

**PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED
FOR 2112 WALNUT ST**

2112 Walnut Street

rabanth@aol.com <rabanth@aol.com>

Tue 9/19/2023 8:36 PM

To: preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>; Paul Steinke <psteinke@preservationalliance.com>

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Dear members of the Architecture Committee and Historical Commission,

I am writing to address the proposal for 2112 Walnut Street. I agree with the staff that the proposal does not currently meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards. Not only is there an unprecedented amount of demolition of visible historic fabric but the new construction would loom massively over Walnut Street and the wonderful carriage streets behind. The construction next door at 2110 Walnut was approved by the Commission because it was largely new construction on a vacant lot. This project should use the standard for building on an historic building which says that the scale and massing should be compatible with the existing building. This developer did this very successfully at a project on the 100 block of Arch Street in Old City where a number of floors were added on top of the rear of an historic building without being visible from Arch Street. Thank you
Randal Baron



**KLEHR HARRISON
HARVEY BRANZBURG LLP**

Carl S. Primavera
Direct Dial: 215-569-1663
Email: CPrimavera@klehr.com

September 22, 2023

Via Electronic Mail:

laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

Philadelphia Historical Commission
c/o Laura DiPasquale, Historical Preservation Supervisor
One Parkway, 13th Floor
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: 2112 Walnut Street

Dear Ms. DiPasquale:

As you know, I represent a group of unit owners residing in residential condominiums at 2108-2110 Walnut Street. They are vigorously opposed to the application submitted by the owners and applicants regarding the property at 2112 Walnut Street for proposed demolition of a significant portion of the existing structure and a 13 story new addition. The property is contributing in the Rittenhouse Fitler Historic District.

The matter is scheduled for a hearing before the Architectural Review Committee on September 26, 2023 at 9:25 a.m. We have received and reviewed Staff Comments which recommend Denial under various Standards, Guidelines, and Sections of the Preservation Ordinance. We will not repeat them but are in agreement with that Recommendation. We believe that:

1. The application should be submitted to the Hardship Committee for review. The structure is currently occupied as an office and there has been no suggestion that it is not suitable for continued use or adaptive reuse without the proposed significant demolition and new construction.

2. The proposed new addition is not consistent with the character of the Historic District. The proposed 13 story new tower is out of scale with the District and the existing structure of the property and it is highly conspicuous from the public right of way. This creates an adverse impact to the District.



September 22, 2023
Page 2

3. The application is negatively impactful to the structures on both Walnut and Chancellor Streets. The oversized planned addition and number of units will dramatically overburden Chancellor Street and the structures to the south in both scale and activity. The same is true for Walnut Street properties. It is important to note that the same developers proposing this application built and sold the units which my clients own. There was no disclosure to them that the expensive units they purchased would be impaired by the same developers building next door to them. This also raises concerns over the logistical challenges presented by this plan. The tight alignment of structures and streets will create many potentially dangerous and disruptive conditions.

We look forward to attending the zoom hearing on the 26th and appreciate your placing this letter into the record of the proceedings.

Very truly yours,

Carl S. Primavera

CSP:kmm

cc: Meredith Ferleger, Esquire (via electronic mail: mferleger@dilworthlaw.com)



**KLEHR HARRISON
HARVEY BRANZBURG LLP**

Carl S. Primavera
Direct Dial: 215-569-1663
Email: CPrimavera@klehr.com

September 22, 2023

Via Electronic Mail:

laura.dipasquale@phila.gov

Philadelphia Historical Commission
c/o Laura DiPasquale, Historical Preservation Supervisor
One Parkway, 13th Floor
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Re: 2112 Walnut Street

Dear Ms. DiPasquale:

As you know I represent a group of unit owners at 2108-2110 Walnut Street opposed to the application submitted by the owners of 2112 Walnut Street. The application is likely to be scheduled for a hearing before the Historical Commission on October 13th. We are requesting that the Meeting of the Commission on this case be continued to the next date when it meets as 4 of my lead clients will, unfortunately, be out of the country on previously planned trips and, therefore unavailable. Of course, we are prepared to participate in the meeting of the ARC on September 26 (as you are correct that the religious holiday observances will be concluded by that time).

