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Moreover, in the currently used remodel criteria, (Slide 8) it states that if either the non-complying or non-conforming status is compromised by exceeding the identified parameters, ONLY a Board of Adjustment variance can preserve the status.

In short, it should have been the City, back in November, presenting you the facts of why the project exceeded the remodel parameters. However, we find ourselves in the position of asking you to uphold the department's regulations, while the City asks you to support their decision to suspend them.

(Slide 9) This is the remodel criteria City staff have been using consistently over the last three years. Although many do not like this piece of regulation because they believe it is too generous to those wanting to claim remodel status, it does have the virtue of being cleaar/

It clearly states that in order to maintain remodel status, the project must keep one ORIGINAL, COMPLETE exterior wall AND the original foundation.

(slide 10) This is unit B. It only has half of one complete exterior wall (the structure used to be two-stories). It also has no beams left from the pier and beam foundation.

(Slide 11) This is Unit "A" It is hard to photograph due to the visual barrier that has been placed around the structure. However, this slide shows you the last remaining wall as it stands today. The applicant chose this North Wall as the one complete exterior wall to remain. He thought the North wall was a legal non-complying wall. It turns out he mistakenly left an illegal wall instead. Over one third of it encroaches on the 5 foot side yard set back. These are the plans he submitted when he thought the wall was non-complying. In order for the wall to comply, he has to either demolish or move over a third of it, neither option is allowed under the remodel criteria.

During the pre-appeal meeting, staff stated that because the portion of the wall that encroaches was originally permitted to enclose the ATTACHED garage, and because it is positioned, as Mr. Guernsey stated "like a nose", in front of the structure, it could be demolished. There is no evidence in the code that supports either of those qualifiers. Mr. Guernsey has later stated that this is something he would Amnesty through the Amnesty CO process. However, this project cannot presently receive a CO, so what we are left with is a last remaining wall that is illegal.

(Slide 12) We have demonstrated that neither structure meets the wall requirement. Now the foundations. The structure of both foundations are either missing due to demolition, or are so unsound, that the only way for them to support a new structure is by pouring a brand new slab foundation over the old per and beams. The process was already started for unit B and this is what it looks like. Once again citing the remodel criteria, it clearly states that "the foundation may be reinforced, but not removed OR replaced". Mr. Guernsey has asserted that because they have not removed it, that it is still the original foundation. It may not have been removed, but it certainly is being replaced.

#### (Slide 13) Matt's slide

We have shown you that this project is not a remodel. Now we will show you that it was issued based on wrong information provided by the applicant.

(Slide 14) Ordinance 25-2-511, sometimes known as the stealth dorm ordinance, states that a property that increases both Gross Floor Area and number of bedrooms has to comply with the present maximum occupancy of 6 unrelated persons in total. In order to circumvent the trigger, the applicant labeled obvious bedrooms, as game rooms and studies.

The owner's website shows that he provided the city erroneous information.

(Slide 15)

(Slide 16)

(slide 17)

(Slide 18)

(Slide 19)

(slide 20) Turning a blind eye to the stealth bedrooms is even more concerning given the applicant's history of safety violations.

As an aside, the \$61,000 fines were forgiven, citing in the release that all the repairs had been made. As you know, all that has happened on this site is that it was illegally demolished.

About two weeks ago, Mr. Guernsey presented to the Codes and Ordinances subcommittee of the Planning Commission an amendment intending to close the loop whole that this applicant is intending to create. Mr. Guernsey said it was important because it was a matter of safety. It is indeed a matter of safety and the City should be held responsible if they look the other way on these obvious bedrooms, while granting the applicant double the occupancy he could otherwise have.

(Slide 21) In conclusion,

- 1) It is not a remodel- And
- 2) It is based on inaccurate information

Although applicants and/or their agent(s) are expected to attend a public hearing, you are not required to attend. However, if you do attend, you have the opportunity to speak FOR or AGAINST the proposed development or change. You may also contact a neighborhood or environmental organization that has expressed an interest in an application affecting your neighborhood.

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- delivering a written statement to the board or commission before or during the public hearing that generally identifies the issues of concern (it may be delivered to the contact person listed on a notice); or
- appearing and speaking for the record at the public hearing; and:
- occupies a primary residence that is within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development;
- is the record owner of property within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development; or
   is an officer of an environmental or neighborhood organization that

has an interest in or whose declared boundaries are within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development.

A notice of appeal must be filed with the director of the responsible department no later than 10 days after the decision. An appeal form may

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be available from the responsible department.

