



District of Columbia Government
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A
Box 75115
Washington, DC 20013



September 17, 2004

Jatinder Singh Khokhar, Chief
Building Inspection Division
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Building and Land Regulation
941 North Capitol Street, NE, Room 2200
Washington, DC 20002

Re: 1125 G Street, NE

Dear Mr. Khokhar,

In letters dated May 28, 2004 and June 23, 2004, Mr. Denzil Noble, Acting Zoning Administrator of the DCRA assured the Commission that the DCRA would closely monitor the progress of work on the above-referenced property. It is our understanding that you are now overseeing this monitoring process and other issues related to this property. On September 9, 2004, at a regularly scheduled, public meeting, with a quorum present, the Commission voted unanimously to request your office to either take action to prompt the owner to complete construction of a safe and stable building or to demolish the structure. On September 8, 2004, you and building inspector Andrew Proto inspected the property and validated the concerns of the Commission:

- (1) *Structure failing.* Subsequent to the June 23rd letter, a piece of two by four framing fell off the west side of the house between the second and third floors onto the adjacent property. As you observed, hundreds of fasteners are protruding from the exposed plywood indicating that they are no longer attached to the studs as the harsh seasonal elements continue to degrade the structure. It is very likely that more lumber will fall injuring persons or property. This appears to be in direct violation of D.C. Building Code Section 3307.1 which requires that adjoining private property be protected from damage during construction.
- (2) *Property unsecured.* The fence surrounding the property can easily be exploited as the gate on the front sidewalk is loosely connected. The front, rear and basement doorways of this vacant property have no doors or other coverings. According to D.C. Building Code Section 115.1, "a vacant building, unguarded or open at door or window, shall be deemed a fire hazard and unsafe within the meaning of the Construction Code." This structure continues to be an inviting target of opportunity for illegal activity.
- (3) *Decay by neglect.* This construction is only partially completed. No visible or documented progress has been made on this project since the last inspection conducted in May 2004. As referenced in Mr. Noble's May 28th letter, the DCRA has previously been forced to take action when the owner failed to obtain the required inspections, as required by Section 109 of the D.C. Building Code.
- (4) *Improper landfill.* The soil along almost the entire side of the west side of the house was backfilled with very low-grade materials some of which has eroded creating caverns which cause improper drainage of water. D.C. Building Code Sections EX – 1301 applies the safeguards specified in Chapter 13 of the Code to be followed during construction. It appears that several of the sections in Chapter 13 have been violated including Sections 3303.4.2, 3304.3 and 3307.1 which require proper backfilling. Specifically, those holes should be filled and leveled to provide good drainage and that provisions be made to control water run-off and erosion during construction activities.
- (5) *Supporting rafters exposed to rotting conditions.* You expressed grave concern that the pressed wood rafters that support the back corner of the house and first floor have long been exposed to moisture and soil. The cement block that was to protect the wood has never been installed leaving the wood vulnerable to rot.



District of Columbia Government
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A
Box 75115
Washington, DC 20013



Based on this most recent inspection conducted, you stated that Mr. Proto would coordinate with the owner of the adjacent property to obtain access and so that the structure can be inspected twice a month – on or about the 9th and 23rd of each month. Specifically, each inspection will focus on following four issues:

- (1) *Safety*. Is the structure properly maintained to protect public safety?
- (2) *Secure*. Is the property adequately secured to prevent easy access?
- (3) *Permits*. Are all the permits properly displayed and valid?
- (4) *Progress*. Is there any measurable progress on the structure?

In closing, the Commission requests that your office to continue to enforce existing regulations and engineering standards regarding this property. The community continues to suffer needlessly because of this neglected property.

Respectfully,

Joseph Fengler, Chair
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

cc: Councilmember Sharon Ambrose
Councilmember Harold Brazil
Peter Jones, Ward Six Neighborhood Services Coordinator
Denzil Noble, Acting Zoning Administrator, DCRA
Andrew Proto, Building Inspector, DCRA
Juan Scott, Chief, Code Enforcement, DCRA