

Hitchen, Lea

From: Greg De Groot <gdegrootri@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 9, 2021 5:07 PM
To: erinkate@aol.com; gm@prospectstudio.net; karl.megules7@gmail.com; matthew@mcgeorgeai.com; Neal McNamara; Andrew Barkley
Cc: Hitchen, Lea
Subject: James Street/Vespia

Commissioners,

Early in the process one of the members of the HDC encouraged the Vespias to "talk to the neighbors." Katie Vespia sent us a number of plans and renderings on September 11, 2021. Please see our response below.

Thank you.

Greg & Judy de Groot
38 West Street
East Greenwich

Begin forwarded message:

From: Greg gmail <gdegrootri@gmail.com>
Subject: James Street
Date: September 16, 2021 at 8:16:13 PM EDT
To: katie fayle <kfayle1@gmail.com>

Katie,

Thank you again for reaching out to us regarding the James Street project. We believe that constructing appropriately designed houses on in-fill lots in the historic district is important to creating a pleasing streetscape and maintaining the sense of place that we love about this neighborhood.

Our concerns with the proposals we have seen thus far fall into two primary categories; 1) the scale or massing of the structure and 2) the aesthetic of the design.

The Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia published "Sense of Place: Design Guidelines for New Construction in Historic Districts," which while being a bit of heavy reading at times contains a passage which cuts to the heart of the issues here:

Compatibility requires more than similarities of massing or abstract references; it must be a primary objective of the designer and an integral part of the design process for projects in historic settings. What makes buildings from different eras and styles compatible is that they share the same underlying principles of space, structure, elements, composition, proportion, ornament, and character.

http://www.preservationalliance.com/publications/SenseofPlace_final.pdf Page 9

It is our view that the current proposal for the James Street project fails to live up to this standard.

While we recognize the challenges posed by the lot, the scale of the proposed house is incompatible with the streetscape of the immediate Eldredge/James context. We believe that new construction should be compatible with and harmonize with the size, scale, color, material, rhythm and character of the district.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts with you and hope you can settle on a design which meets your needs while honoring the values that the residents of the Historic District are committed to preserving.

Greg & Judy de Groot