CITY OF BLOOMINGTON



June 22, 2017 @ 5:30 p.m. COUNCIL CHAMBERS #115 CITY HALL

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS June 22, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

*Council Chambers - Room #115

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ROLL CALL

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED: 5/18/17

REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS: None at this time

PETITIONS:

- UV-04-17 Lewis Development Company 200 S. Washington St., 114 E. 4th St., 121 E. 3rd St. Request: Use variance to allow the use "drive through" in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zoning district. Case Manager: Jackie Scanlan
- V-09-17 Alisan Donway
 1302 E. 2nd St.
 Request: Variance from maximum fence height standards.
 <u>Case Manager: Amelia Lewis</u>

The Board will need to vote in order to re-hear this petition per BZA rules of procedure, Article VII, Section F

 V-12-17 Tim Kennedy 1000 S. Lincoln St. Request: Variance from maximum fence height standards. <u>Case Manager: Amelia Lewis</u>

BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALSCASTAFF REPORTDALocation: 200 S. Washington Street / 114 E. 4th Street

CASE #: UV-04-17 DATE: June 21, 2017

PETITIONER: Lewis Development Company 601 N. College Avenue Suite 1A, Bloomington

CONSULTANT: Studio 3 Design 8604 Allisonville Road, Indianapolis

REQUEST: The petitioner is requesting a Use Variance to allow a drive-through bank in the CD zoning district.

REPORT: The property is located on the southwest corner of 4th and Washington Streets. The bank site is .40 acres of a larger .80 acre holding that stretches south to 3rd Street. The property is zoned Commercial Downtown (CD) and it within the Downtown Core Overlay (DCO) area. The property currently contains a Fifth Third Bank branch with a drive-through and surface parking lot. Surrounding land uses include an office building with parking lot and Firestone Tire to the west, parking lots to the north and east, and a surface parking lot to the south that is part of the larger holding.

The petitioner proposes to retain the existing bank building and drive-through and construct a pair of additions that would redevelop the site and building as a 4-story mixed use building. The use, 'drive-through' is not permitted in the CD zoning district. The petitioner has designed the additions to be able to retain the existing bank building, while creating a space inside of the new addition to the building for the existing drive-through. The drive-through would be accessed through the same street cut as an internal parking area and all traffic exiting the drive-through would exit into the east-west alley that bisects the block.

The Plan Commission voted at their April 17, 2017 meeting to forward a positive recommendation to the BZA on the use variance request. They also conditionally approved the site plan for development of the lot, subject to variance approval.

20.09.140 CRITERIA AND FINDINGS FOR USE VARIANCE:

Findings of Fact: Pursuant to IC 36-7-4-918.4. the Board of Zoning Appeals or the Hearing Officer may grant a variance from use if, after a public hearing, it makes findings of fact in writing, that:

(1) The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community; and

Proposed Finding: No injury is found with the use variance request for an internal drive-through use. The existing drive-through location will remain, but will be internal to the structure. The negative impacts associated with a typical drive-through, such as

its effects on pedestrian walkability and its negative aesthetic appeal, are significantly reduced by the placement of the drive-through within the building.

(2) The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner; and

Proposed Finding: No adverse impacts are found on the use and value of the adjacent area associated with the proposed use variance. A typical external drive-through exists on the site currently. The location of the drive-through internal to the building will mitigate the negative impacts associated with a typical drive-through, and improve the aesthetic impact that the drive-through currently has while allowing an existing bank business to continue current levels of operation.

(3) The need for the variance arises from some condition peculiar to the property involved; and

Proposed Finding: Peculiar condition is found in that the existing building contains a drive-through in the downtown and said building will remain on the lot as part of an approved redevelopment site plan. The existing bank use will remain, including the drive-through area. The additions to the building will have the end result of the drive-through becoming enclosed by the new construction.

(4) The strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance will constitute an unnecessary hardship if applied to the property for which the variance is sought; and

Proposed Finding: Hardship is found in preventing an internal drive-through use for a proposed bank. The bank use exists on the lot and in the building currently, and functions with a drive-through. The strict application of the terms of the UDO would require that the existing drive-through area be removed, even though the bank business is not vacating the building. The drive-through, which is currently in a surface parking lot, will be entirely internal to the building and shielded from street-view. Because the bank use is not only a permitted use in the CD zoning district, but is a desirable downtown use, it is an unnecessary hardship to require the existing bank user to remove the drive-through use.

(5) The approval does not interfere substantially with the Growth Policies Plan.

Proposed Finding: The Growth Policies Plan states that new drive-through uses should be limited, if not forbidden, within the Downtown area. The policy has the effect of creating a more walkable and pedestrian-friendly downtown environment. The proposed internal drive-through will have limited impact on the walkability of the area. The Plan Commission found that the proposal will improve the aesthetic effect of the drive-through while allowing the business to continue to function in its current capacity. The curb cut used for the drive-through is also for internal parking, so no additional curb cuts are required for the use. The drive-through also empties onto an alley, so

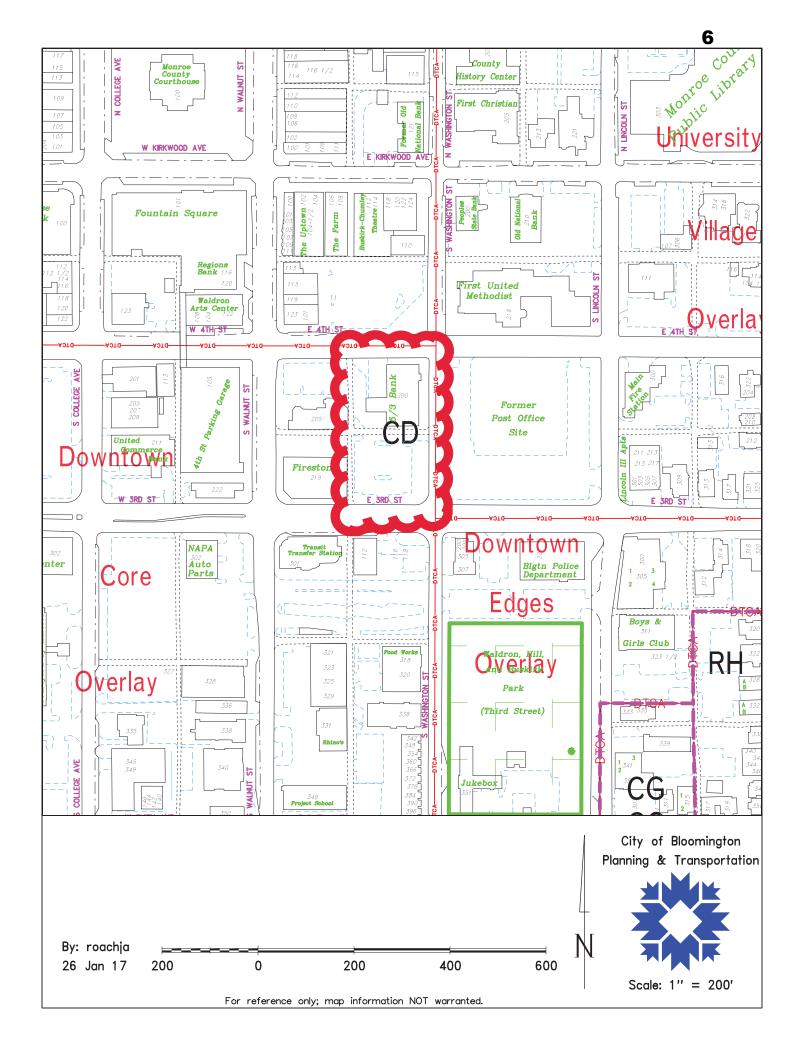
no exit curb cut is required for the use. The visual impacts of the existing drive-through will be ameliorated by the internal design. Therefore, the negative aesthetic effects of a typical restaurant or surface parking lot drive through use are addressed by the design.

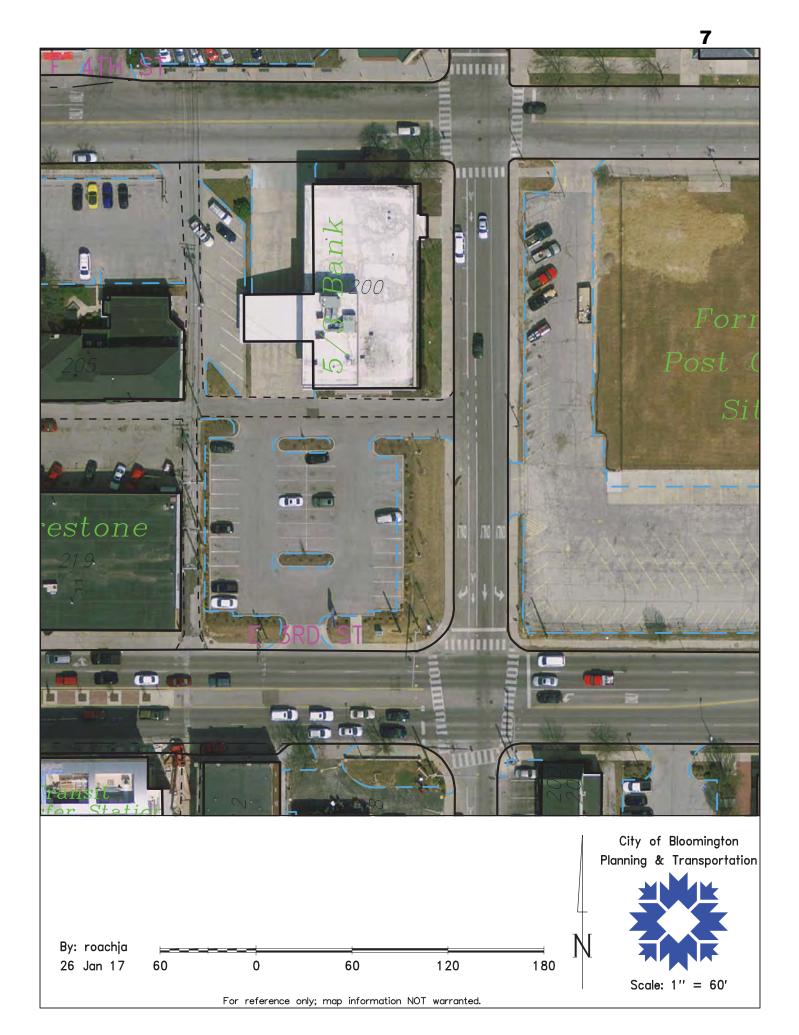
Furthermore, it is noted that usage of a bank drive-through is typically less than that of a less desirable drive-through fast food restaurant. The existing bank use and building will remain on the site.

The Growth Policies Plan states in its Compact Urban Form Policy that commercial development should be directed to existing commercially zoned land, and incentives should be provided to encourage the re-use and improvement of vacant or underdeveloped commercial sites. The Plan Commission found that this site plan redevelops an underutilized property and the drive-through use variance allows for retention of a downtown business amenity, an existing bank. The use of the drive-through is well designed to have minimal impacts on the surrounding area. Furthermore, bank uses are typically considered long-term uses.

RECOMMENDATION: The Department recommends that the Board of Zoning Appeals adopts the proposed findings and approves the use variance request with the following conditions:

- 1. Approved subject to all terms and conditions of Plan Commission site plan #SP-16-17.
- 2. The drive-through use shall only be a permitted use for a bank. A Zoning Commitment to this effect must be signed and recorded prior to the release of a building permit.





UV-04-17 Petitioner Statement (Use Variance Addressed at the End)



April 3rd, 2017

City of Bloomington Planning Department P.O. Box 100 Bloomington, IN 47402

Attn: Mrs. Jackie Scanlan

RE: Cityside

PETITIONERS STATEMENT

Dear Mrs. Scanlan,

Studio 3 Design is pleased to submit the attached apartment development, "Cityside", for Plan Commission consideration. The following document outlines the project scope and addresses comments received to date regarding the project. Please take time to review and contact us with any questions that you may have.