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	Case Number: C15-2010-0042 – 1915 A David Street Contact: Susan Walker 974-2202 Public Hearing: Board of Adjustment, May 5, 2010
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Statements Submitted in opposition to appeal by agent Mike McHone:

### 1) There is standing to the statement that the 6 illegal units at 1915 David had a legally established use:

There was already an in depth look at this issue by a 245 Committee that ruled there was no evidence that the illegal units in operation at 1915 David had a legally established use.

### 2) "1915 David Street is located 7 blocks west of the University of Texas in an area that has been predominately student housing since the 1930's or before."

The Central Austin Combined Neighborhood Plan established an area of greatly increased density closer to UT and protected this area for single family use. This street has been zoned for single family use since 1931.

#### 3) "June 2, 1936 . . . . application for 8 fixture units . . . . "

These fixtures will supply two bathrooms and two kitchens – not 6 apartment units.

#### 4) "The City has acknowledged and approved the use."

The city has acknowledged the two-family use because permits for that use exist.

### 5) "The appellant's dispute of the two family interpretation is in error. The building permits issued in 1950 establish a two-family use".

There is no longer an established use because the structures have been demolished beyond the parameters of a residential remodel.

#### 6) "1970 Polk City Directory: 5 separate addresses"

This indicates that the illegal conversion to 6 apartments may have occurred before 1970.

### 7) "After 70 years the City decides the "use" is not permitted."

The apartment use was created illegally under SF3 (previously "A") zoning. There were never permits nor certificates of occupancy for any use other than two-family.

#### 8) A site plan exemption was granted.

The site plan exemption has been rescinded, and the agent was duly notified.

### 9) On site meetings were held with inspectors who instructed on the parameters of demolition.

According to City records NO site inspections occurred on the site before the Stop Work Order was issued for the UNPERMITTED demolition of the structures. If any information was given, it was under the understanding that a permit would be pulled and duly reviewed.

### 10) The appellant's dispute of the definition of remodel is in error. The memorandum of the "remodel criteria" is being followed.

Neither structure has the required COMPLETE exterior wall. The rear structure has only half of the foundation remaining. The interior piers have been covered with dirt to support the proposed slab and will no longer support the structure. Whether pouring a slab foundation over an original pier and beam foundation means maintaining the original foundation needs to be interpreted by the Board of Adjustment, not by City staff.

### 11) "The appellant's dispute about new rooms is inconsistent and contradictory."

The agent is attempting to confuse the issue of "code enforcement of occupancy" with the mislabeling of rooms in order to obtain a grandfathered entitlement of increased occupancy. Nothing stops a property owner from remodeling a property and increasing the number of bedrooms tenfold. However, that same property would not be able to grandfather an increased occupancy due to the restrictions outlined on 25-2-511.

If the agent is correct in that the spaces labeled as study's and gamerooms will be equipped with the safety requirements of a bedroom, then it appears to support our argument that those spaces are indeed intended as bedrooms and should be labeled as

such and should trigger an occupancy limit of 6 for the site – 4 for the front unit and 2 for the rear unit.

### 12) "The use is not abandoned when a building permit is issued to repair or remodel a non-conforming structure."

There is no such thing as a "non-conforming structure".

However, if he is referring to a non-complying structure, he abandoned the use by exceeding the degree of demolition.

### 13) "occupancy relates to the number of people in a dwelling, not to a limit on a building permit as to the number of rooms."

Occupancy does not relate to the number of rooms except for the language in 25-2-511 "unless. . . the gross floor are and number of bedrooms did not increase."

### 14 ) "To deny permits based upon the assumption that the "extra rooms" are a "potential" occupancy violation puts the City is (in) a very difficult position."

To enable high occupancy while denying that rooms will be used for sleeping puts the City in a difficult position regarding the safety of its citizens.



To: Ms. Leane Heldenfels, Chair and

Members of the Board of Adjustment

From: Gregory I. Guernsey, AICP, Director,

Planning and Development Review Department

Date: May 1, 2010

Re: An Administrative Appeal Request

Case No. C15-2010-0042.

Property Address: 1915A David Street

Ms. Karen McGraw, on behalf of Ms. Nuria Zaragoza (the "Applicant") has filed an administrative appeal, requesting an interpretation of whether the Planning and Development Review Department Director's determination that: 1) the property qualifies as a remodel of a two family residential use; 2) the property is developed with a two-family residential use; 3) the occupancy limit of twelve (12) unrelated adults is grandfathered, and the gross floor area and the number of bedrooms on the site did not increase; and 4) a room not labeled as a bedroom is not a bedroom and does not trigger Section 25-2-511: Dwelling Unit Occupancy Limit and does not have to meet life safety requirements as a sleeping area, is correct.

