

26 June 2020

Members of the Board:

My name is Debra Richards Harlan and I am a resident of Bonnycastle. I've attended and presented at numerous prior meetings relative to the subject site, and would like to submit comments concerning the requests under consideration today.

While the newest proposal is made under current R-7 zoning, the bulk of this building on its small site doubles the footprint of the existing structure and will impose some hardship on its abutting neighbors in terms of proximity and lack of privacy.

There's an utter lack of landscaping, or effective "screenery" that would help mitigate these requests. Zero private yard and all impervious paving is not a happy combination. Doubling the impervious surfaces without relief is a poor precedent to set in heat island city.

While the three mature trees along the park right of way remain and plan notes state said trees will be protected during construction, I have little confidence that care will be taken, and I don't think there is sufficient reason to approve pave out of the entire private yard and a good part of the front without serious mitigation of new trees planted, green screens conceived to soften the impact of this structure on the side yards, and other planting measures that restore screening (trees) already removed by the applicant. Unkempt evergreens comprise the existing landscaping. There is no lighting plan to ensure the bulk of the building in these close quarters doesn't adversely impact neighbors.

Ironic, then, the odd artist rendering of the existing ROW tree drawn so large it obscures the rather undistinguished infill building from view. Are we to assume the building will go virtually unnoticed due to heavy landscaping?! One tree does not a forest make, and one skillfully rendered drawing is not a landscape plan.

Consider Mr Cogan's plantings at Park Grande-for all its other failings as compatible infill - the site boasts a lush tree canopy along sides and rear and significant screening on all sides. Paving to the rear is minimal.







The two awkward back out parking spaces at the alley should be eliminated in favor of green. Paving should be mostly pervious. An enforceable landscape plan that addresses tree canopy and neighbor screening should be part of any approved development proposal - especially one that seeks several sidesteps from the code. Trees of significant caliper should be planted and maintained in the front yard and other locations on site . I emphasize “maintained” as the applicant has previously cut down all the perfectly healthy trees on site that once provided mature screening.

As far as the sidewalk waiver is concerned, I understand the request in theory but it would be a great use of the proposed excess paving to connect, working with the adjacent condo association, the stub of the existing walk so access to Bonnycastle is established. The sidewalk from the overscaled “courtyard” to Cherokee Road seems gratuitous otherwise. This could likely be accomplished without undue stress upon the existing mature oaks in the ROW, and is in keeping with the BHA neighborhood plan.

Finally, I still want to know how the fire department will service this building from a substandard width alley; no notes about widening this unnamed alley are shown on the updated site plan, not received until today.....

and access to the development was a serious concern of fire professionals during previous rezoning hearings.

The height variance is acceptable providing all other issues regarding paving and landscaping and lighting outlined in these comments are adequately addressed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Debra Richards Harlan