Project Location

The project is located along Washington St. between 3rd St. and 4th St. in the Downtown Core Overlay. The site currently houses the existing Fifth Third retail bank branch on the north half and a surface parking lot on the south half. A majority of the existing bank building will be preserved and added on to on the north property. The surrounding land use includes a commercial office building and auto care business to the West, the Bloomington Transit Center and apartment/office buildings to the South, a surface parking lot to the East, and surface parking and retail to the North.

Project scope:

The project consist of 3 buildings. Two on the north Lot and 1 on the south lot. Building designation for the purpose of this filing will be noted as follows:

Building 1	Located on the South lot with frontage on both 3 rd street and Washington Street. Basement level will be a parking garage for public and residents Street Level will be a Retail box and retail parking Levels 2, 3 and 4 will be apartments.
Building 2	 Existing bank building. Located at NE corner of the north lot, Building 2 fronts Washington St and 4th street. Level 1 will remain 5th third bank with zone on the south end for a work out facility. Level 2 will be converted to apartments A new level 3 will be constructed over the existing building.

Building 3 Located on the NW corner of the north lot.
 Building 3 fronts 4th street and will connect to the existing building at level 2.
 Street level will be a garage containing parking for bank customers and a drive thru with a teller line and an ATM line.
 Levels 2, 3 and 4 will be a row of 6 three story townhomes and 2 studio units all accessed from level 2.

Non-Residential space

Non-residential space is required in the Downtown Core Overlay district for 50% of the ground floor footprint. At the North parcel, Building 2 (existing bank building) will re-use the first floor of the building for 5th third bank and a work-out facility. Building 3 (connected to building 2) contains the Bank parking and bank drive thru. Building 1 will contain a commercial space at the corner and parking for the commercial tenant.

North parcel: Buildings 2 and 3 – Total footprint: 15,794 gsf. Dedicated Non-residential 10,319 gsf, (65%) includes area dedicated to bank drive thru function.

South Parcel: Building 1 Total footprint: 14,014 gsf. Dedicated Non-residential 7,022 gsf (50%).

Apartment Types (Total Project)	<u>Count</u>	Beds
Studio 1 Bedroom Flat 2 Bedroom Flat 3 Bedroom Flat 4 Bedroom Flat 4 Bedroom Townhouse 5 Bedroom Flat	38 Units 3 Units 1 Unit 8 Units 6 Units 6 Units 2 Units	38 Beds 3 Beds 2 Beds 24 Beds 24 Beds 24 Beds 10 Beds
	64 Units	125 Beds

Property density:

North Property

Site: 132' x 132' = **.4 acres** 60 apartments/ acre = **24 DUE's allowed**

Studio units	.20 DUE x 2=	.40 DUE's		
2 Bedroom Flat	.66 DUE x 1 =	.66 DUE's		
3 Bedroom Flat	1.0 DUE x 4 =	4.00 DUE's		
4 Bedroom Flat	1.5 DUE x 3 =	4.50 DUE's		
4 Bedroom Townhouse	1.5 DUE x 6 =	9,00 DUE's		
18.56 DUEs provided (24 DUE's allowed)				

South Property Site: 132' x 132' = **.4 acres** 60 apartments/ acre = **24 DUE's allowed**

Studio	.20 DUE x 36 = 7.20 DUEs
1 Bedroom Flat	.25 DUE x 3 = .75 DUEs
3 Bedroom Flat	1.0 DUE x 4 = 4.00 DUEs
4 Bedroom Flat	1.5 DUE x 3 = 4.50 DUEs
5 Bedroom Flat	2.0 DUE x 2 = 4.00 DUEs
	20.45 DUEs provided (24 DUE's allowed)

Parking Counts

The Downtown Core Overlay does **not require any parking** for non-residential space or for residential developments south of 4th street. Parking will be provided in both buildings. In addition, street parking is being proposed on both 4th Street and Washington Street.

<u>North Building</u> Required parking for Retail/Residential Level 1 Garage	0 spaces 11 spaces
<u>South Building</u> Required parking for Retail/Residential Sub-grade Garage Level 1 Garage	0 spaces 28 spaces 19 spaces
Total Enclosed Spaces	58 spaces provided, zero spaces required
<u>Street parking</u> 4 th Street Washington Street	3 spaces (parallel parking) 7 spaces (parallel parking)
Total Street parking	10 spaces
Total Available parking	68 spaces

Build to Line

Per the requirements in the Downtown Core Overlay, the buildings area all built to the "build-to" line on all required street frontages.

Building Height

The Site has approximately 11' of fall from high to low between 4th street and 3rd street. The City UDO measures buildings from the lowest point on grade to highest point on building. As a result, the allowable building height of 50' is adversely impacted by the change in grade on the site. Additionally, the owner's choice to reuse the existing bank building is impacted by the existing high floor to floor volume of the bank building. As such we have elected to not include a 4th floor on the existing bank building in order to maintain a building height <u>under 50</u>'.

Building 1 measures **50'-0''** above the lowest point of grade on site, which meets the UDO height requirement. We lowered the floor to floor heights, removed the corner tower and modified our structural system to bring the overall height of building 1 to <u>under</u> 50'

Building 2 Due to re-use of the existing building on the north property the tallest portion of Building 2 measures **48'-3**" above the lowest grade level on site. The 4th floor addition was removed to bring this building down to <u>under</u> 50' in height

Building 3 measures **48'-10**" at its greatest low to high height. We lowered floor to floor as well as modified our structural system to bring this building in <u>under</u> 50' in height.

Building 2 and 3 – if viewed as a single structure for purposes of height measures **49'-8**" ft from the lowest point on site to the highest point on building. Maintaining the overall building at under the 50' requirement. This was achieved by no longer revising all the grades to create back in angled parking. We have elected to maintain the existing set up of parallel parking and a bike lane on the street.

Parking Garage

An underground parking garage is located beneath Building 1 on the south lot only, accessed via ramp off of Washington Street. Level 1 parking garage spaces in the south building are accessed off of 3rd Street. Level 1 parking garage spaces in the North building are accessed via 4th Street as well as the alley between the buildings.

The 3rd street parking garage will be a right-in and right out only garage entrance providing for better traffic flow out onto 3rd street with no one trying to make a left turn. The Development standards suggest that when there is a building at a corner lot, that drives should access the building from a secondary street. In our case, Washington is considered secondary to 3rd street. As such, we will be requesting a development standards variance to have a right-in, right-out entrance from our commercial garage. The parking off of 3rd street is provided for the retail tenant at the corner of 3rd and Washington. Hiding the parking off of a back alley will only serve to harm the viability of the business.

Building Entrances

Building entrances are provided on all primary streets- 3rd street, 4th street and Washington Street.

Building 1 provides 3 entrance points to the building. The primary resident entrance is located near the northeast corner of the building on Washington Street, and provides access to the elevator lobby. The main commercial space entrance is located mid-site on the east façade off of Washington Street. A secondary entrance that can serve both the retail and the residential space is provided on the south façade (3rd street) at the stair tower location.

Building 2, Existing building, provides a primary entrance for the bank and the residential off of Washington Street and a secondary entrance for both uses at the south end of the building off of the alley.

Building 3, connected to building 2, provides a primary pedestrian entrance off of 4th street into the public parking garage,

Vehicular entrances are provided to public parking off of 3rd street into building 3, and off of 4th street into building 1. Residential parking is provided in the sub-grade parking garage under

building 1 and accessed off of Washington Street. Parking also has access opportunity from the central east-west alley.

Streetscape

Street trees and pedestrian scale street lighting are provided in a regular rhythm along 3^{rd} Street, Washington Street and 4^{th} Street. All trees and lighting meet the requirements of the UDO, with trees being planted in 5' x 5' ornamental tree grates. The wide right of way on 3^{rd} , 4^{th} and Washington streets allow for sidewalks, lighting, trees and in many areas additional green space along the street front.

Void to Solid Percentages

The UDO asks for a building in this overlay district to have a 60% void to solid ratio on the ground floor and 20% void to solid ratio on the upper floors. The existing building is exempt from this requirement, but the new portions of the building are as follows:

Building 1:

South façade – Level 164.7%South façade - Upper floors28.0%

East façade – Level 1 64.7% East façade – Upper floors 31.3%

Building 2: (existing)

East façade – Level 1 NA (exempt) East façade – upper levels 51.2%

North façade – Level 1 NA (exempt) North façade – upper levels 42.4%

Building 3:

North façade – Level 1 65.8% North façade - upper levels 41.4%

Window detailing

Upper story windows have been ganged together where possible to obtain the best natural lighting possible for the interior of apartment living spaces. The issue of providing the UDO requested proportions of the windows has been addressed through the incorporation of a vertical 6" mullion between each window unit allowing for the rectangular units to be grouped together to create the best possible natural interior lighting. Windows at the corner of 4th and Washington Streets are storefront units running from floor to ceiling. The windows – while large to create the exterior expression as well as great views and natural lighting for the corner apartments, still meet the intended proportions as described in the Downtown Core Overlay. Where possible, windows incorporate visually distinct sills and lintels in complementary materials.

Building Materials

The three structures have been detailed to provide the look and feel of three separate buildings along the street. Building 1 is fully separated from buildings 2 and 3. Buildings two and three, while connected, are detailed differently and are divided by a two story building element that is unique as well in color and architectural expression.

Architectural cast stone, two colors of brick and a fiber cement panel system form the majority of the palette for Building 1 (south building). A strong stone base will be provided around the perimeter of Level 1. Additionally, glass storefront windows wrap a majority of the ground floor level and carry to upper stories at the southeast corner. A strong roof element will cap off the corner and be trimmed out in metal fascia. Inset balcony areas will be primarily clad in fiber cement reveal panel with a steel guardrail system at the front. Fiber cement products and other secondary materials will be kept to a minimum of 20% on primary facades.

Building 2 (existing) will maintain existing materials such as limestone and glass, and build off of that with complementary materials on the new level 3. The building addition above the existing building will use a complementary color brick to continue the rhythm of vertical pilasters on the facade of the building with brick infill panels. A strong horizontal band will replace the old building cornice and provide a base for the transition to the new portions of the structure.

Building 3 will be a mix of cast stone and brick on primary facades and have a mix of brick and hardy siding on interior courtyard elevations. The 4 story elements of building 2 and 3 will be divided by a 2 story structure, slightly recessed and detailed in a different brick with metal panel canopies and copings to accent the façade. The courtyard elevations will be primarily cementious siding.

Building Façade modules

North building (building 2 & 3) provide the façade modulation along 4th street. A break in the façade between Building 2 and 3 is also provided, and breaks the 4th street elevation both in height and setback. Along Washington Street a façade module has been incorporated into the east façade of the building's 3rd floor addition to meet the requirements of the UDO.

The south building (building 1) provides the required step back at the residential entrance at the northeast corner of the site as well as at the main commercial space entrance on Washington Street and mid-block on the south façade. At each location the step back is carried up the full height of the building.

Building Step Back

The Downtown Core Overlay requires that any building over 45' step back at the 45' mark a minimum of 15' from the build-to line. The intent of this requirement was for structures exceeding 4 stories in height so that additional floors would be set back leaving the perceived street elevation at no more than 4 stories. The UDO allows a 50 ' structure in this district, setting the top 5 feet of the building back makes little sense in this development. A waiver will be pursued for a building step back.

Building Height Step Down

The property at 205 S. Walnut Street is identified on the City of Bloomington Survey of

Historic Sites and Structures. Although this structure does not share any adjacent street frontage with Building 3, the properties back up to each other across the north south alley. As such, consideration has been taken with regard to overall building height. Building 3 on the North property is within 14'-0" in height of the existing building, meeting the requirement in the UDO. The existing buildings highest roof is +40 feet above grade

Building 3 is at 799.64 to parapet height. The historic building is at 790.25 to top of roof. Putting our building approximately **9' taller** than the historic structure and within the allowable 14' height variation.