#### REMODEL

The applicant has stated the remaining building structure at 1915A David Street does not qualify as a remodel of the previous residential building. However, the current building code and the zoning regulations (which is the subject of this appeal) do not define what the term remodel means. Currently, the Planning Commission is considering an amendment to the zoning regulations that will clarify what the meaning of the term "remodel" means.

The City issued a building permit for 1915 ("A") in August 1950 to Miss Fannye N. Cherry to construct a "Frame Res, with Garage Attached" (see attachment "A"). The constructed building consists of a one-story, two bedroom house with an attached single bay garage. At the time of construction, the attached garage was built approximately 22.4 from the front (west) property line and 3.8 from the side (north) property line. The zoning ordinance in effect at the time the permit was issued should have treated an attached garage as part of the principal structure; therefore, it appears the attached garage was issued a permit in error. The attached garage should have been setback twenty-five (25') feet from David Street and five (5') feet from the property

to the north. However, the garage could remain in its current location under Section 25-2-365 which is a provision that grants amnesty for certain structures constructed prior to March 1986 (see Attachment "B"). Sometime between 1950 and 2009, the one space garage was converted into a bedroom without building permit. The City did not recognize the illegal conversion of the garage into a bedroom, so the property owner decided to demolish the garage and construct a new study addition onto the existing residence.

The current building permit for 1915A David Street is for an addition and remodel of the existing residence. A new study addition was approved in compliance with front and side yard setback requirements. Other new additions include a small addition to the rear (east) side of the building, an addition to the front (southeast) side of the building and a roof addition over the existing building. The portion of the building being remodeled will utilize one existing exterior (north) wall and the existing foundation. It is not uncommon for an individual to remodel a residence and add onto the residence at the same time. In this case, the property owner has maintained the foundation and the exterior wall abutting the portion of the original residence being remodeled (see Attachment "C"). Therefore, this remodel and addition to the existing building does not constitute an abandonment of the existing use or the creation of a new two-family residential use.

#### <u>USE</u>

The Applicant has stated the current property has no use. However, this statement is incorrect. The subject property was developed under two permits in 1950 as a two family use. At the time these permits were issued, a two family use was defined as a "...detached or semi-detached building having separate accommodations for and occupied as a dwelling by two (2) families." The zoning on the property in 1950 was "A" Residence District and allowed a two family use as a permitted use. Today, the property is zoned family residential-conditional overlay-neighborhood plan (SF-3-CO-NP) combining district zoning. The current zoning allows a two family residential use on lots 7,000 sq. ft. (the subject property is approximately 7,900 sq. ft.) or larger in size as a permitted use. A two family residential use is defined as a "...the use of a lot for two dwelling units, each in a separate building, other than a mobile home." This means the current use is a permitted use and not a non-conforming use. A non-conforming use "...means a land use that does not conform to current use regulations, but did conform to the use regulations in effect at the time the use was established."

#### **GRANDFATHERING**

Since this is an addition and remodel to an existing residence, the permit is grandfathered from certain zoning requirements. It is legal non-complying with respect to the off street parking requirement. The zoning regulations defines non-complying as "...a building, structure, or area, including off-street parking or loading areas, that does not comply with currently applicable site development regulations for the district in which it is located, but did comply with applicable regulations at the time it was constructed." If a two family residential use or a single family use is remodeled, then the current off-street parking requirement would not apply. In 1950, a two family use and a single family use were not required to provide off-street parking. Therefore, either of these uses could be remodeled or expanded without additional parking spaces being triggered. Staff did require one (1) off-street parking space be maintained on the

property, because the current Code [(Section 25-6-472(I)] does not allow someone to reduce the number of provided parking spaces on-site, if the minimum number of parking spaces are not currently provided.

#### **OCCUPANCY**

The current zoning regulations state under Section 25-2-511 that "...not more than six unrelated persons may reside in a dwelling unit" and "... for a two-family residential use ..., not more than four unrelated persons 18 years of age or older may reside in the principal structure, and not more than two unrelated persons 18 years of age or older may reside in the second dwelling unit, unless after (effective date of ordinance) [November 18, 2004], the gross floor area and the number of bedrooms on the site did not increase, except for the completion of construction authorized before that date." Since the use did exist prior to the 2004 date, and the gross floor area <u>and</u> the number of bedrooms on the property did not increase, the new occupancy limit on the number of unrelated adults was not triggered.

