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation, LLC. has not given a consistent or convincing reason for the proposed organization and dormitory structure on a quiet residential street as opposed to a major street such as 16th Street NW, Alaska Avenue, NW and Georgia Avenue, NW.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation has been less than transparent in its approach and dismissive of the concerns of residents and community leaders and declined to answer many of the most-pressing questions posed by ANC 4A commissioners and community members,

- The property owner did not address the safety concerns residents in the community expressed, such as questions about frequent arrivals, staff and resident turnover, logistics for accommodating family visits (parking, traffic, etc.), and key safety issues, including whether there will be tenant rentals, and property maintenance.
- The property owner will not provide information on funding sources and means of support.
- The property owner did not respond to requests for information about the relative number hours and days of operations and average number persons who will be on the property at any given time and public events.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation, LLC has been evasive when asked about the legal basis for their alleged Matter of Right to occupy the property and build a boarding house or dormitory as referred to in the media article.

WHEREAS, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation, LLC has declined to answer questions about and assure the community that there are no conflicts of interests between the developer, realtor, Board members or staff in the selection and/or purchase of this property.

WHEREAS the location of the establishment to the quiet residential street of 1400 Hemlock raises important neighborhood character issues that the District of Columbia should weigh heavily in considering whether the proposed location is appropriate for the proposed boarding activity, equitable for the residents of Shepherd Park, and in line with the city's development plan.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 4A opposes the proposed construction of a 15-20 person boarding house or dormitory as a separate structure on quiet residential street of 1440 Hemlock Street NW in Shephard Park Neighborhood. It is not the appropriate place for a study center with separate living quarters with undefined hours of operation and unknown number of tenants.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the property owner/developer and the 613 Foundation, LLC reconsider its decision to build a separate structure for living quarters on said property in the middle of a residential community given issues surrounding the appropriateness of the facility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commission supports the residents petition opposing the application and permit to construct the structure currently under construction. Further it is requested that DCRA decline/reject/rescind the construction permit and the current structure be removed and replaced with the "large family room" addition that was originally permitted.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DCRA and the Office of the Zoning Administrator work to review and amend its zoning regulations to limited construction of this type the middle of blocks of single-family dwellings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DC Council consider legislation that would prevent the construction of dormitory and large-scale structures that do not comport with the character of neighborhood and nearby communities, notwithstanding property rights of all citizens in the District of Columbia. Allowing the concentration of such facilities in communities with a rich history further exacerbates economic and development inequalities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Commissioner Stacey Lincoln, ANC 4A04, is hereby authorized to serve as the Commission's representatives in all matters relating to this resolution.

ADOPTED by unanimous vote at a regularly scheduled public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of 6 of seven members were present) on March 1, 2022, by a vote of 2 yes, 1 no, 3 abstain.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Patience Singleton

Patience Singleton, Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4A

Cc: Honorable Muriel Bowser, Mayor
Ernest Chrappa, Director, Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Honorable Janeese Lewis-George, Councilmember, Ward 4
Honorable Robert White, Councilmember At-Large
Honorable Anita Bond, Councilmember At-Large