Please let me know what else I need to do to present this request to the Commission.

Very truly yours,

Carl S. Primavera

CSP:kmm

cc: Meredith Ferleger, Esquire (via electronic mail: mferleger@dilworthlaw.com)

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Re: 2112 Walnut St. Proposed Demolition & Development

Jaimie Drumm <jaimie@msreco.com>

Fri 9/22/2023 2:43 PM

To: preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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To: Members of the Historical Commission

From: David Singer

I am writing in protest of the 2112 project. The demolition of the rear of the building simply for profit is not a good enough reason. The massive high rise that would loom over Walnut St., Chancellor St. and the English Village townhouses would create an unpleasant environment for all who live under it. The current building at 2112 Walnut St. is perfectly acceptable for a new user.

Sincerely,

David Singer

--

Jaimie Drumm
Asset Management
Michael Singer Inc.
P: (215)925-8683
C: (215)987-8922

2112 walnut opposition

Julia Feng <jules6985@icloud.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 4:30 PM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

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Hi Laura

We are the owners of 2122 chancellor st and wanted to let you know that we are opposed to the building at 2112 walnut. The renderings show the major access point being chancellor st and our street is too small to accommodate the large number and size of construction vehicles. The cobblestone st is historic as well as the carriage homes. I am concerned about the damage it will cause to our street and to the structure of our home.

We as well as our neighbors were never notified of this hearing. I'm sure you will be receiving emails of them opposing too.

Julia Feng/Stephen Woerheide

2122 chancellor st

570-614-8807

2112 walnut st

Lisa Ostroff <lisaostroff@gmail.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 12:05 PM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

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I oppose the construction of the 13 story building proposed for 2112 walnut st. As a resident living at 22nd and chancellor st the proposal of access to parking on chancellor st would severely ruin the historic cobblestone street. It is a dead end street and the additional traffic would make it unsafe.

Lisa Ostroff

Fwd: 2112 Walnut Street

Heather Ascher <ascherheather@gmail.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 6:00 PM

To:Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

Cc:Michael Ascher <ham.ascher@gmail.com>

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Dear Ms. DiPasquale:

I am addressing the proposal to build a thirteen story high-rise residential building at 2112 Walnut Street.

My wife and I reside at 2137 Saint James Street and have ownership interest in two streets on the Historical Commission's Register of Historic Streets. Of interest at this time is the Belgian block street on the south side of our property.

We are opposed to this project for the following reasons:

First, it violates the nature of the adjacent buildings even, and including, the unfortunate already disproportionate building adjacent to the east of the focal lot. In fact, it has been the understanding of residents that buildings are not to be erected higher than six stories on the south side of Walnut Street.

Second, the company that built the the residences at 2110 Walnut Street, Aston Investments, first attempted to run heavy equipment over the 2100 block of Chancellor St. This is a historically protected Belgian block street which was not originally built to sustain such traffic. Before these workers were rebuffed, their equipment damaged a portion of the street for which residents were promised a repair; years later the promise of the repair remains unfulfilled.

If the parking entrance to 2112 Walnut Street is to be on Chancellor Street, this will result in additional damage and deterioration to a uniquely well-preserved Belgian block street. In addition, there will be uncharacteristic noise and vehicular activity on a dead-end street populated by small, single-family homes. Any usage of Chancellor Street for either construction or subsequent occupancy (parking, trash set out, garage entry) is not acceptable. Related to this concern would be trash collection and pickup. Trash bins on Chancellor Street would be detrimental to residents in adjacent homes and would place the entire area in an objectionable, unhealthy climate. Again, heavy trash trucks navigating the narrow Chancellor Street would pose a problem for residents and the street itself.