Staff does not believe applicant's reference to the previous BOA determination case in 2003 is relevant to this case, since the previous case addressed a duplex use and a group residential use, and not a two family residential use. A duplex use "... is the use of a site for two dwelling units within a single building, other than a mobile home." A group residential "...is the use of a site for occupancy by a group of more than six persons who are not a family, on a weekly or longer basis. This use includes fraternity and sorority houses, dormitories, residence halls, and boarding houses." The site development standards for these other uses, including the off-street parking requirement is also different from a two-family residential use. Finally, the referenced zoning section (25-2-511) has been revised by City Council since the BOA decision of 2003 and now has different requirements for a duplex use and two-family residential use.

#### **BEDROOMS**

Current zoning regulations do not define bedroom. However, City Staff has historically defined a bedroom as a room with a closet, other than a bathroom or kitchen. Current zoning regulations also do not define a study, game room, den, dining room, home office, playroom, or media room. Staff relies on a property owner to designate a room's use; however, staff will count a room as a bedroom if the room has a closet.

Given the concerns raised by the applicant and other interested neighborhood representatives, Staff will request the Planning Commission initiate an amendment to the zoning regulations to remove or modify the reference to bedrooms for a two family residential use or a duplex use. This amendment would have the potential to lower occupancy limits for unrelated adults on any two family residential use or duplex use, if the floor area is increased.

#### **ENFORCEMENT**

City Staff does not limit or prohibit someone from obtaining a building permit on the basis of who they are, what past code violations they may or may not be guilty of or what potential land use violations they may commit in the future. If any violations do

occur and they are brought to Staff's attention, then our Code Compliance Department will pursue enforcement accordingly.

#### **FINDINGS**

Staff does not believe there is reasonable doubt or difference of interpretation as to the specific intent of the regulations, because: 1) all rooms can not be assumed to be bedrooms under the current zoning regulations; and 2) the reference to the previous BOA case was for a different land use and the relevant zoning regulation has been amended since the previous BOA decision.

Staff believes the use provisions clearly permit the use which is in character with the uses enumerated for the various zones and with the objective of the zone in question because: 1) the remodel, with or without an addition to an existing one family or two family use is permitted under the current zoning regulations without triggering new occupancy limits or off-street parking requirements for the subject property or any other SF-3 zoned property in the City; and 2) the subject building complies with the height and setback requirements, and the site on which the building occupies complies with the SF-3 impervious cover and building coverage standards, and residential design and compatibility (McMansion) standards.

The interpretation will not grant a special privilege to one property inconsistent with other properties or uses similarly situated in that: 1) the subject property has not been zoned for only a single family use since 1931, but for one or two family (duplex, two family residential) uses since 1931; and 2) the issuance of a remodel permit which maintains a single family use or a two family residential use (that maintains a one exterior wall adjacent to the portion of a building remodeled) and a foundation is the consistent with the same criteria that has been and would be applied to other properties within the neighborhood and elsewhere in the City,

If you have any questions, please contact me at 974-2387 or by e-mail at <a href="mailto:greg.guernsey@ci.austin.tx.us">greg.guernsey@ci.austin.tx.us</a>.

Miss Fannye N. Cherry

1915 David St.

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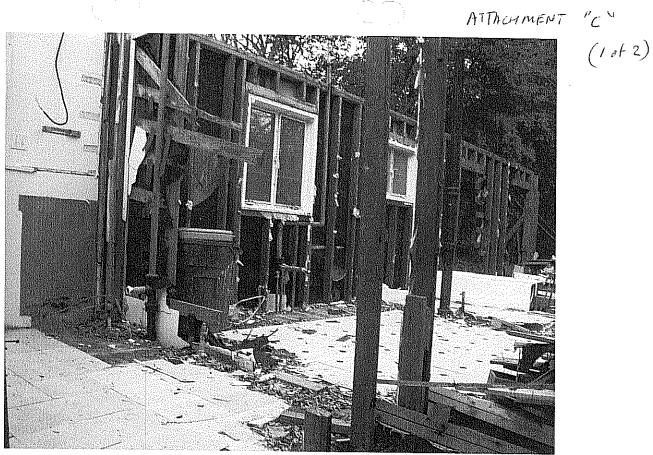
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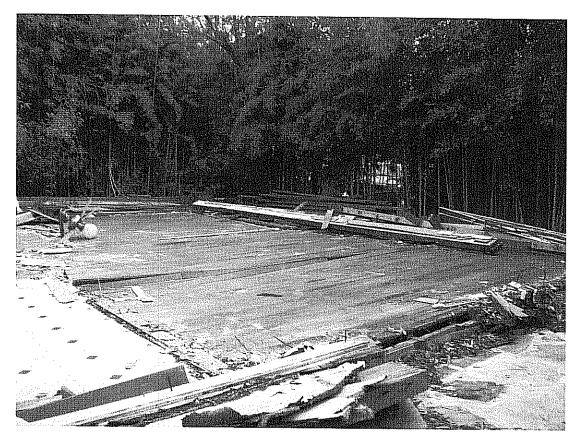
#### § 25-1-365 EXEMPTION FROM COMPLIANCE.