Bike Storage/ Parking

A total of **25** bike parking spaces are **required** for the development as a whole. This includes (4) spaces provided for the non-residential space and 21 spaces provided for the 125 total bedrooms on site. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the required spaces will be provided as long term, class 1 spaces and $\frac{1}{2}$ of the spaces will be provided as covered, short term class 2 spaces.

A total of **36** spaces have been **provided**. 10 in a secured bike room in building 1 and 8 in a secured bike room in building 3.

(4) Located on 4th street, (12) located along Washington street and (2) located along 3rd street All of which exceed the required amounts by 11 bike spaces or **44% increase**.

Environmental Considerations

The developer is interested in providing a building that is sensitive to the concerns of today's built environment. As such, we are incorporating the following into the project:

- Recycling provided on site for all three buildings.
- Salvage and adaptive reuse of existing building.
- Living wall planting system provided on building 3 roof terrace.
- "Green friendly" building materials This includes both materials with recycled content as well as building materials that have been harvested and manufactured within a 500 mile radius. Primary building materials include cementitious siding/panels, brick, CMU blocks, cast concrete and wood.
 - Interior building materials include carpeting, low VOC paints
- LED lighting package
- Energy efficient "Energy Star" appliances.
- High efficiency furnaces
- Energy efficient windows with low-E glazing
- White reflective roofing membrane for energy conservation and reduced heat island effect.
- Use of larger window openings for natural day lighting of interior spaces to cut down on the use of artificial lighting.
- Covered and secured bike parking beyond requirements (55% over requirement)
- Creation of walkable sidewalks- plantings, trees and lighting

Benefits to the Community

- Use of local labor for construction
- Job creation and retention with new retail and maintaining 5th 3rd bank on site.
- Tax dollars for the city

- Salvage and adaptive reuse of existing building
- Converting open parking lots into active street frontage.
- Adding population that will support downtown business.
- Burying utilities in North-South alley from 3rd Street to 4th Street– this will make the alleys more traversable.
- Repaving alleys surrounding property as part of utility relocate.
- Widening East- West alley between our properties to allow for two cars to pass.
- Adding streetscape along 3rd, 4th and Washington streets lighting and landscaping.
- Reducing the drive-thru lane pull in off of 3rd street making sidewalk more pedestrian friendly.
- Concealing drive-thru under building- creating a nicer streetscape.

Encroachments:

The project will require the following encroachments with the city:

- Street trees and street lights along all 3 primary facades along 3rd Street, Washington Street and 4th Street.
- Grease interceptor at the southeast corner of the property Due to the presence of a full underground parking garage, this is being proposed in the Washington Street right-ofway.
- Building entrance canopies along the proposed level 1 commercial space as well as all building entry points.

Trash Removal

A central trash room will be provided in building 1 on the north end, across from building 2 & 3 entrance. The trash room is sized to include multiple recycle bins and 2 dumpsters. Trash will be concealed behind a rolling garage door in a secured room made available to trash and recycle collection companies.

Water Service & Meter Pit

The project will connect to the water main along 3rd Street and 4th Street. A master meter will be installed in the City right-of-way at the northwest corner of the site and will house the necessary meter. A city standard riser room will be located adjacent to the service entrance on both buildings.

Sewer Service

Both buildings will connect to the city sewer mains along Washington Street. A new section of sanitary sewer will be provided from the alley dividing the properties south to the intersection of 3rd Street. All connections will be lateral connections with standard patching of the street as required.

Private Utilities

Duke Energy and a cable/phone/internet provider to be determined will provide for the service needs of the development. We anticipate 2 electrical transformers for the project, both located on the west side of the property near the alley that divides the building.

Anticipated Waivers

We will be asking for 1 waiver for the development:

 A waiver is being requested to allow the building to **not** step back at 45 feet above grade. The buildings on site do not exceed the allowable height of 50'. The step back rule has historically been viewed by staff to apply to buildings that exceeded 4 stories as a means to maintain the visual appearance of a 4 story building along the street by stepping the 5th story back 15' from the main building facade.

Variances:

We have identified two variance's that will need to be approved by the BZA, and are requesting support from both planning staff and the planning commission.

- 1. A use variance is required to provide a drive-thru in the downtown area. We are replacing an existing drive-thru on site that is currently out in the open with one that will be fully enclosed under roof and screened from public view. We feel that this is an improvement on the current situation on site and allows a long term commercial tenant to remain on site as well as allowing the adaptive reuse of the current structure as part of maintaining the bank at this location.
- 2. A development Standards Variance to allow for a right-in, right out entry drive off of 3rd street into a public parking garage.

Development standards suggest that when a site is at the corner of streets, drives should be located off of the secondary street – in this case, 3rd street is considered the primary street and Washington Street is considered the secondary street. As such, staff has noted that a development standard variance is required to allow an entrance for public parking to occur off of 3rd Street.

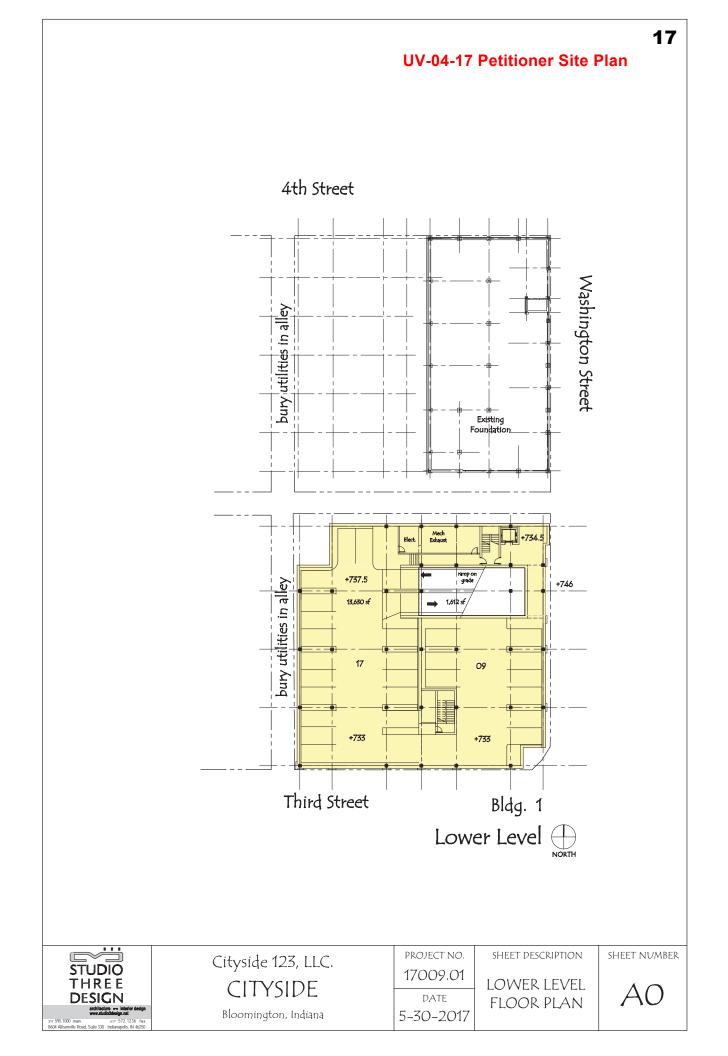
It is important to note a few items when considering this entrance location:

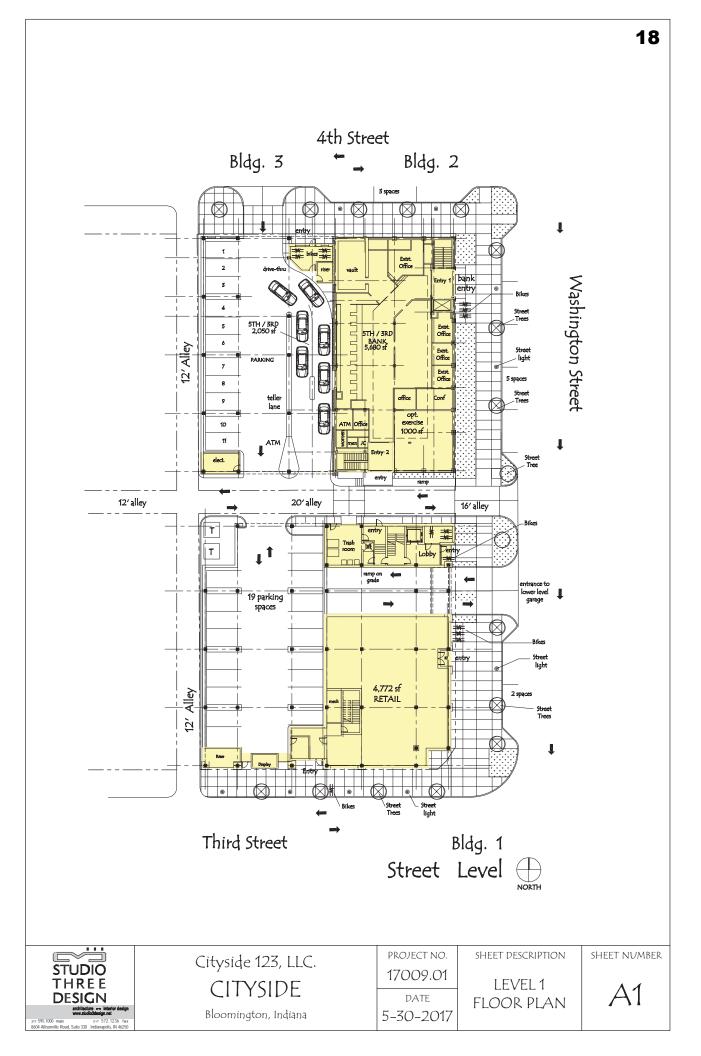
- A drive entrance off of 3rd street into the 5th third parking lot exist at this location today as well as a drive entrance off of Washington Street.
- The entrance / exit will be changed from two way to a right-in, right out only entry/ exit.
- The parking serves the corner retail space and removing it from view will only serve to harm the viability of the retailer at this location.
- Parking entrances have been allowed around the Downtown on corner lots onto the primary street.