Third, windows and balconies overlooking the homes on Chancellor Street will preclude the privacy that the enclave has heretofore enjoyed. Additionally, a

thirteen story building to the east of this area will place these structures in an environment devoid of sun until noon, an arrangement that is unfavorable when compared to the present circumstances.

There are a number of negative implications and precedents that can be avoided by rejection of this zoning variance which is in place to protect residents.

L. Michael Ascher, Ph. D.

Professor

Department of Psychiatry

Temple Health Sciences Center

Residence: 2137 Saint James Street

Opposition to 2112 Walnut Street

Keren Veisblatt Toledano <kveisblatt@gmail.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 12:27 PM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>; preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

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Dear Laura and Members of the Preservation and Historical Commissions,

I oppose the project plans at 2112 Walnut Street as it is proposed today. The addition of 16 parking spots on a narrow, cobblestone alleyway on Chancellor Street is unsafe. The street is already degrading due to the current traffic patterns. It is a quiet, small, dead-end street with no through traffic that has to accommodate over 24 cars. It is OFTEN blocked. There are already close calls between cars on such a narrow street which cannot accommodate two way traffic. There are already major access and quality of life issues. The entrance for the project should be on Walnut Street which is a main corridor for pedestrian and car traffic. Walnut Street is maintained for high levels of traffic unlike Chancellor.

As it is, the city does not care for the street. We pick up debris and trash on our own and WE are the ones that pay for the snow removal and sometimes trash removal. Oftentimes, the narrow passage of the alley means that the garbage trucks do not come to pick up trash, so the street is lined with old garbage piles and recycling bins. Please reconsider using this space as parking access. It will lead to degradation of the historic alleyway and it will be unsafe.

Thank you,

Keren Veisblatt Toledano, resident at 207 S 22nd Street (parking access on Chancellor)

Opposition to 2112 Walnut Street

Harvey Ostroff <harveyostroff@gmail.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 12:50 PM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

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I am opposed to the project at 2112 Walnut Street as proposed for the following reasons:

A 13 story building is totally out of character and scale to the near historic buildings

16 additional vehicles going down a historic street will further damage the cobblestone which was to be repaired by the developer/builder during the last project and is now involved with this one.

Balconies which protrude and allow residents to look down on adjacent properties will interfere with the privacy of near neighbors

Heavy construction equipment which will be needed to build a 13-story building using a residential historic access road (Chancellor) will damage the historic cobblestone and potentially crack the historic adjacent properties' interior/exterior walls, pavements and associated masonry work

I respectfully remain,

Harvey Ostroff

Sent from my iPhone

Opposition to 2112 Walnut Street Plans

Michael Toledano <michaelstoledano@gmail.com>

Sun 9/24/2023 12:19 PM

To:Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Laura and Members of the Preservation and Historical Commissions,

I oppose the project at 2112 Walnut Street as it is proposed today. The addition of 16 parking spots on a narrow, cobblestone alleyway on Chancellor Street is poorly conceived. The street is already degrading due to the current traffic patterns. It is a quiet, small, dead-end street with no through traffic that has to accommodate over 24 cars. It is OFTEN blocked. People park illegally here as it stands today. I already have to ask people to move their cars due to traffic/parking issues at least once a week. There are already major access issues.

Furthermore, the city does not care for the street. We pick up debris, trash, leaves on our own and WE are the ones that pay for the snow removal and sometimes trash removal. Oftentimes, the narrow passage of the alley means that the garbage trucks do not come to pick up trash, so the street is lined with old garbage piles and recycling bins. Please do not increase the amount of traffic, people, trash, and general usage of this tiny historical alley that is already at its limit.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael Toledano, resident at 207 S 22nd Street (parking access on Chancellor)

I am the owner of 2116 Chancellor Street, one of 5 historical carriage houses on Chancellor Street. The 2112 Walnut Street project was just brought to my attention 2 days ago. I was definitely not notified by the owner or developer about construction of a large 13 story building, 2112 Walnut Street project, which will greatly affect my property, which is located approximately 50 feet from the proposed construction site. Chancellor Street is a very narrow cobblestone street, very uneven and receives no maintenance from the city. It is hard to imagine how this tiny residential dead-end street will be able to function during construction. Has anyone studied the impact construction traffic will have on this already congested street with parking spots behind walnut street buildings and garages in the historical carriage houses? Residents depend on their timely access to this tiny street to drive to work, drop off their children at school, etc. Construction traffic will have a huge impact on the way Chancellor Street will function.