- (A) This section applies to an existing use or occupancy for which a certificate of occupancy was not issued if:
- (1) the structure in which the use or occupancy occurs existed before March 1, 1986;
  - (2) the use or occupancy was established before March 1, 1986;
- (3) the use or occupancy was not subject to an enforcement action on January 1, 1988;
  - (4) the use is a permitted use or is a nonconforming use; and
  - (5) the use is not an adult-oriented business use.
- (B) The building official shall issue a certificate of occupancy for a use or occupancy described in Subsection (A) if the building official determines that continuing the existing use or occupancy is not a hazard to life, health, or the public safety.
- (C) The building official shall issue a certificate of occupancy under Subsection (B) notwithstanding the noncompliance of an existing use or occupancy or of a building in which the use or occupancy occurs with applicable technical code requirements or site development regulations.

Source: Section 13-1-732(f); Ord. 990225-70; Ord. 031211-11.

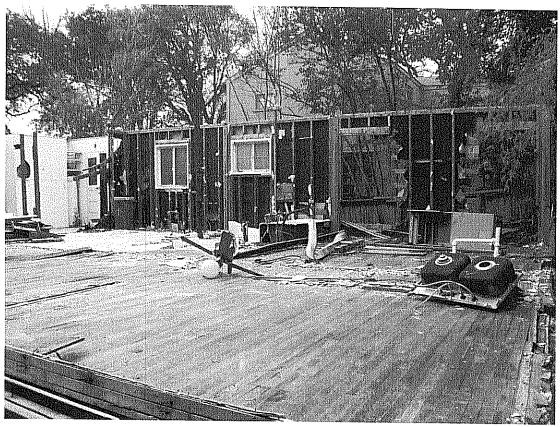


North wall of 1915-A David, standing to the right (south) of the front room.



Taken from almost the same spot as above, the hardwood floors and stone patio of 1915-A David.

(2 of 2)



From the rear/southeast corner of 1915-A David, looking north across the hardwood floors; 1917 David in the background.

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City of Austin-Planning & Development Review Department/ 2nd Floor

Austin, TX 78767-8810

C/O Susan Walker P. O. Box 1088

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155000-0004 comments should include the name of the board or commission, or Council; the scheduled date of the public hearing; the Case Number; and the contact person alle ☐ I am in favor N City of Austin-Planning & Development Review Department/ 2nd Floor Written comments must be submitted to the board or commission (or the contact person listed on the notice) before or at a public hearing. Your 1 object SKEEL STRUCTURE JEVIELOPERE Case Number: C15-2010-0042 - 1915 A David Street S. F. CENOREL 4) MOCH CAROLE 12/2 If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to: NEIGHEONE HOOD BIED - MADINS DESI DENTIAL De Renier 0/21612AL Your address(es) affected by this appliçation MORK P Board of Adjustment, May 5, 2010 Contact: Susan Walker 974-2202 DEMO CITION 01/10 Daytime Telephone:  $\overline{\mathcal{AZ}}$ FNR/OSE 15 1/07 Signature 422mastre Comme Com PLAGNOG Austin, TX 78767-8810 Your Name (please print) Rooms 4 Oscinsor C/O Susan Walker isted on the notice. Public Hearing: P. O. Box 1088 drove Comments:\_\_ 4 135

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CHY of Assrity's' current interpretation, that it is not permitting an increase in the number of BEDROOMS, and therefore can grandfather the occupancy is flawed.

However, if you agree with the grandfathered OCCUPANCY LIMIT of twelve (12) unrelated individuals for the site, per Greg Guernsey's letter (March 4, 2010), then consider that the act of grandfathering establishes a NONCONFORMING USE that triggers the nonconforming use code limiting the improvement of the structure to 20% of its value before the improvement. Since the building has been substantially removed it cannot be put back into use and expanded for an amount equal or less than 20% of the previous value.