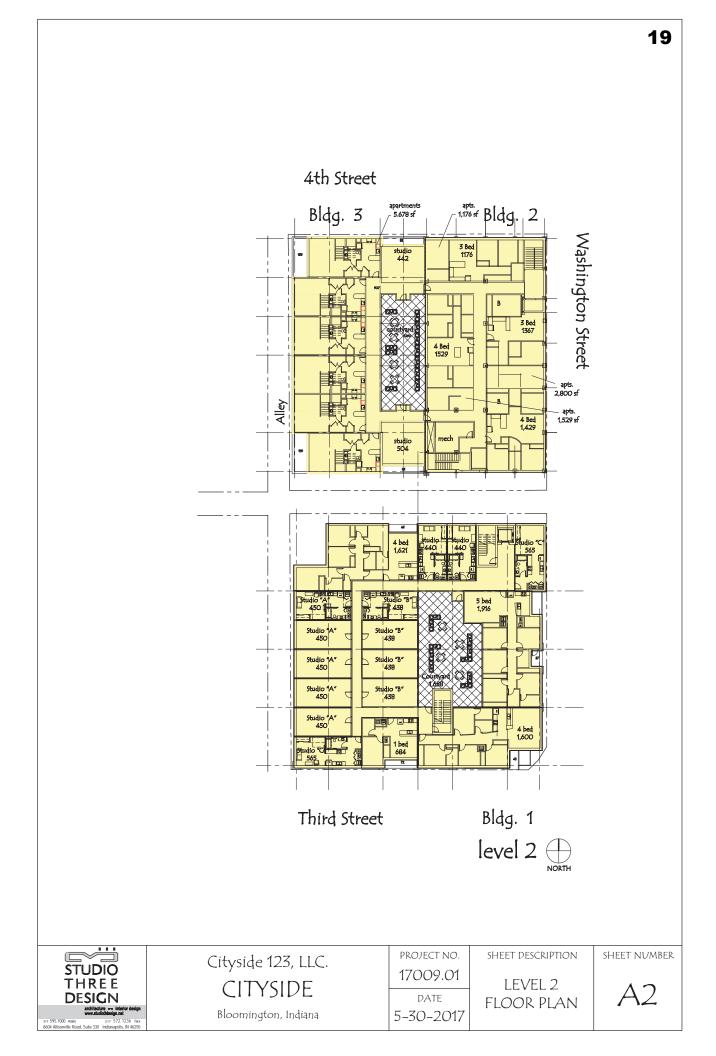
Respectfully submitted,

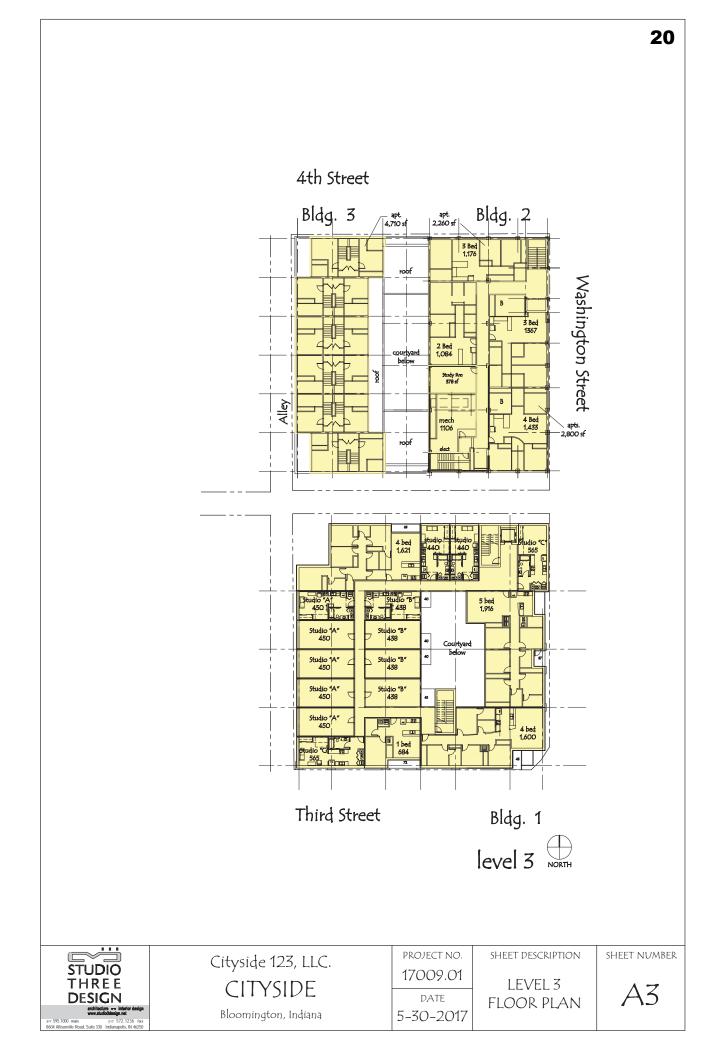
STUDIO 3 DESIGN, INC

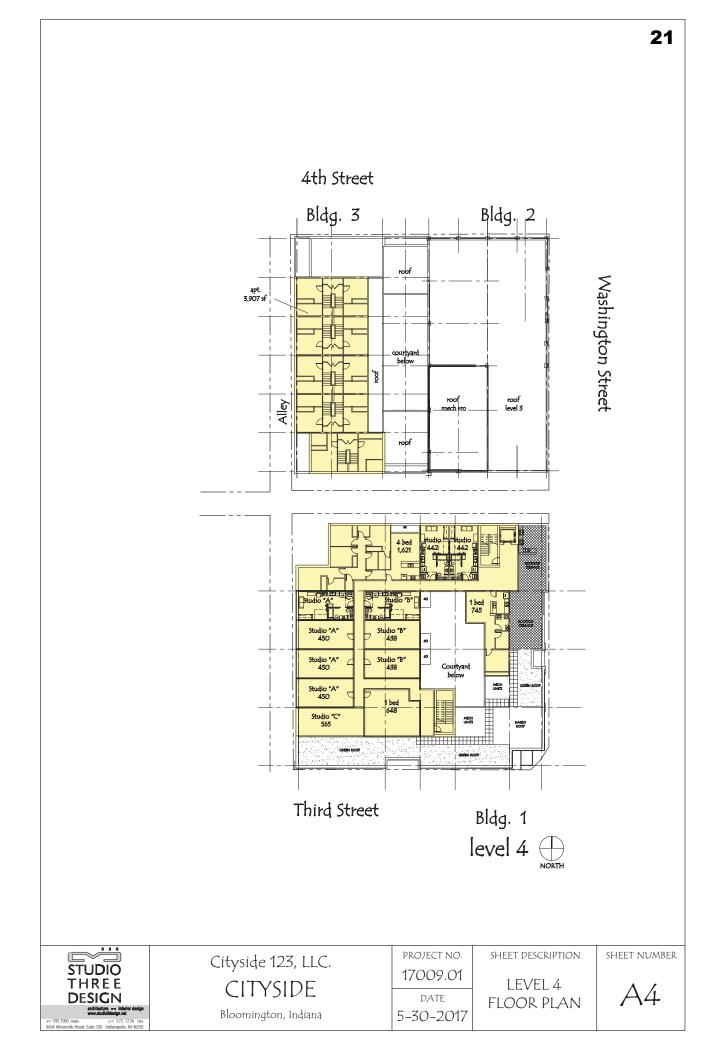
Timothy W. Cover



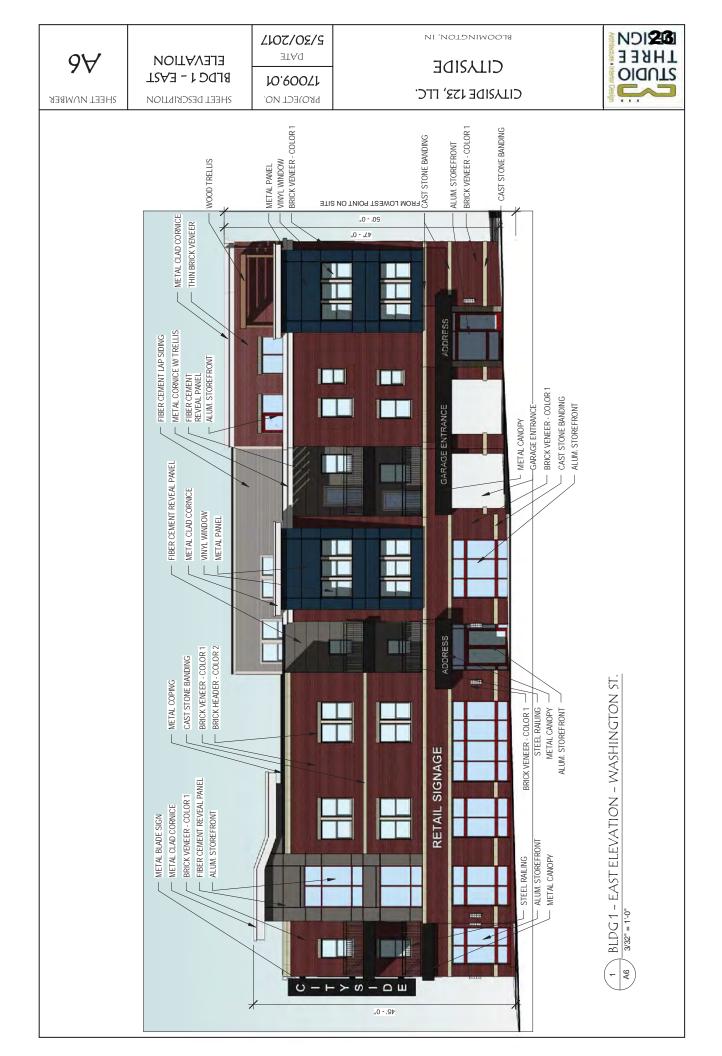




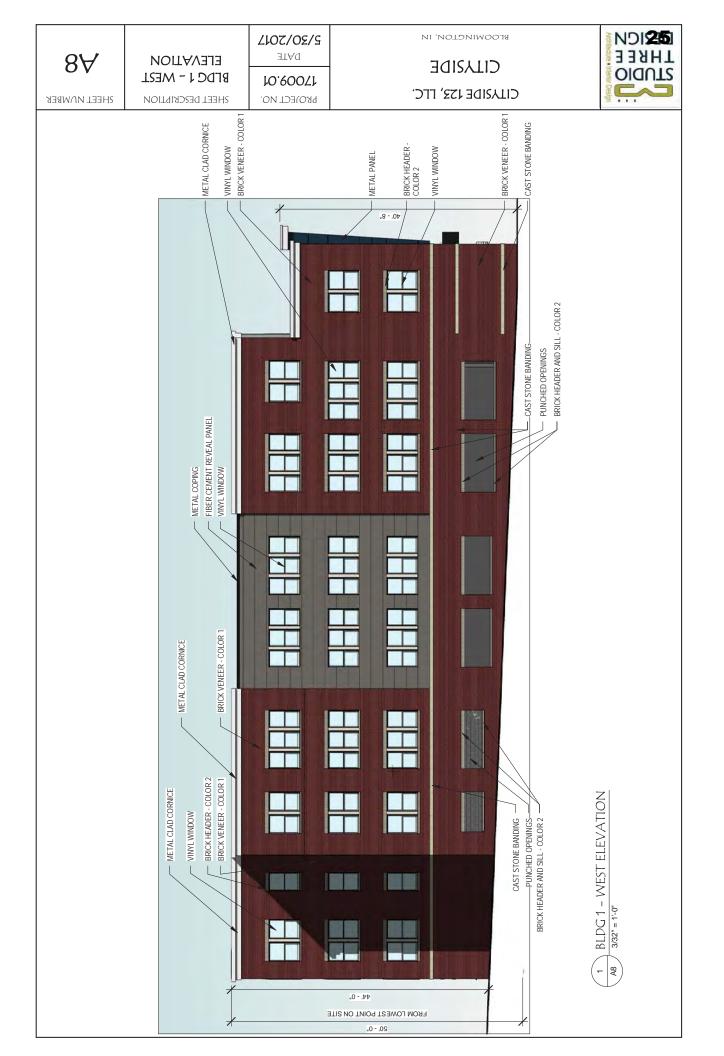




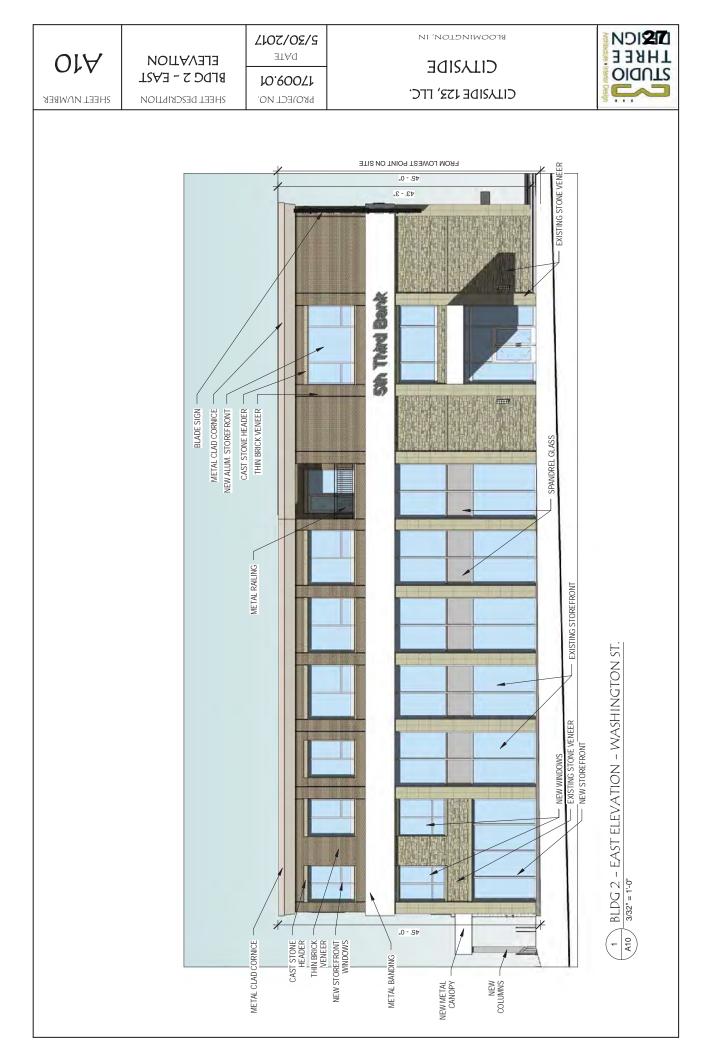






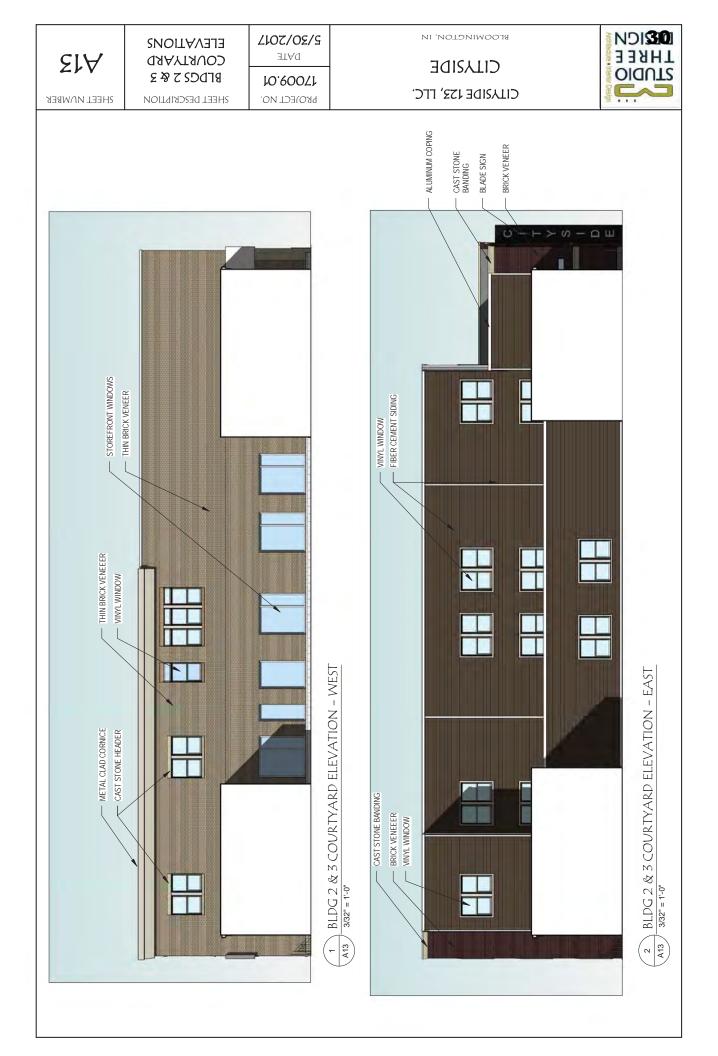






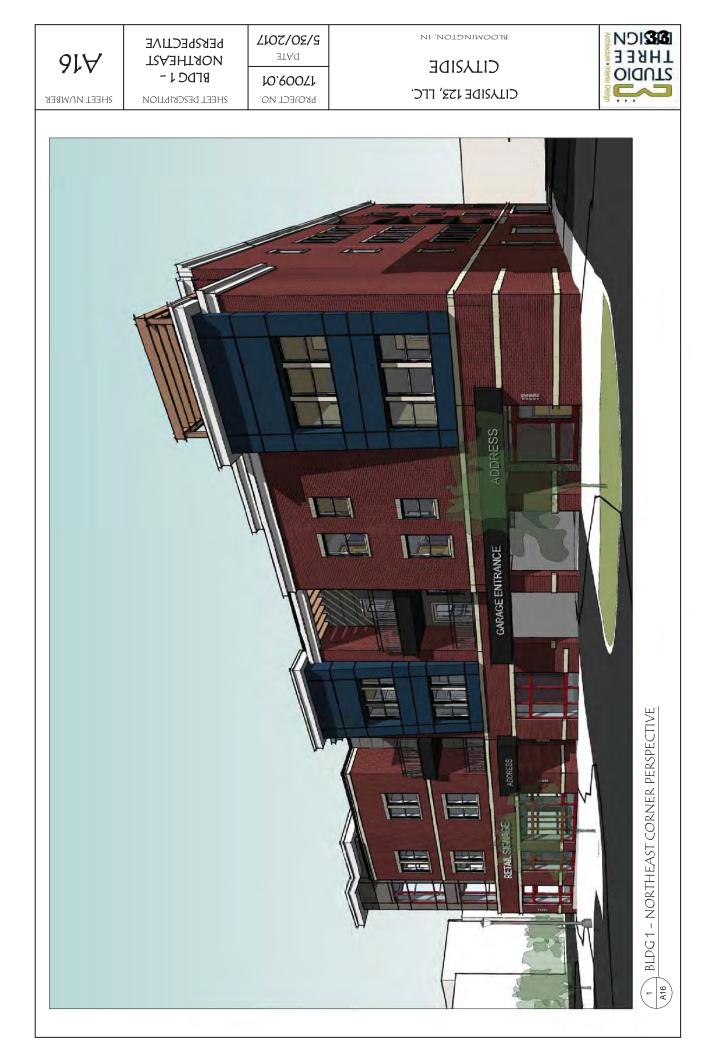






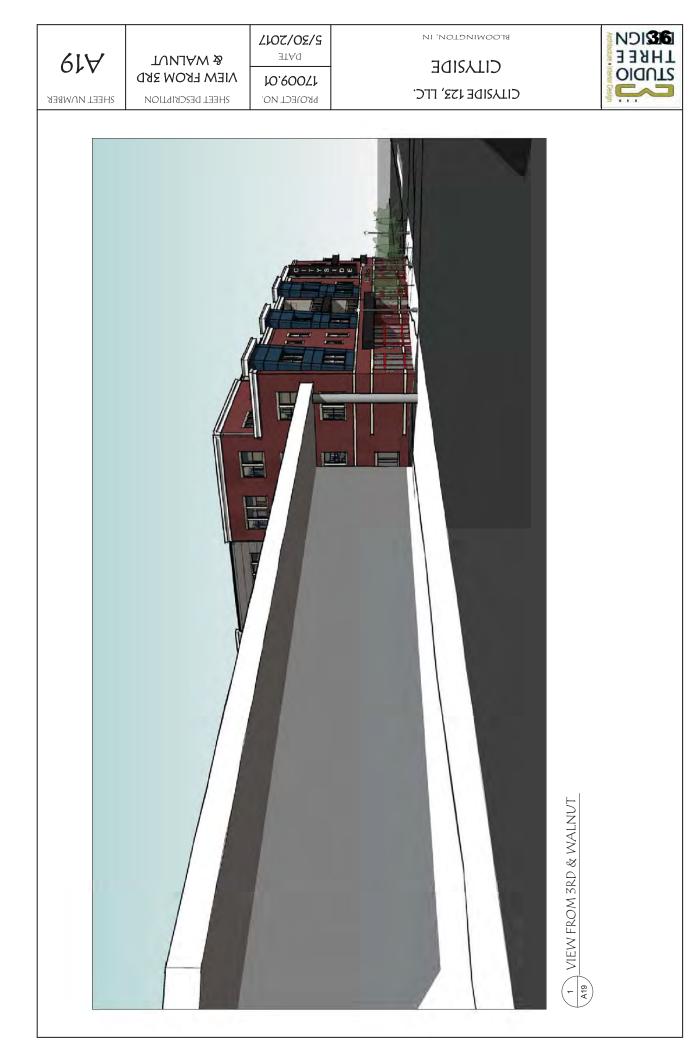








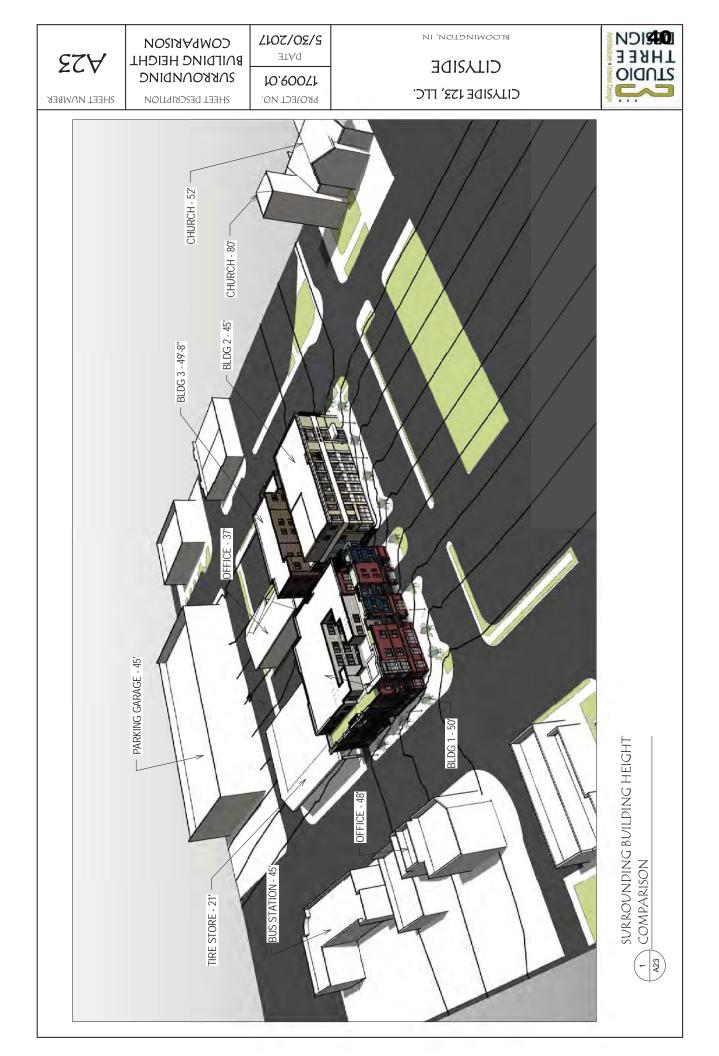




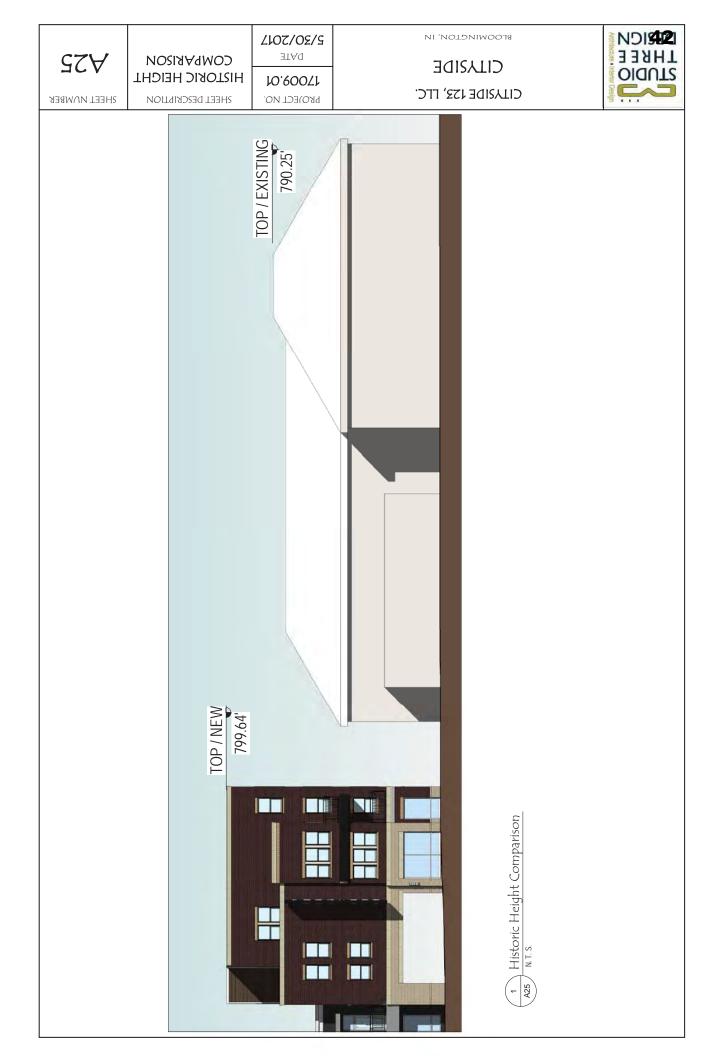


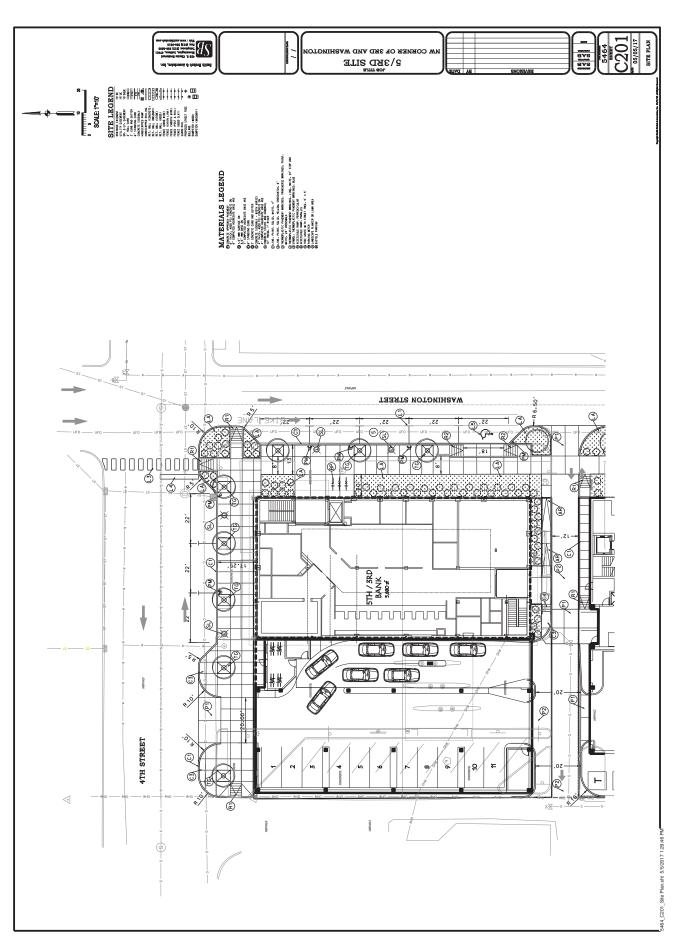


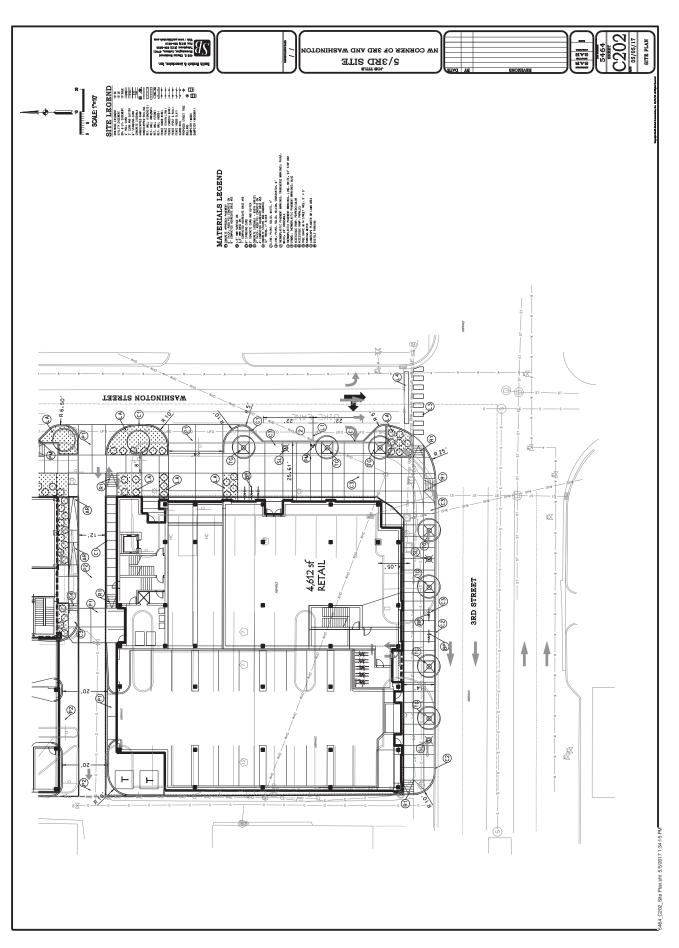


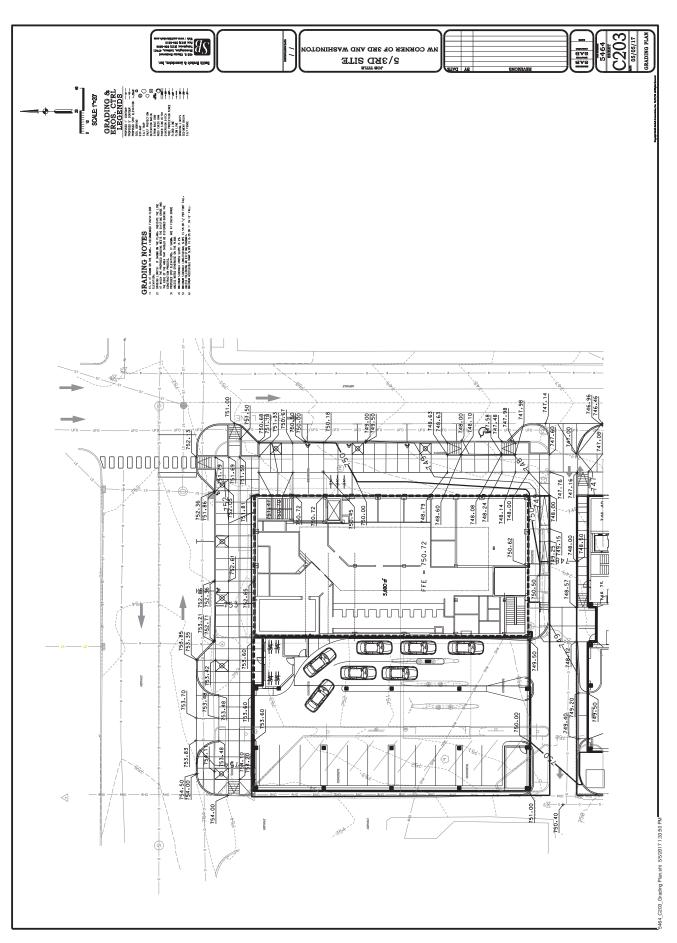


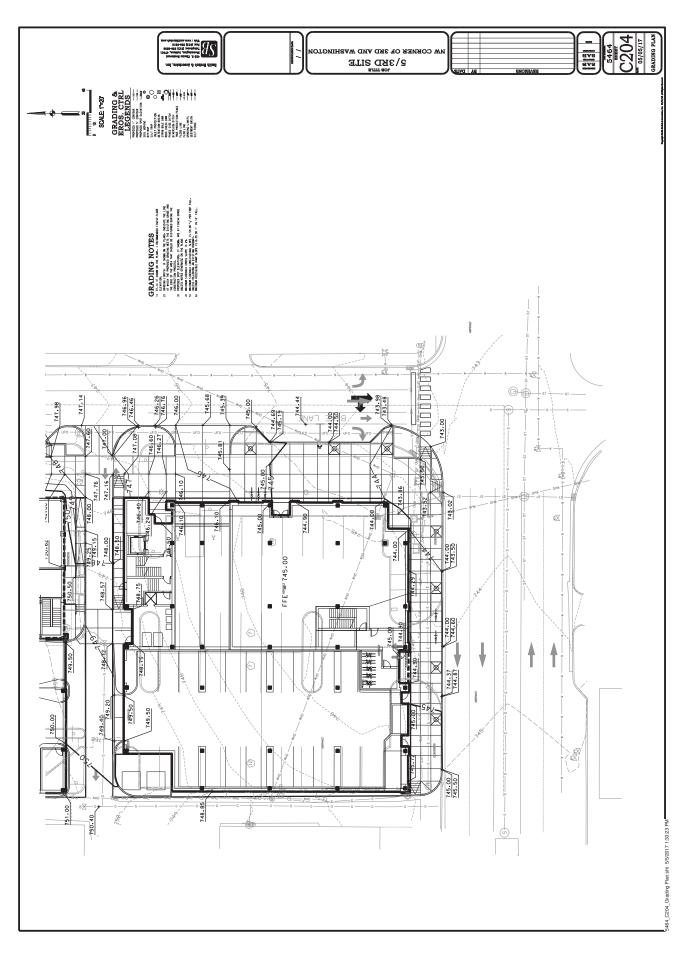


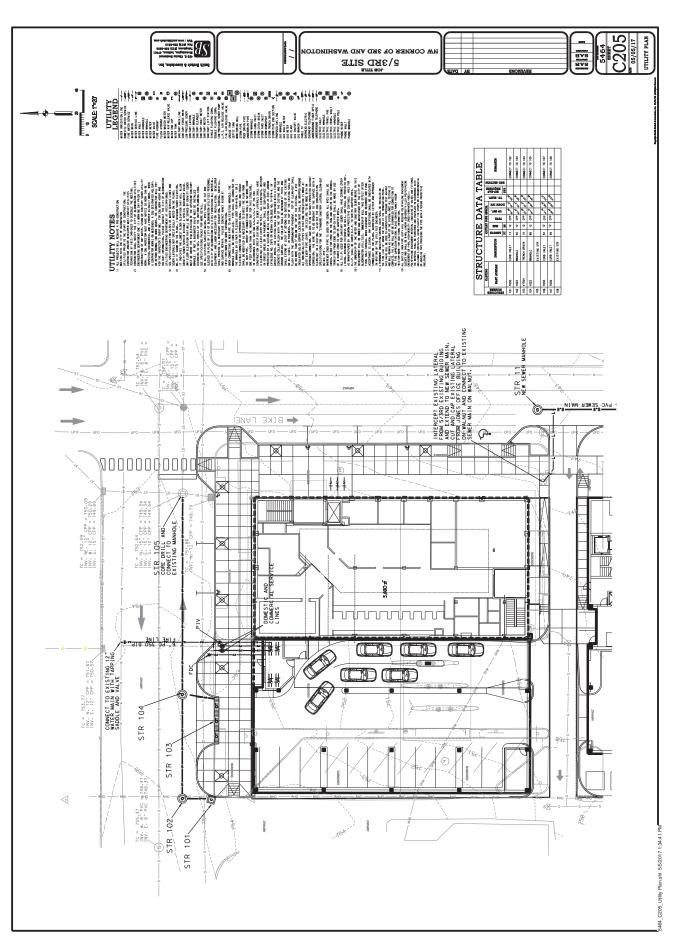


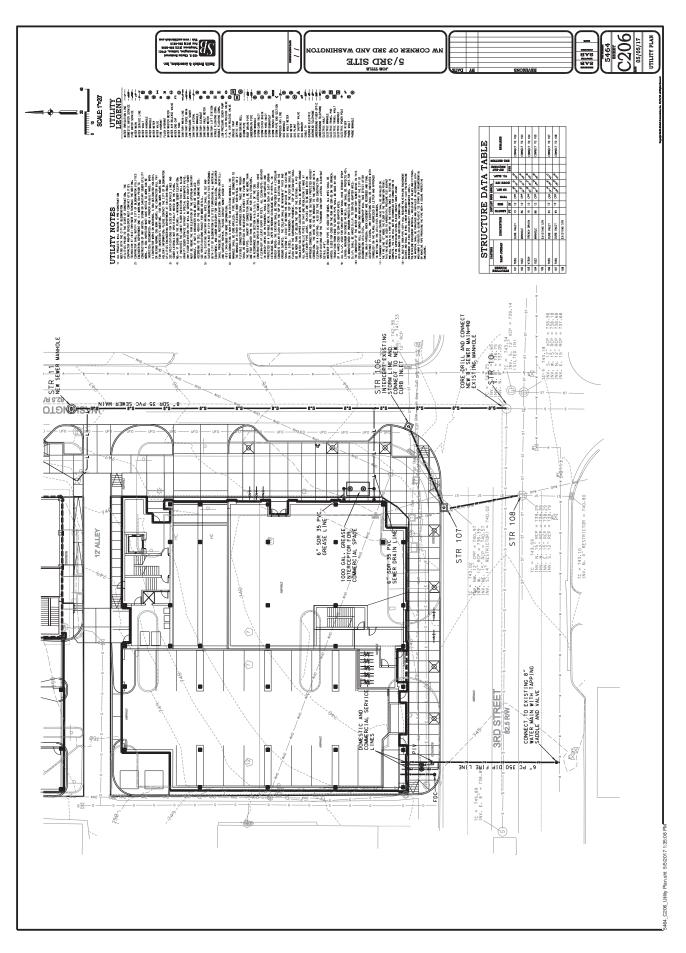












BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS STAFF REPORT – 2nd Hearing LOCATION: 1302 E. 2nd

CASE #: V-09-17 DATE: June 22, 2017

PETITIONER: Alisan Donway 1302 E 2nd, Bloomington

REQUEST: The petitioner is requesting a variance to allow a fence in excess of the Unified Development Ordinance maximum height requirements.

PREVIOUS HEARING: This case was heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals on May 18, 2017. The Board voted denial 4-0. Following the meeting, the petitioner informed staff that she did not receive a copy of the staff report and pointed out two errors in the previous report. It is not required by BMC 20.01.380 for a petitioner to receive a copy of the staff report prior to the meeting, though it is custom practice for the Department. The two errors from the previous report are corrected as follows:

- 1. The first report stated that the proposed fence would "begin 8 feet from the southeast corner of the house, extending approximately 13 feet west meeting the property line and extending 132 feet south along the property line." The length of the property is 132 feet, while the proposed fence would measure approximately 69 feet. The fence would also be located at the southwest portion of the house, not the southeast. The diagrams shown in the presentation reflected the correct location and dimensions of the fence.
- 2. The original report identified E. 2nd Street as a classified in street. While 2nd Street does have a higher traffic volume, it is not a classified street.

The BZA Rules of Procedure allow a petition to be reheard by the Board within less than 6 months, only with a unanimous vote of the Board. The Department recommends that the Board re-hear the case based on the errors in the report and the fact that the petitioner was not sent the report prior to the hearing.

REPORT: The petitioner owns the single family home at the southeast corner of S. Highland Avenue and E. 2nd Street. The property is zoned Residential Core (RC) and located within the Elm Heights Neighborhood.