The construction equipment needed to build a 13-story building is very upscale, large and heavy. This heavy equipment movement over this small historical cobblestone street far exceeds the intended load capacity it can support. Overtaxing this cobblestone street may lead to sewer collapse, underground utility damage, and most importantly damage to the sound structure of the 5 historic carriage houses which have stood undamaged on this small cobblestone street since 1880. Can we allow a project to overstress an 1880 passage way that was designed to support horses and carriages, not the type of major heavy construction equipment necessary to build the 2112 Walnut project. Who will be responsible for damages if cracks begin to appear in my historic carriage house? These historic buildings need to be preserved and protected from projects like this which might cause irreparable damage to their existence.

The similar building 2110 Walnut Street, has a vehicle entrance on Walnut Street and therefore does not impact their neighbors, unlike the 2112 Walnut project, which will greatly impact all their Chancellor Street neighbors. It appears that 100% of their vehicle traffic will use Chancellor Street (construction and post construction traffic).

The dramatic change in traffic pattern on Chancellor Street due to construction and everyday usage of 2112 Walnut project should formally be presented to those folks it will impact most, namely the residents who live on Chancellor Street.

My carriage house has only one entrance which is directly onto Chancellor Street, a mere 50 feet from the proposed construction site. I do not have the ability to use my back door (there is no back access possible for my carriage house). We need to be told the full scope of the 2122 Walnut Street project and how it will impact our immediate neighborhood of Chancellor Street both during and after construction. A good neighbor is considerate of his neighbors. I hope this 2112 Walnut project will demonstrate neighborly consideration to the impact this development will have on their neighbors, or will all considerations and approvals be based on rich folks getting richer?

If they leave the Walnut façade intact, all the demolition and deep foundation digging and soil removal will be down Chancellor Street. We are going to get trampled, and our

air quality will be degraded by construction dust and equipment and truck exhaust fumes.

We need time to study the impact to local residents since none of the local residents have been notified by the owner or developer of the 2114 Walnut project.

Please delay approval of the 2112 Walnut project until the owner and developer can communicate with our neighborhood (Chancellor Street residents) and explain what will be done on our street and how this construction will impact the daily lives on the street. Explain in detail construction plans, traffic patterns during construction and after construction, when construction will begin, how long it will be under construction and anticipated completion date. We are asking for communication and transparency.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter affecting all Chancellor Street residents.

Respectfully,

Ralph Woerheide

2116 Chancellor Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Email: ralphwoerheide5@gmail.com

Cell phone: 708-250-7207

Proposal: Demolish 2112 Walnut St.; Construct 13 story addition

Joan F <jzfinger@gmail.com>

Mon 9/25/2023 4:16 AM

To:Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>;preservation <preservation@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

My name is Joan Finger. I own the carriage house at 2120 Chancellor Street which is behind the proposed construction. I read about the proposal above on August 30th in the Inquirer, but was not informed of this architectural review until today. This despite the fact that this construction would directly impact my home. I thought all property owners who are directly affected by proposed construction would be contacted in a timely manner. This is clearly not timely and it seems that the participants planned it this way to minimize community involvement. My concern is not just the inconvenience of construction. More importantly, I am concerned with the continued use of Chancellor Street as a major thoroughfare between 22nd Street and the rear of 2112 Walnut Street, which will be the only driveway entrance in and out of this 13 story building.

