

Item #1B:

Report Of PCZBA Meeting - June 2, 2015

Zoning Code Amendment(s) Re: FAR & Impervious Coverage

Residents Comments

David Lothspeich

To: Angie Underwood
Subject: RE: Zoning Board Public Hearing June 2, 2015

From: chiqui32@comcast.net

Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2015 5:25 PM

To: fred@fredphillips.com ; michaeldvorak@comcast.net ; kazmerj@hotmail.com ; isoparr@aol.com ; BPeltin@rpitrust.com ; szr5182@aol.com

Cc: angie@aunder.com

Subject: Zoning Board Public Hearing June 2, 2015

TO: LG Village Zoning Board*

RE: "Consideration of amendments to the Village Building Code Title 5 Zoning Regulations, including without limitation modifications to the maximum floor area, impervious surface coverage limitations, floor area ratio and other regulations", as stated on the Agenda of the Zoning Board for June 2, 2015.

Dear Zoning Board Officials;

With all the respect you all deserved but it is disappointing to read that our Village Officials are contemplating modifications to the residential maximum floor space. Needless to add, I strongly oppose the idea.

This Village predecessors already established that: "In no case shall a principal building exceed 13,000 square feet" and that "No variance or other relief shall be granted from this note 6, except as permitted in an approved planned unit development pursuant to section 5-11-18 of this title".

The Village Comprehensive Plan also reads that: "...a community may have occasional buildings that are out-of-scale with the remainder of the community, but they should be buildings of importance to the general public, so that their difference has a symbolic meaning (1991)".

If other communities (like Barrington comes to mind) allow mammoth size residential buildings, is not a reason for LG Village to imitate them.

You, your colleagues, let alone any of us, can predict how a mammoth size home building structures could impact the resale value of adjoining homes in a negative way.

Mammoth size homes are on the minority and are a thing of the past because the generation of today is not interested on high maintenance homes, high property taxes and poor resale value.

Today and in years to come, a resident adjoining a lot that has the potential for accommodating a mammoth size house may have to content with the decisions you and your colleagues are contemplating today.

If a bank were ever to foreclose on that kind of property, it won't be you but the adjoining neighbors that will have to content with the pink Elephant in the prairie.

This kind of building construction has a one time only monetary gain for the Village coffers because of the high cost of the building permits, but that is where the benefits ends. While the negative impact that it could have on neighbors could last for generations.

Please, make sure that the final decision you and your colleagues reach on this subject leaves behind a sound legacy for the benefit of this community as a whole.

Make sure your final decision does not affect the peace of mind and the home investment of some of the residents that reside next door to a lot with the potential to build a mammoth house.

Unless there is a strong justifiable reason to increase the size of residential buildings, the established residential building code should remain as it stands today.

Thank you for taking into consideration my thoughts and let us not forget those residents that will be directly affected.

Respectfully Submitted;
Chiqui & Brian H Johnson # 5244 RFD

* Charles Cohn No email address listed

David Lothspeich

From: Lisa Schultz [l2schultz@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, June 01, 2015 10:12 AM
To: David Lothspeich
Subject: PLEASE FORWARD: June 2 PCZBA Public Hearing regarding amendment of Title 5 of the Zoning Code

Dave,

Could you please forward to all PCZBA members, to the Trustees and to President Underwood today if possible?

Thank you,

Lisa Schultz

Dear PCZBA Commissioners, Village Trustees, President Underwood,

As a LG resident and past Plan Commissioner, I have serious concerns about the recent push to increase the maximum square footage for homes in Long Grove from 13,000 square feet. I am hoping you will not support this initiative.

As a Plan Commissioner at the time this Zoning Code was adopted, I can tell you that the Commission at the time (like now, full of really hard-working, bright people) deliberated very carefully for many meetings over maximum floor area. We carefully discussed every aspect of regulating home size, including visiting homes of different sizes, looking at national sales records and doing research on other Villages who allow the building of enormous residential structures. We considered the future of the Village in detail, the Comprehensive Plan as our rudder and fairness to all residents. This code was not derived in a carefree manner and should not be tossed aside at the whim of a particular investor and/or contractor. Zoning Code 5-3-12 was written for just this sort of situation and specifically dictates there will be no variances granted from it outside a PUD. Please read my concerns based on my history with helping to create section 5-3-12 of the Zoning Code in regard to maximum gross floor area.

I see four serious concerns for Long Grove..

1). What will become of a 20,000 sq ft home - or even a 14,000 sq ft home when the original owner needs to sell? History has it that behemoth homes are difficult to sell and often sit empty for lengthy periods looking for buyers - and then are unfortunately viewed by investors to be considered for 'other' uses. Most of us have watched the saga of the Michael Jordan home as the price continues to drop and no one wants it. And, of course once a property sits empty for an extended period, inevitably offers will come asking for zoning relief and to turn it into something else. Our community and you, our PCZBA will then be placed in the unfortunate position of having to consider requests for rezoning a residential area with no other viable option in site for the huge building and inevitably making one party (owner) or another (residents) come out a loser. We need to ask what value would such a home bring to Long Grove or LG residents if any, and at what cost? Why create problems for the future?