The petitioner proposes to construct a 6 foot tall privacy fence along the west side of the property, along S. Highland Ave. The standards for maximum height in the UDO state that "forward of the front building wall of the primary structure, fences and walls shall not exceed 4 feet in height." The "front building wall" is defined as "the building elevation which fronts on a public street." Located on a corner, this property has frontages along both S. Highland and E. 2nd Street, while the functional front of the house is along E 2nd St. The area between the house and the street can be fenced with a 4-foot fence, but not the 6-foot fence that is proposed.

The proposed fence would begin at a point 8.5 feet north of the southwest corner of the house, extending approximately 13 feet west meeting the property line and extending 69

feet south along the western property line on Highland Ave to adjoin with fencing along the southern property line. There would be approximately 7.5 feet between the curb and the proposed fence.

Located in the Elm Heights Historic District, the petitioner was required to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission. On March 29, 2017 the BHPC issued COA-17-20 for the following work on the property, "Removal of the Evergreen trees along Highland Avenue and construct a 6' wooden fence along the back of the property and along Highland Avenue only 8' from the rear of the house."

CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

20.09.130 (e) Standards for Granting Variances from Development Standards: A variance from the development standards of the Unified Development Ordinance may be approved only upon determination in writing that each of the following criteria is met:

1. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.

Proposed Findings: No adverse impacts anticipated by the proposed fence.

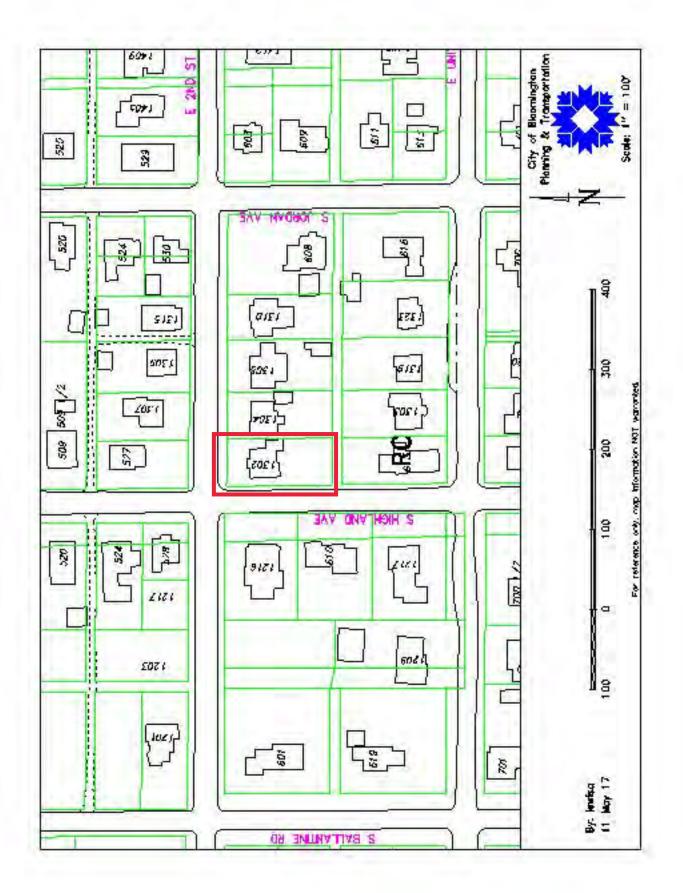
2. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.

Proposed Findings: There is a negative impact on the public space which the standard was designed to protect. A 6-foot tall privacy fence within the front yard at this location would adversely impact the streetscape and the comfort of pedestrians along a roadway with no sidewalk.

3. The strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property; that the practical difficulties are peculiar to the property in question; that the variance will relieve practical difficulties.

Proposed Findings: There are no peculiar conditions on this property that require a variance from the fence standards. The property in question is a corner lot, meaning it has two front building walls. This is not a peculiar condition as there are many corner lots throughout the city facing the same issue. The only practical difficulty on this site is protecting the existing, mature walnut tree located along Highland Street. However, the UDO does not prohibit a fence on this property and the tree could still exist with a 4 foot fence in the proposed location, which is permitted by the UDO. There are alternative solutions that could still provide privacy and be compliant with the UDO.

