

July 11, 2018

Dear RCOs and Neighbors,

I am writing to inform you about 592-4 Jamestown Street, a 2-unit building at the corner of Jamestown St. and Henry Ave. I'm applying for a zoning variance to obtain city approval of the property as a two family dwelling. The property has been a 2-unit building for the 30 years we've lived on the block. When we purchased the property in July of 2017, the seller and the real estate agent represented the property to us as a two unit building. They gave us copies of documents from the City of Philadelphia approving the application for use as a real estate office on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor. (attached). The City approved a variance for two units in 1962.

The building was renovated into two units over 50 years ago, sometime in the 1960's, and has been in use as a two unit building ever since. The attached photographs reflect the interior of the property as it was when we purchased the property.

The City's own records about this property are not consistent. Shortly after we purchased it, I received a bill for trash collection reflecting that the City considers it a two unit building. (attached). However, when I went to get the required Real Estate Rental License for the 2-unit building, I was informed that the property was not completely zoned as a 2-unit building, and that I would have to apply for this variance.

In the 30 years that we have lived at 566 Jamestown Street, our mixed-use block, has gone from largely owner occupied, to approximately 50% owner occupied, with several rented houses on the block. There are also three commercial properties on our block, the Henry James Tavern, a Medical building and a lot with a number of garages, each of which is rented to different individuals or companies.

We purchased 592-4 with the intention of improving the property, both the building and the yard. Since it has a full side yard, facing Henry Avenue, it really functions as the entrance to our block. In the last year, we have planted three trees, several shrubs, and flower and vegetable gardens, creating a much more vibrant and attractive green space on Henry Avenue. This is particularly important as the foot traffic at this intersection is extremely high, with D'Alesandro's, Chubby's, Fiesta Pizza, Roxborough Seafood House, and the Aikido Studio all right there, along with the Sunoco station and Arrow Field for football in the next block. In addition, these businesses and traffic at the corner, lead to much litter on our side yard which we are picking up on a daily basis.

We have also done a considerable amount of work on the property, including masonry repair and pointing, basement insulation, replacing a broken basement window and the deteriorated rear door, installing a new cool roof coating, and having a solar PV system installed through the City's Solarize Philly program.

Granting this variance will enable us to obtain the required Rental Real Estate License and continue the operation of the property as an approved 2-unit building. It will allow us to continue to improve the property, thus improving the entire block. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Liz Robinson
566 Jamestown Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19128