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By

November 21st, 2026

Dear Members of the Board of Adjustment,

I am writing to formally express my strong opposition to the variance requests submitted by The Edwin B. Christy Revocable Trust and Brian Zanesky for the property located at 197 Richards Avenue.

As a neighboring property owner, I am deeply concerned about the impact this proposed development would have on our property, our privacy, and the established character of our neighborhood.

I understand that the applicant is proposing to renovate and convert the existing three-family structure into a single-family residence while also constructing a second, separate single-family home on the same lot. Although I appreciate the desire to improve the existing property, I strongly believe that adding an entirely separate residence to this particular parcel is inappropriate and represents an overdevelopment of the property.

There are several reasons why I believe this proposal should not be approved.

With regards to privacy, construction of a second residence would fundamentally change the relationship between our properties. A second home, including its windows, potential decks, and outdoor living spaces, would create additional opportunities for direct views into our backyard and private outdoor living areas. Our backyard is an important part of our home and where our family spends considerable time. We should not have to sacrifice the privacy and enjoyment of our property because of a development that attempts to place an additional residence on an already undersized lot.

The proposed development is inconsistent with the established character of the neighborhood and the property is being overdeveloped relative to its size.

The applicant is requesting permission to have two separate dwelling units despite the lot providing only 5,162 square feet per dwelling unit, when 7,500 square feet is required. This is not a minor dimensional adjustment. It represents a significant departure from the City's established density requirements.

The requested side-yard setback of only 3.5 feet, compared with the required 10 feet, further illustrates how tightly the applicant is attempting to fit this development onto the property.

The impact extends beyond the physical structures themselves andI question whether the requested variances are necessary to make reasonable use of this property.

Based on the application, the applicant is already proposing to renovate the existing structure and convert it into a single-family residence. This would provide a reasonable residential use of the property without the need to construct an additional home.
The request for a second residence appears to be an effort to maximize the development potential of the parcel rather than address a hardship that prevents the property from being reasonably used. I respectfully ask the Board to carefully consider whether the applicant has demonstrated the special circumstances and unnecessary hardship required to justify these substantial departures from the zoning ordinance.

We all have an interest in maintaining and improving our neighborhood. However, improvements to one property should not come at the expense of the privacy, enjoyment, and character of neighboring properties.

I respectfully ask the Board to consider the cumulative impact of all three requested variances, rather than viewing each one in isolation. Taken together, they would allow a level of development that the existing zoning requirements were designed to prevent.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Board of Adjustment deny the requested variances and not permit the construction of a second independent residence at 197 Richards Avenue.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and for allowing our concerns to be heard. I regret that I am unable to attend the meeting personally, but I appreciate having this letter read into the record and considered as part of the public hearing.

Respectfully,

Nathan and Lindsay Decker of 215 Richards Avenue

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November 15, 2026

To: The Board of Adjustment

Re: Opposition to Requested Variance submitted by The Edwin B. Christy Revocable Trust and Brian Zanesky for the property located at 197 Richards Ave.

Dear Members of the Board of Adjustment,

I am writing to express my opposition to the requested variance that would allow the construction of a second house on the property across the street from my home.

I have lived in this neighborhood for nearly 50 years and have deep appreciation for its character, its homes, and the residential atmosphere that has made this such a desirable place to live. I believe the proposed construction would significantly alter the character of our neighborhood and change the nature of the streetscape that residents have known and valued for many years.

I am particularly concerned that placing a second house on an already small and narrow lot would increase the density and occupancy of a property that was not originally intended to accommodate two residences.This would create additional demands on an already limited homesite and could have a negative impact on the surrounding properties.

I am also concerned about increased parking that would inevitably accompany another residence. Additional vehicles parked along the street, particularly in front of my driveway, would create an inconvenience and potentially affect access and visibility.

Furthermore, I have concerns about the potential impact on the neighboring property values. The introduction of a second house on a lot of this size could change the character and the appeal of the immediate area, with possible consequences for the value of the surrounding homes.

Finally, I believe it is important for the Board to consider the precedent that granting this variance could establish. Allowing a second residence on a lot that was not designed or intended for that purpose, could encourage similar requests in the future, gradually changing the character and density of our established residential neighborhoods.

I recognize that property owners have the right to make improvements to their properties, but these rights must also be balanced against the interests of the surrounding homeowners and the preservation of the neighborhood as a whole.

After nearly five decades of living here, I strongly feel the character, scale, and residential integrity of this neighborhood is important. I respectfully ask the Board to consider these concerns and deny the requested variance.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Vicki Anderson Decker
182 Richards Avenue
Portsmouth, NH