RECOMMENDATION: The Department recommends that the BZA adopt the proposed findings and deny V-09-17.





Petitioner's Statement

Neighborhood Characteristics

My name is Alisan Donway. In January 2016, I purchased my current home at 1302 E. 2nd Street, on the southeast corner of the intersection of E. 2nd Street and Highland Avenue. The lot is 0.1788 acres. It has an attached garage on the east side of the house and a deck (12-feet by 16-feet) on the rear southwest side. A dilapidated wooden fence remains on the back-property line of the lot.

The neighborhood is completely residential. Of the 22 homes that I was required to notify about this request for a variance, 60 percent were owner-occupied and 40 percent were rentals. The other three corners of my intersection are rentals, as is the house behind me. Before I purchased my house, it too was a rental property. To preserve this area as a mixed-use neighborhood requires reasonable consideration for the values of older homeowners, who typically prefer quiet, privacy, and unlittered neighborhoods more than students do. The students' presence contributes to the value of the neighborhood, undoubtedly, but so do older homeowners. I spend a minimum of 10 hours a week picking up many bags of litter between Atwater and University Streets, from Swain to Ballantine. If you drive out people who own and occupy their homes, by denying them privacy on their property, the neighborhood's attractiveness will quickly deteriorate and the area will return to the process of slummification that I found to be underway when I arrived.

At the previous hearing, a board member opined that, after all, I chose to buy a house in the city and that, had I wanted, I could have purchased a house further out, where the lots are larger and privacy less of an issue. In fact, I did not have that option. My husband suffers from a medical disability (epilepsy) that precludes him from driving. To carry out his professional work as an editor and to live as an independent human being, he must be within walking distance (two or three miles) of the university and its libraries, the malls and their shops, and his physicians. I believe, therefore, that to deny me a variance on the grounds that I could have moved to a more rural area of Bloomington amounts to discrimination on the basis of a medical disability.

Petition

