

January 25, 2016

Dear Chairman Phillips and Commissioners,

As we may have a conflict with attending your meeting on February 2, 2016, we are writing to you now regarding both New Business items on your agenda for that evening.

The issues on which we wish to present testimony are the requests to allow variances so that the square footage of a residence may exceed 13,000 sq ft on a property greater than 8 acres, and to allow one resident a variation to increase the square footage of a home already at the limit. We are against this idea for the following reasons:

1) You all considered this issue in May/June, 2015. You are aware that you and the Board said "no". Prior to that when I (Lisa) was on the Commission with many of you, we considered this same issue for maybe the 6th time. I recall that based on our consideration of the Comprehensive Plan calling for a "pastoral nature", the danger of what becomes of such properties when the owner moves on (unsalable/commercial use), and based on being responsible about increases in impervious surface in our Village which is largely wetland, we voted no - as did our Village Board. **That 6th time, we SPECIFICALLY discussed and agreed to use language purposefully disallowing any variation to this ordinance to avoid precedent setting and "getting around" this law. Opening this door will change the nature of our Village in way that doesn't support The Plan or what residents just told us via survey.** Our Comprehensive Plan pretty much spells out that we do not want to be South Barrington, and our residents just confirmed it.

2) Setting an "8 acre" parcel limit is putting a burden on specific neighborhoods - not the entire Village. We are selecting certain residents for being affected by this. How many parcels are left and whom will they affect when these monster structures are built? And what is magic about 8 acres?

Our neighborhood has such a 10 acre parcel backing up to it and a home of that size would be completely out of character there and not appreciated by the neighbors. We all bought in the woods and in a neighborhood of all unique, not huge, homes because we like that look. There were rules to protect us from a huge monolith going there and we knew it. Whether you find such a structure attractive or not, please don't impose that on others - the Comprehensive Plan says "pastoral" not "big box".

We are very familiar with the topography and hydrology there and even with water management, we can be sure that such an impervious surface increase would further exacerbate substantial water flow issues and that homes would likely be damaged. The water balance is already extremely precarious and difficult to manage in any water event. Our water issues have been discussed for years and years and we know with certainty that they cannot be easily mitigated via engineering. We ask that you please go out and look at each parcel left in the Village and determine whether such a structure on each would be in keeping with each neighborhood that would be subjected to both the structure and the impervious surface increases (if you aren't comfortable already with saying "no").

3) Hardship. The Board just approved a variance for a family in Towner subdivision based on moving an aging parent into their home. That seems a reasonable hardship. Is it truly a hardship not to have an 8 car garage - especially given that one could build a free standing carriage house that would possibly be more attractive and save us all from the "monolithic" look? Our home has a 6 car garage that was accomplished by taking from living space and our total floor area is less than half the 13,000 square foot area - but we manage. It would be sad to me that we would be the Village that is in the news having called the need for a home larger than 13,000 square feet and an 8 car garage a "hardship".

4) Lastly, please review the survey results. This is not being requested by residents. It is being asked for by a single resident without hardship and a single Trustee, who, without more said, should recuse himself from this discussion. Another Trustee, immediately upon the Board's vote to approve this reasonable ordinance capping homes at 13000 sq ft, looked up and said to a particular audience member something to the effect of "don't worry, we can get around this"... out loud! And here we are again. Long Grove just voted in three Trustees by a landslide because they promised transparency and representation of the *majority of residents*. This is not in the best interest of the majority or Long Grove.

Please consider what you call "hardship". Please consider our home and the others that will be devalued by allowing a variance on just a few properties in our Village. It's just not the right thing to do and outrageously unnecessary. All of our LG neighbors bought their homes knowing the rules - please don't change them mid-game.

Thanks for your consideration and for representing the majority,

David Phillips and Lisa Schultz
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