

Paul Peou and Hua Wang  
110 Gibbon Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
917-721-3644  
huacwang@gmail.com  
1/5/2021

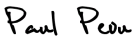

Dear City of Alexandria,

We are relatively new neighbors in Old Town Alexandria and we are writing to express our support for the efforts of Carrie and Ben Capuco in renovating their fourth-floor. Carrie and Ben have been wonderful neighbors, and we trust their judgement and work in the design and planning along with the wisdom of the board and community in the review and approval.

We believe Carrie and Ben have thoughtfully and diligently worked with their architect to limit the impact of the renovation. And we have seen similar designs elsewhere so believe this design appears to be well adapted.

We look forward to seeing the completed work.

Sincerely,

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Paul Peou and Hua Wang	

## Lia Niebauer

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**From:** Deborah Seymour <seymour.debbie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 1, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** Lia Niebauer; Ben Capuco; Carrie Capuco; Jake McInerney  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Fwd: Support for Petition for Variance at 108 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Hello Lia -

We are writing in continued support (please see prior letters of support, below) of Ben and Carrie Capuco's project which is pending with the ARB. We know they have modified the design to address comments received during the variance process, and have no objections.

Thank you,  
Jake McInerney and Debbie Seymour  
106 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Deborah Seymour <[seymour.debbie@gmail.com](mailto:seymour.debbie@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 10, 2021 at 8:28 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Support for Petition for Variance at 108 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
**To:** <[lia.niebauer@alexandriava.gov](mailto:lia.niebauer@alexandriava.gov)>, Ben Capuco <[bcapuco@comcast.net](mailto:bcapuco@comcast.net)>, Carrie Capuco <[ccapuco@comcast.net](mailto:ccapuco@comcast.net)>, Jake McInerney <[jake.e.mcinerney@gmail.com](mailto:jake.e.mcinerney@gmail.com)>

Hello Lia -

We are writing in continued support of Ben and Carrie Capuco's project which is pending with the ARB. We've seen their modified design which addresses comments received during the variance process, and have no objections.

Their applications are:

- BAR #2020-00533 OHAD Request for partial demolition/ encapsulation at 108 Gibbon Street
- BAR #2020-00532 OHAD Request for alterations

Thank you,  
Debbie Seymour and Jake McInerney  
106 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Deborah Seymour <[seymour.debbie@gmail.com](mailto:seymour.debbie@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Jan 4, 2021 at 6:27 PM  
**Subject:** Support for Petition for Variance at 108 Gibbon Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
**To:** <[kaliah.lewis@alexandriava.gov](mailto:kaliah.lewis@alexandriava.gov)>, <[mary.christesen@alexandriava.gov](mailto:mary.christesen@alexandriava.gov)>, <[margaret.cooper@alexandriava.gov](mailto:margaret.cooper@alexandriava.gov)>  
**Cc:** Jake McInerney <[jake.e.mcinerney@gmail.com](mailto:jake.e.mcinerney@gmail.com)>, Ben Capuco <[bcapuco@comcast.net](mailto:bcapuco@comcast.net)>, Carrie Capuco <[ccapuco@comcast.net](mailto:ccapuco@comcast.net)>

Hello Kaliah, Mary and Margaret -

We own the home at 106 Gibbon Street and are neighbors of Ben and Carrie Capuco who live at 108 Gibbon Street.

Ben and Carrie let us know that they are seeking a variance to add a set of dormers on their 4th floor and to finish their 4th floor attic.

We have seen the design and find it to be attractive and non-obtrusive. The design of the addition is in line with the character of the neighborhood. We believe this addition and improvement will add value to our property, just as the beautiful native garden has which Ben and Carrie installed in the front area of our homes.

We are writing in support of Ben and Carrie's project.

Respectfully,

Debbie Seymour and Jake McInerney

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Debbie Seymour  
cell: 703.786.8669

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cell: 703.786.8669

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cell: 703.786.8669

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Capuco Family  
108 Gibbon Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

July 6, 2021

Board of Architectural Review  
City of Alexandria, Virginia  
Via Electronic Mail to: [lia.niebauer@alexandriava.gov](mailto:lia.niebauer@alexandriava.gov)

Reference: BAR #2020-00532 OHAD Request for alterations at 108 Gibbon Street

Members of the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review,

We are grateful for the opportunity to address you in person on July 7, 2021. We hope in person meetings will return a community element to the applications processes. We are introducing ourselves to you, because we have not had that opportunity yet.

We are Ben and Carrie Capuco. We have owned, lived in, and renovated homes in Annapolis Maryland and Hagerstown Maryland for over 30 years. We moved to Alexandria in 2016 to eliminate our commutes and were delighted to find a home that was just a short walk and bike ride from our offices. We are a family of 4, in a townhome with 3 bedrooms. Although other homes with finished 4<sup>th</sup> floors were available on the market, we purchased the home with an unfinished attic because we enjoy renovation projects that update and enhance the beauty of a home.

We met with Steve Kulinski, our architect, and city staff early in 2020 with the idea of finishing the attic using a dormer to allow adequate headspace to accommodate HVAC and make the area usable. The unique size and orientation of our home in the Pomander Walk sub-development posed several challenges for our project, but we were willing to work with all of the stakeholders to move the effort forward. Unfortunately, we never foresaw the pandemic with requirements for working from home. What began as an interesting home improvement project quickly became an urgent necessity for home office space. An urgency we are still struggling with today.

In March of 2020, we found ourselves working from home – 4 of us trying to find quiet space and privacy for endless zoom calls and virtual meetings. Suddenly the need for a home office was glaringly obvious. We tucked one table in one daughter's bedroom creating a space to share and "reserve in advance" for online meetings and classes. We tucked another at the foot of our bed in the master bedroom and used it similarly.

In June of 2020, Carrie's employer forfeited its sub-lease at 1199 North Fairfax and transitioned to a full "work at home" operation. Now the need for a home office became a permanent condition, and the urgency increased.

We continued working from home for several more months and then received the frustrating news that Ben's office was also reducing its leased space and converting him to "work at home" status. The table at the foot of our bed in the master bedroom became Ben's permanent office.

Since beginning this permitting process sixteen months ago, we have done our best to work with and respond to all stakeholders. We have received encouragement from many neighbors both on the Gibbon Street side and Pomander Walk.

We have modified our design four times in response to comments. We bring before you another modified design that is smaller in size and has less window area than previously proposed. In response to comments, it is a significantly subdued dormer from the design presented when the dormer was approved for our variance.

We have balanced the dormer on the side elevation by pulling it back from Gibbon Street as identified by this Board and in response to concerns raised by board member Adams. Gibbon street has a lively roofscape of dormers and chimneys, the dormer on our setback home will be almost imperceptible from that street. It will fade in the view and only add to the interest of the surrounding roofscapes in this part of town.

Eliminating the Juliette balcony has simplified the design and made the dormer more innocuous. The proposed double hung windows now match the existing windows on the house. The design we bring before you tonight does not affect anything below the gutter line. Previously we were interrupting the gutter line. The view up the alley from Union Street is heavily blocked by foliage. Looking up the alley is not the attraction that gazing over the river is for any passerby. The end gables of Gibbon Street and Pomander Walk are the prominent eye catchers when facing away from the river.

We hope that you will find this design acceptable and allow us to move on with the renovation to accommodate our basic needs.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Carrie and Ben Capuco*