I am petitioning for a variance to build a 6-foot backyard fence (instead of the UDO's 4-foot fence) along the southern 69 feet of my 132-foot side-yard property line, adjacent to Highland Avenue. Such a fence is necessary for privacy, sound buffering, animal control, and personal safety. To enclose the backyard, I would add a small piece (13 feet long) to the north end of the fence, which would go from the property line to the side of the house, 8.5 feet north of the building's southwest corner. I would also replace the dilapidated fence at the back of the lot.

The staff's previous report gave the board a completely erroneous impression of my request. It spoke of the fence beginning 8 feet from the southeast corner of the house, rather than the southwest corner. Far worse, the staff report said that I was petitioning for a 132-foot fence, which is the length of my entire property along Highland St. I can well understand that the board did not want to grant a variance for a 132-foot fence, 6-feet high, running along Highland Street. In fact, the fence I am proposing is approximately half that length. Its only purpose is to enclose

my back yard, as most other homeowners are allowed to do. I must also correct the staff report's statement that the fence "would leave a <u>portion</u> of the right of way vacant." To the best of my knowledge, it would leave the <u>entire</u> right of way vacant. This fact is relevant to the criteria for granting a variance.

Criteria for Granting a Variance.

1. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.

Staff Report ("Findings") of May 18. "The use and value of the area adjacent to the property would be impacted by the placement of a 6-foot-tall fence as it would change the existing landscaping and visibility along a significant portion of the lot."

The only change to the existing landscaping would be the removal of the Canadian hemlock hedge and its poison ivy, and they are going to be removed regardless of whether this variance is granted. Half of the hemlocks are dead and two of them are so large that they are almost touching the house, which would allow carpenter ants to enter. I have permission to remove this hedge, because the hemlocks are less than 9 inches in diameter. Once the hemlocks are removed, and if I am allowed to install a 6-foot fence, I will plant the area outside fence with grass, improving the visual beauty of the area.

As for visibility, the fence will stop at least 60 feet from the intersection of Highland and E. 2nd St. and create no visual interference for traffic.

The fence will <u>not</u> run along the entire 132 feet of the property as the previous staff report stated. The only hindrance to visibility would be the visibility of my backyard, which is private property not public property. The Code recognizes as wholly legitimate and understandable the private-property right of virtually all home-owners to eliminate the visibility of their backyards by erecting 8-foot fences around them. Only the owners of corner lots are compelled to open their private backyards to the peeping of strangers.

