

From: [Holly Chatham](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: Re: Comments in advance of Thursday 1-21-21 BAR meeting
Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 10:21:11 AM

Lia,

I'd like to add further objections to what I've written below. I just found out they are roof decks that are to be added, which makes things far worse. We were not one of the lucky individuals in the neighborhood to have received written notice of this, so we didn't know details.

A roof deck takes away even more privacy than back decks would. This will be a deck on the 4th floor and another in the rear, plus exterior stairways, meaning no privacy for the surrounding neighbors, it would be visible from the street, as well as the fact that this landlord does not maintain his/her properties, as we know from the fire, so these would be an added danger.

This would be the only deck on the 4th floor in the neighborhood.

Drs. Holly Chatham and Patrick Wood
(917) 570-3216

> On Jan 19, 2021, at 6:36 PM, Holly Chatham <holly.chatham@icloud.com> wrote:

>

> Ms. Niebauer,

>

> I am writing to express opposition to the proposal for alteration at 810 Prince St., proposal #2020-00617. We are the homeowners at 814 Prince, one house down. The alteration is for decks to be added to the back of 810 Prince, which is a rental property.

>

> First, these additions will be unsightly, and will affect our property values. We homeowners are the ones who take care of the area—we repair the holes in the alley, we all work on rat prevention together, we contact the electrical company when there are problems with the electric poles, we liaise with the arborists for maintenance of the trees in the alley, we pay hefty taxes which go to the good of the city, and we are respectful with noise levels and privacy. We take care of the back gardens and gates, while the rental properties in this square block are in disrepair. We do not need yet another unsightly deck that will go into disrepair by landlords who already did not take care of the property, resulting in an electrical fire.

>

> Noise and lack of privacy: there is a rental property next to our home and we struggle with both privacy and noise—we have had to ask the landlord numerous time to ask his tenant to turn down the loud music....that the tenant plays outside on this balcony. There is no need to have balconies on these houses—it will not increase property value, but will decrease it. Furthermore, rentals are very easy to rent on this square block, and the addition of a balcony will not increase the draw of people who want to live here. This is a family neighborhood and bringing a double balcony to the back of this rental property will mean that families who own their homes will be subjected to noise disturbances. We already have a problem with a tenant smoking marijuana behind 810 Prince, so would like to avoid that in the future. Adding “party balconies” to the back of this property will attract tenants who are looking for “that type” of property.

>

> Third, why is this necessary? It takes away from the neighborhood, rather than adding something positive to it.

>

> Respectfully submitted,

> Drs. Patrick Wood and Holly Chatham

> (917) 570-3216

>

From: [Alex Santantonio](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]9/21 BAR Hearing Comments for 810 Prince St
Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 11:12:35 PM

Dear Members of the BAR,

My wife and I have reviewed the proposed alterations concerning the historic property at 810 Prince Street and would like to submit our concerns that we, as a long-standing adjacent neighboring property, oppose the alterations on many accounts.

First, and most importantly, as you know, the home located at 810 Prince Street is historically significant to the fabric of Alexandria's historic district. The proposed alterations would not only be incongruous with the structure itself, the changes would likely jeopardize the integrity of the structure, especially if future maintenance is deferred, as has been the case in the past. The roof decks would significantly alter and possibly damage the roofline of the historically valuable flounder structure at the rear of the property, as well as the roofline of the main structure. There is no similar approved deck structure on the 3rd floor of any other buildings nearby.

Second, the proposed alterations seek to place the terraces/roof decks at a point where they would be visible from the sidewalk/alley along South Alfred street (historically named Pullmans Alley) and possibly from the South Columbus sidewalks. It is our opinion that these alterations would harm the integrity of the sightlines and character of the neighborhood and would set a precedent for other similar alterations that may impact the cohesion of the large and small surrounding row homes.

Third, the terrace structures would place socializing areas at a vantage that would ultimately be detrimental to numerous neighboring properties. The proposed terraces would allow social gatherings to peer into a dozen or more yard spaces of residences in the Prince, Alfred, Duke, and Columbus block. Many of these properties were not notified of the changes (as they aren't true adjoining properties) and are likely unaware of the proposed plans, unless made aware through other neighbors. We are concerned these additional socializing areas will result in significant noise pollution and compromised privacy for these numerous neighboring homes, especially if the structure remains a multi-unit rental.

Fourth, there is no significant recent precedent for roof deck structures in the neighborhood, beyond one on the neighboring property, which has been in place for decades. (As stated in the docket, no permits or BAR approval was found in regards to this structure.)

Finally, as with any significant undertaking that requires establishing additional load-bearing platforms on historic structures that were never meant to support such elements, especially those with common walls, we have a concern regarding the impact the construction would

have on the property itself, the adjacent properties, and on the use of the narrow private alley space for construction equipment and material queueing.

It is for the above stated rationale that we, as a neighboring property, oppose the proposal to add the two roof decks to 810 Prince St., and hope the BAR will take these factors into consideration when reviewing the request for alterations.

Thank You,
Alexander Santantonio

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From: [JOHN HARMAN](#)
To: [Lia Niebauer](#)
Subject: BAR Hearing re: 810 Prince St
Date: Thursday, January 21, 2021 5:24:31 PM

By way of introduction, I am John Harman, owner at 812 Prince St, a historic home adjacent to 810 Prince St.

I would like to join my neighbors in expressing my concern on negative impacts on surrounding homes from a privacy and noise standpoint of the two decks proposed, as well as any possible visual intrusion especially from the fourth floor level, where there currently exist only decks for supporting utilities (air conditioning).

In particular, I am concerned about the structural and safety impact that of the added weight of heavy composite decks and exterior stairways, as well as a number of people using them, on the two hundred year-old party walls between 810 Prince St and historic homes at 808 and 812 Prince St. In my own case at 812 Prince, I share some 70 feet of common party wall with 810 Prince St. And have over time shared smoke intrusion as well as water intrusion through this party wall on several levels. You will note that I have a somewhat smaller and lighter deck on my building, which has been there for some forty years, and I have personal experience with the extensive amount of maintenance necessary to keep it structurally sound and safe.

Thank you,

John Harman

Lia Niebauer

From: Michael Vergason <mvergason@vergason.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 6:39 PM
To: Lia Niebauer
Cc: Victoria
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR #2020-00617&2020-00619

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi Lia,

My wife, Victoria and I plan on attending [this evening](#)'s virtual hearing. We reside at [808 Prince Street](#). In case we have difficulties attending the hearing, we do have some significant concerns regarding the application for roof structures as well as the proposed basement at 810 Prince.

We are concerned that the excavation associated with creating a new basement and entrance to the basement on the south side of [810 Prince St.](#) may undermine the stability of our common wall. In addition, the BAR should be aware that the current weight of the metal staircase that is attached to our historic 1795 and 1808 structures is continuing to cause damage to the stability of that wall (as evidenced by cracks opening on that wall). We are constantly having to repair a major crack on the west side of our property where the staircase attaches to our house. Anything that might add weight to that existing staircase could cause further damage to our wall (we cannot tell how the new staircases are structured).

Finally, having lived in our house for over two decades, we are very aware that the owners of [810 Prince St.](#) do not maintain their property well.

We plan on sharing these comments with you shortly.

Thanks,

Michael Vergason and Victoria Vergason

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