2) How would larger structures impact quality of life and property values for current residents? Considering the few undeveloped properties remaining in LG that could, if given permission, support a 20,000 sq ft building, we must then consider the neighborhoods they might affect. Trustee Marshall suggested properties as small as 10 acres should be considered at a VB meeting recently! So, even considering remaining open spaces of 10 acres or more, one sees that they are not in the middle of built out developments, but more typically near the country-like areas of Long Grove where residents intentionally chose to be amid often heavily forested land and often smaller, more unique homes. These are areas where I would suspect residents would *least* like to be near a 20,000 (or even 13,000) sq foot neighbor. Is it fair to ask residents to play by changing rules? I definitely would not have purchased my home if there were a 20,000 sq ft home on the 10 acre parcel on Old McHenry just south of Country Lane or if I knew Code might allow it to be developed in the manner being discussed. That parcel, as an example, is surrounded by homes of reasonable size and unique character. If a huge structure were allowed on that site it would surely devalue all of the surrounding (interesting, creative, historic) homes nearby, changing the very pastoral nature of the area.

What else could Long Grove and residents lose? Trustee Marshall also mentioned combining lots. If parcels were combined to accommodate such behemoth structures, what would become of whole neighborhoods? Mardan could surely be at risk for this. What other Long Grove neighborhoods? Considering Mardan as an example of any Long Grove neighborhood, one could foresee lovely small homes in the shadow of a behemoth, destroying property value neighborhood wide, making beautiful homes "tear downs". Worse, what about the homes lost? I was treated to viewing some architectural treasures as I walked Mardan during the election. I didn't know so many small and hugely creative, interesting homes exist there - so many built into the nature around them - just lovely. Does Long Grove really want to trade one or more of these beauties for square footage and monoliths? Bigger is *not to be confused* with better. ...and isn't 13,000 square feet already "bigger"?

Precedent. It is my understanding that there is one home in (or backing up to?) Royal Melbourne that already has a variance from (or is in violation of) the square footage code. If this is the case, let's not let it happen again; not let it be used as "precedent setting" or a reason not to end this now. This is a good opportunity to support the Zoning Code that indicates *no variance* unless a PUD is involved. If there is already one home outside code - we need to stop it there. There are many communities where these homes are somewhat standard, but they don't belong in "pastoral" Long Grove per our Code and Comprehensive plan - it would surely be a step down, not up for our community.

3). Can Long Grove really afford any suggestion of conflict of interest? With residents just having spoken loudly about their concerns about any action of the Village Board that even hints at conflict of interest, having a Trustee who is a contractor that does considerable work in our Village involved in this issue is troublesome. This issue, as every Village issue, should be raised when necessary on solid need and addressed by those who have no potential for personal gain. To avoid any suggestion of impropriety, the Trustee in question should immediately recuse himself from any further conversation and from voting on this topic.

4). The Comprehensive Plan calls for the nature of Long Grove to be "pastoral" and for large structures to be to the benefit of the entire community. Is there anything about a massive structure on the order of 20,000 sq ft that could be considered "pastoral"? When in doubt as leaders, we should always return to the Comprehensive Plan. The last time a Board wanted to ignore the Comprehensive Plan by supporting a behemoth structure across from Kildeer School, residents came out in unprecedented numbers against the idea. *Residents believe in the Plan and support it.* Why have a Comprehensive Plan if we are to 'reconsider' it at every request by a developer/contractor/investor? It is a specious argument to suggest that the generous limit of 13,000 sq ft limiting anyone from enjoying their land (or even from having a huge structure) in our "pastoral"

Village. We are not South Barrington by choice and our Plan and Code are meant to prevent it. Let's do all we can to keep it that way.

This serious planning issue should not be affected by developer/investor interest for variance. That is a never-ending story. Zoning Code 5-3-12 is in place to prevent that and specifically says "(c)No variance or other relief shall be granted from this note 6 except as permitted in an approved planned unit development pursuant to section 5-11-18 of this title." (5-11-18 is regarding PUDs) Long Grove residents should not have to worry that code will be changed from that under which they bought their properties and in which they placed their trust.

Trustee Marshall indicated in a recent VB meeting that we want to attract these "valuable people" (who want big homes) away from Barrington Hills. When I asked for clarification, he indicated they have money and "know people". I must strongly disagree with the entire premise. I think most of us believe that Long Grove has always been fortunate to attract "valuable" intellectuals, artists, musicians, philanthropists, creators, volunteers, masons, naturalists, business owners (...the list goes on and on). Many of those valuable people live in gorgeous, interesting, reasonably (albeit large!) sized country estates with lots of natural land surrounding them (think Tony Dean and Barbara Turner properties) - the essence of Long Grove. I must also disagree that any substantial number of Long Grove residents *want* to 'attract' someone who just can't possibly live in the confines of 13,000 square feet. That we need to change our zoning to attract "valuable" people is yet another specious argument - Long Grove is chock full of "valuable" people. We lose nothing by standing by our well-thought out Zoning Code.

In closing, one needs to ask why this is being pushed (one has to wonder whose interests are being represented here)? Why would the in-depth work of a past Plan Commission to address this issue be overturned? Nothing has changed with regard to this issue. There is no community outcry for 20,000 square foot buildings in residential neighborhoods. Current residents' property values should not be sacrificed for the wishes of a few in order to attract an element that is beneficial for builders, but not for most residents. At every turn, I hope you will work to keep what is left of Long Grove's unique and beautiful natural setting protected from becoming yet another sea of bigger and bigger homes, at the expense of the *pastoral* nature of our Village. Please consult the Plan and recommend denial of this request.

Thank you for your service to Long Grove.

Respectfully,

Lisa L. Schultz
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