In 1950 a TWO-FAMILY use was constructed on this site. At some later date, the two structures were illegally subdivided into six apartments. Following the severe, unpermitted demolition, City staff estimated that a maximum of two bedrooms existed in the original 1915A structure. In order to circumvent the OCCUPANCY LIMIT of six (6) unrelated adults for the site that is triggered by the addition of bedrooms per 25-2-511, the applicant simply labeled the new rooms as "GAMEROOM" or "STUDY"

While these new spaces are not labeled as BEDROOMS on the submitted plans, they are advertised on the owner's company website as spaces intended for the same use as the identified bedrooms (texanproperties.net). Unsuspecting tenants are not likely to know that a room they are renting for several hundred dollars a month was permitted and inspected as a STUDY or GAMEROOM and not as a LEGAL sleeping area. The city's current interpretation of what constitutes a BEDROOM is that if there is not a closet in the room then it is not a bedroom. This interpretation is inadequate to determine compliance with Section 25-2-511 and compliance with occupancy. As these rooms are not inspected for compliance with egress or smoke alarms, they are not safe sleeping areas.

For the purposes of interpreting 25-2-511 - A BEDROOM could reasonably be defined as any room that meets:

- the definition for habitable space under the IRC 2006 Section R202 (space to be used for living, eating, cooking and sleeping AND
- the minimum area requirements per IRC 2006 Section 304 (70 square feet, minimum 7' dimension) AND
- that is a private space or can be made private by the addition of a partition wall and/or door (most likely to be achieved without a permit) AND
- has outside door s/and/or windows which may provide for emergency escape and rescue.

ENFORCEMENT: The current owner purchased this property in 1993. Since 2007 there have been numerous code violations including substandard housing conditions and zoning violations amounting to over \$61,000 in fines. If this project is built as currently permitted, allowing two extra STUDY's and a very large GAMEROOM, along with the

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congestion impacting neighbors.

CTV OF GALEATEM thered occupancy of twelve (12), it will set in motion an unsafe situation, as the once "two-bedroom" building will have more space to house individuals and to accommodate the newly grandfathered 12 occupants. The City's CODE ENFORCEMENT officers will have to enforce that the rooms not labeled for BEDROOMS do not become illegal and unsafe sleeping rooms for unsuspecting renters. With up to 12 occupants on the site and only one parking space there will be much

Neighbors have, to date, filed 5 appeals, three of which have been rejected and not heard by the City. YOUR HELP IS APPRECIATED to help these neighbors and the City avoid an egregious situation from being condoned and abetted by City permitting actions.

**NOTE:** The board must determine the existence of, sufficiency of and weight of evidence supporting the findings described below. Therefore, you must complete each of the applicable findings statements as part of your application. Failure to do so may result in your application being rejected as incomplete. Please attach any additional support documents.

1. There is a reasonable doubt of difference of interpretation as to the specific intent of the regulations or map in that

This project does not qualify as a REMODEL per the City's standard definition so the project must be considered new construction and must meet current parking and occupancy regulations.

New rooms being added must be acknowledged to be BEDROOMS and will trigger the occupancy limit of 6 unrelated adults per site in Section 25-2-511 (A) (3).

An occupancy limit of 12 was never intended and cannot be grandfathered per Board of Adjustment ruling April 14, 2003 so the OCCUPANCY LIMIT is 6 unrelated adults for the site.

2. An appeal of use provisions could clearly permit a use which is in character with the uses enumerated for the various zones and with the objectives of the zone in question because:

A newly established single family, two-family or duplex use is permitted and would have to meet occupancy limits of 6 per site and parking requirements which are not going to be met with the currently approved plans. Similar uses and the same regulations apply to all SF3 areas including the surrounding area.

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Board of Adjustment, May 5, 2010
Public Hearing:
Contact: Susan Walker 974-2202
Case Number: C15-2010-0042 - 1915 A David Street

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:

City of Austin-Planning & Development Review Department/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor C/O Susan Walker

P. O. Box 1088

Austin, TX 78767-8810

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2nd Project 25-2-511)
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Daytime Telephone: 512-472-3784
Your address(es) affected by this application Austin, Tx 78705
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Public Hearing:  Board of Adjustment, May 5, 2010
Case Number: C15-2010-0042 – 1915 A David Street Contact: Susan Walker 974-2202

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