Interestingly, this building historically did not have a driveway entrance to Chancellor Street. There was only a walkway to the backyard of that property. Directly behind that property is a parking space attached to 2112 Chancellor Street which fronts the dead end of Chancellor Street. When the lawyers first purchased 2112 Walnut Street, they paved the back garden to make parking. However, the entrance to that parking area diagonally crossed both the land for the parking space at 2112 Chancellor as well as the back corner of the property at 2114 Walnut Street. At that corner was a tree belonging to 2114 Walnut Street. The space between the corner of the building at 2112 Chancellor and the tree at 2114 Walnut was so narrow that the lawyers sheared off their side view mirrors on their cars at least twice. In their anger, they had the tree removed without consulting the owner at 2114 Walnut Street. I understand there was a financial settlement for the abrupt tree removal.

My concern is that a 13 story building needs adequate driveway entrance and exit for a substantial number of cars. How can a driveway of that size be carved out of a space not much wider than a car? Chancellor Street should not be their driveway. 2112 Walnut Street does not own property on Chancellor Street. There are a number of new condo developments on Walnut Street with entrance and exit ramps directly on Walnut Street. There is adequate precedent for these structures. Additionally, the fronts of these developments are not all historically correct. There are modern buildings fronting Walnut Street. They are lovely and contribute to the streetscape even with their driveway ramps. There is the Wanamaker House and there is also one at 2110 Walnut Street, directly next to the proposed building. Interestingly, that building went up with a driveway entrance on Walnut. They had an original driveway entrance on Chancellor Street, but did not use that for their parking garage. They use Walnut Street.

I see no significant reason to save the facade of a building on Walnut Street at the expense of a whole community of 1870 carriage houses. There are 5 carriage houses/residences to be exact and we cannot change our windows and doors without consulting the Architectural Committee of the Philadelphia Historical Commission. In fact, a recent request to add a 3rd floor with a setback to preserve the front of the carriage house on Chancellor Street was rejected even though my house already had the same 3rd floor addition. Had the commission consulted me, I would have approved

my neighbor's addition. Meanwhile, you are considering destroying the whole appearance and function of Chancellor Street for this project that has inadequate driveway access to and from Chancellor Street. We have a well maintained cobblestone street. It's beautiful. The construction will destroy it. My guess is that if this project goes through, the cobblestone street will be paved. Bravo for the Historical Commission. If you are willing to destroy our neighborhood, why did you include us in the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District? Ah, but I guess the appearance of Walnut Street is more important than a viable 1870 carriage house neighborhood on Chancellor Street.

Clearly, I oppose this project at 2112 Walnut Street if it means that the only entrance and exit to that building will be from Chancellor Street.

Please call if you have any questions or if you wish to discuss alternatives.

Please let me know that my letter was received and that my opposition to this project was recorded.

Thank you,

Joan Finger

2120 Chancellor Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-287-2074

jzfinger@gmail.com

Opposition to Proposed New Construction at 2112 Walnut Street

Jacalyn Price Pollock <jacipollock@gmail.com>

Mon 9/25/2023 10:01 AM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

This letter serves as my strong opposition to the proposed project at 2112 Walnut Street. The demolition of the majority of an existing 4-story Second Empire brownstone building on Walnut street (Currently serving as a law firm by building owners Lisa and Bruce Ginsberg) that was built in 1870.

I vehemently oppose the proposed parking for this project and the impact that the additional vehicles (construction vehicles, delivery vehicles and condo owners) would contribute to the further demise of Chancellor Street.

My objections to this new project at 2122 Walnut Street are 3 fold:

1. No impact study to historic cobblestone street on Chancellor Street which is currently maintained by owners. This street is not snow plowed by the city and all repair work to the street has been managed by current owners.
2. Impact of Infrastructure under the street based on weight of construction vehicles and materials. Much like St. James Place street, which runs parallel to Chancellor street, the existing stone street has not been maintained by the city. In addition to impacting the stones, the lines running below such as Water, PGW, etc are in fear of being damaged by construction vehicles carrying the steel beams required for such a large project.
3. There has not been a Traffic study for Chancellor Street, a dead end street that is too narrow for traditional 2-way traffic. The increase in cars in this proposal, coupled with the mention of retail (which would require delivery,) The requirement of this many units to have private trash removal, and the change of public parking on 22nd several years ago to the east side of 22nd street, creating a blind right turn onto 22nd depending on how cars are parked.

In addition to these parking related objections- I have objections rooted in the preservation of Architecture and the guidelines for demolishing historic properties in Philadelphia. There is not a preservationist on staff at CBP architects, the former Cecil Baker firm, and this team of designers is more focused on "building something cool" than thoughtfully responding to the materials of the existing building facade or the building proportions. Rather than highlight and celebrate the historic building facade this project is related to, they have chosen to focus on and mimic aspects of the building next door. Perhaps "jumping on the bandwagon" to seek approval for an even bigger glass box overbuild? 2112 Walnut Street is located on the Walnut street side directly next to 2108-2110 Walnut Street, but this building existing site conditions vary wildly from that project (which included a flat surface parking lot with curb cut on Walnut Street for fill in) references to that property's retail front omit that it is ground level retail vs the proposed 2nd floor, non accessible, retail proposed in this project. The adjacent property to the one in question with stepped back new construction from this façade utilized exterior materials that have as much grace to them as that of a shipping container, meaning none.

Let's stop giving deference to the idea of "signature architects."

The idea that Cecil Baker's status as an architect was to Philadelphia was on par with his one time mentor Louis Kahn, or other famed architects, is either an indication of Philadelphia's own desperation to elevate their design scene or indicative of the lack of current design talent we have in Philadelphia. For as many supporters of Baker's, there were in fact critics of his work. By approving this overbuild the historic commission is implying that CBP architects and developers have the Historic Commission in their "pocket" and are able to: sachet past the committee and seek approval under the guise of development, while skirting the rules of preservation, lining their pockets by seeking out tax abatement, and creating over-density on a small historic street.

Lastly, on a personal note, I have owned a home in what is referred to as the "English Village" for almost 2 decades. I have parked my car on Chancellor Street for the past 18 years and have experienced first hand the issues highlighted above. As an architect myself, I understand both the need for growth and changes as well as the need to protect and preserve. The negative impact that this project will have on my family and my neighbors is why I strongly object to this project moving forward.

Thoughtfully,

Jacalyn Price Pollock

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Jacalyn Pollock
2144 St. James Place
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215.219.1656

"It is nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice."

2112 Walnut St proposed project

Jill Deuel <deuel3535@aol.com>

Mon 9/25/2023 11:32 AM

To: Laura Dipasquale <Laura.Dipasquale@Phila.gov>

External Email Notice. This email comes from outside of City government. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Good morning Laura,

Im writing to address the Architectural Committee and Historical Commission regarding the proposed 2112 Walnut St project thats on the agenda for "final approval" Sept 26.

Firstly, Its disturbing that we learned about this project through a published article Aug 24, 2023 in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Secondly, the article stated how 'they' were in discussions with neighbors regarding it...untrue, not ALL neighbors...not us and a few others. Maybe from the Walnut st side everything will appear fine with the intention of keeping the historical facade intact but not everything from the back elevation will be fine. We on Chancellor st will be most directly affected as homes are 3-4 stories max.

We as home owners on the private Chancellor St that sits behind the proposed building at 2112 Walnut St have great concerns about how this will directly impact us and all residences on Chancellor St. We will lose more skyline, lose privacy from all the proposed balconies and windows that will hover directly over us at 13+ stories, there will be added noise and added traffic to the st. Beyond the change of ambiance and character of our residential 1800s built cottage home lined street HOW is all this construction and all that comes with it going to happen?? All down our private Chancellor St?? There are 5 residences with indoor parking garages and 12 open air parking spaces on this St. How will this impact us? Will our real-estate value go down while our taxes keep rising...?! The back elevation would be all steel and glass, nothing historic about it.

We would like to oppose this build as it is currently presented.

Thank you all for your time and consideration

Jill/Wes

Residents/homeowners on Chancellor St