At the previous hearing. a board member remarked, as a reason for denying me a variance, that tall fences are not inviting. Frankly, I don't want to invite random passers-by into my backyard. The same board member stated that "the community has decided" tall fences isolate people. This is not true. The code—and the community that devised it—allows most people in Bloomington to surround their back yards with fences 8-feet tall. What the code—and the community that devised it—has actually decided is that "good fences make good neighbors."

2. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.

Staff Report ("Findings") of May 18. "There is no sidewalk on either side of Highland Street, creating a greater need to protect pedestrian safety. Staff finds potential injury to the general welfare as this could be dangerous for anyone cycling or walking along Highland Street."

Contrary to the previous staff report, removing the hemlocks and poison ivy, and replacing them with grass, will enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on Highland Avenue. At present,

the hemlocks come right to the curb and prevent people from getting off the street in an emergency. The grass strip would give them approximately 4 feet of safety beyond the curb, if they felt threatened by oncoming traffic. Moreover, because the fence will be set about 4 feet back from the street, it will not "loom" over pedestrians, bicyclists, and dog walkers as it would if it directly abutted a sidewalk or street.

3. The strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property; that the practical difficulties are peculiar to the property in question; that the variance will relieve practical difficulties.

Staff Report ("Findings") of May 18. "There are no peculiar conditions on this property. The property is on a corner lot, this is not a peculiar condition as there are many corner lots throughout the city facing the same issue. In addition, Highland Street, the street along the 'non-functional side' of the house is not a classified street with heavy traffic. The only practical difficulty on this site is protecting the existing, mature walnut tree located along Highland Street. The UDO does not prohibit a fence in this location and the tree could still exist with a 4-foot fence as permitted by the UDO."

<u>First:</u> My lot *does* possess a peculiar condition that renders a 4-foot fence inadequate for even minimal privacy. The lot sits part way down Vinegar Hill, whose summit is on 1st street. The hill is quite steep next to my property. Pedestrians, cyclists, dog walkers, and automobile drivers coming from the south on Highland have a high vantage point from which to look over the fence and see the entire backyard, deck, and house, including the breakfast nook windows. In addition, the yards of several neighbors along the west side of Highland Avenue are much higher than ours and provide a similar overlook. This topographical condition also means that a 6-foot fence along the backyard will not seem to loom over passers-by. By contrast, if I built a four-foot fence around my front yard, as the Code allows, its top would be eight feet above the road, and two feet above the heads of most passers-by, because the street at that point drops far below my lot's ground level. <u>Topography matters.</u>

<u>Second:</u> Another peculiar topographical condition is that my lot itself slopes down from Highland Avenue to such a degree that a 6-foot fence set in line with the side of the house (as the UDO allows) would have an effective height of 4 feet in relation to the road, and would not provide any greater privacy or noise reduction than a 4-foot fence on the property line. I would add that the pedestrian and bicycle traffic along Highland is substantial, in the morning and evening, because the street flows directly into the center of campus. Dog-walkers, too, favor Highland for having less automobile traffic than E. 2nd St. or Jordan St.

<u>Third:</u> A 6-foot fence set back even with the side of the house would exclude 23 percent of my backyard and ruin the landscaping. In particular, it would take the fence 2 feet east of a large (4-foot in diameter) black walnut tree. As the previous staff report admitted, this is a definite difficulty. The tree is the center of a long-established landscape design in the backyard and such a fence would put the tree out of the backyard. Moreover, putting fence posts so close to the tree could prove fatal to this very beautiful tree, which is a desirable part of the neighborhood.

A suggestion was made at the previous hearing to build a 4-foot fence from the southwest corner of the lot, north down Highland Avenue, to a point past the tree, then jog in to the line of the house, then continue a 6-to-8 foot fence north to the edge of the house. The principal problem with this suggestion is that it is precisely from the high ground near the southwest corner (where the fence would be only 4 feet) that my privacy is most easily invaded. A secondary problem is that a very considerable garden area lies north of the tree and just to the east of the hemlocks. I have been working diligently to rehabilitate that garden from long neglect by student residents. A fence running in line with the side of the house would put that whole garden outside of my yard, where it would quickly succumb to weeds and litter.

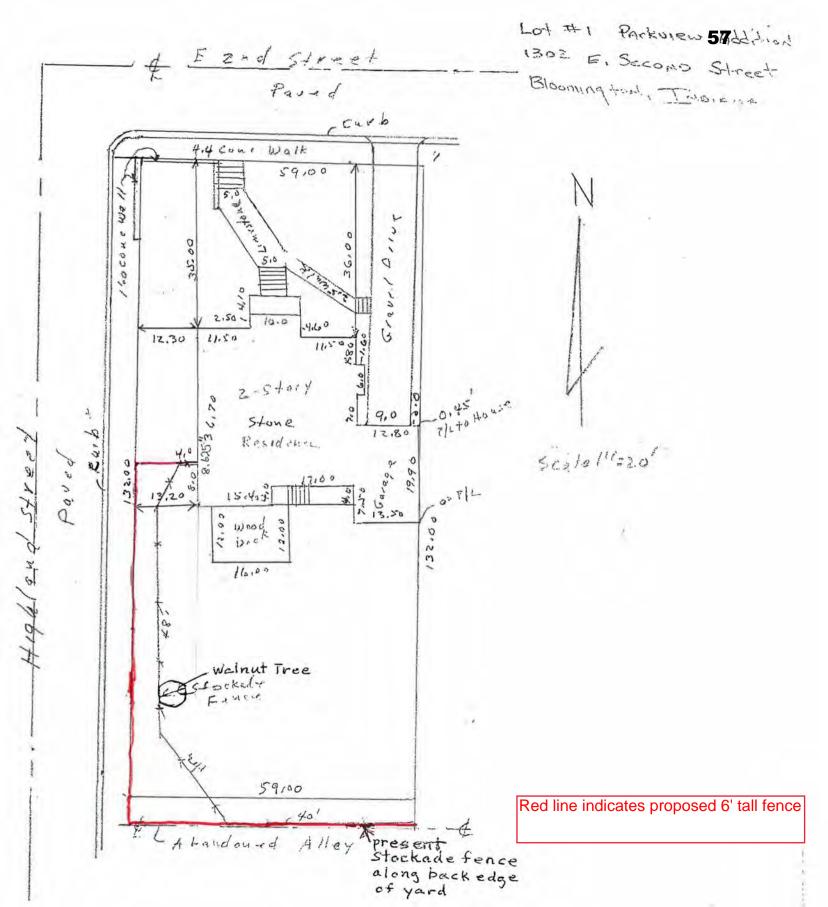
<u>Fourth:</u> The previous staff report noted that Highland Avenue is not a classified street, and that is true. But the traffic along E. 2nd Street is very nearly equal in volume to that on classified streets. Although E. 2nd Street does not run next to the west side of my house, it is only a few feet away, which is no protection from the excessively loud music and mufflers of passing cars. Moreover, the traffic that does pass by my backyard is necessarily accelerating to get up a steep hill from the four-way stop at the intersection of E. 2nd and Highland. That creates noise much greater than mere passing vehicles, especially from pickups, hot rods, and wrecks with bad mufflers.

<u>Fifth:</u> Contrary to what the previous staff report stated, the protection of the large, mature walnut tree is not the only practical difficulty peculiar to the property. The walnut tree itself creates further difficulties, as I argued at the previous hearing. Specifically, as the attached chart on Hedge Plants demonstrates, many common hedges will not grow in the presence of the walnut's juglone, and many others will not grow in its considerable shade. Still others, as the chart shows, are not deer-resistant enough to survive.

At least one board member suggested at the previous hearing that landscaping and hedging alternatives not mentioned in my chart might exist and should be investigated. I have now taken that suggestion and explored the possibilities with Jason Fulton of May's Greenhouse, and I have attached his letter to this petition. His conclusion is that there are no other feasible hedging alternatives that are evergreen, shade tolerant, juglone tolerant, and deer resistant.

Therefore, I believe that I have demonstrated a need for the Use Variance that arises from conditions peculiar to my property itself (as enumerated in the above five points), and shown that strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance will constitute an unnecessary hardship if they are applied to my property. The approval of the Use Variance would not interfere substantially with the goals and objectives of the Growth Policies Plan.

I said earlier that "good fences make good neighbors," but I want to emphasize "good fences." With this petition, I have submitted pictures of two designs for fences. The Elm Heights Historic District has given me a certificate of approval for both of them. I believe that the fence with the lattice on top, set back from the street, and seen against my historic limestone house and the large walnut tree, would be a beautiful addition to the setting and the neighborhood. Moreover, seen from the inside, it would be a magnificent enhancement to the beauty of the grounds, which have been sadly neglected in recent years.







M Gmail

Roger Donway <rdonway@gmail.com>

Petitioner's Statement

Plant selection for difficult site

1 message

Jason Fulton <jasonfulton78@hotmail.com> To: "rdonway@gmail.com" <rdonway@gmail.com> Tue, Jun 6, 2017 at 10:40 AM

Dear Bloomington Zoning Association,

I was approached by Alisan Donway at my nursery looking for some plants for a special situation to apply for screening purposes. They had to meet the following criteria;

- 1) Evergreen
- 2) Shade tolerant
- 3) Juglone Tolerant (From a nearby Black Walnut)
- 4) Deer resistant

This has narrowed the selection down to two options,

- 1) Canadian Hemlock
- 2) Boxwood

Please note the Hemlock may be too large for the area and we are not recommending any large plantings of Boxwood due to the encroaching boxwood blight disease.

Thank you for your time,

Jason M Fulton

Mays Greenhouse

6280 S State Road 37

Bloomington, IN 47401

Ph.# (812)824-8630



Hemlock woolly adelgid

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*), or HWA, is member of the Sternorrhyncha suborder of the Order Hemiptera and native to East Asia. It feeds by sucking sap from hemlock and spruce trees (*Tsuga* spp.; *Picea* spp.). In eastern North America, it is a destructive pest that gravely threatens the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and the Carolina hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*). Though the range of eastern hemlock extends north of the current range of the adelgid, it could spread to infect these northern areas as well. Accidentally introduced to North America from Japan, HWA was first found in the eastern United States near Richmond, Virginia, in the early 1950s. The pest has now

been established in eighteen eastern states from Georgia^[1] to Massachusetts, causing widespread mortality of hemlock trees. As of 2015, 90% of the geographic range of eastern hemlock in North

America has been impacted by HWA.^[2]

Contents

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- 2 Control methods
 - 2.1 Forest level
 - 2.2 Individual trees
- 3 Significance
- 4 References
- 5 External links

Characteristics

An adult individual averages a body length of 0.8 mm and is oval in

shape.^[3] The tiny brown-colored insect has four thread-like stylets that

are bundled together and function as a mouthpart. Three times the length of its body, the stylet bundle pierces the host plant's parenchymatic ray tissue to derive nutrition from stored reserves.^[4] It may also inject a toxin while feeding.^[5] The resulting desiccation causes the tree to lose needles and not produce new growth. Hemlocks stricken by HWA frequently become grayish-green rather than a healthy dark green. In the northern portion of the hemlock's range, death typically occurs four to ten years after infestation. Trees that survive the direct effects of the infection are usually weakened and may die from secondary causes.^[6]

The presence of HWA can be identified by its egg sacs, which resemble small tufts of cotton clinging to the underside of hemlock branches. In North America, the hemlock woolly adelgid asexually reproduces and can have two generations per year. Both generations are parthenogenetic and exclusively female.^[3] In its native Asian habitat is a third winged generation called Sexupera; this generation's sexual reproduction requires a species of spruce that is not found in the Eastern United States and therefore dies. Between 100 and 300 eggs are laid by each

Petitioner's Statement



Evidence of hemlock woolly adelgid on hemlock

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Arthropoda
Class:	Insecta
Order:	Hemiptera
Superfamily:	Phylloxeroidea
Family:	Adelgidae
Genus:	Adelges
Species:	A. tsugae
Bind	omial name
Ade	lges tsugae
(An	nand, 1928)

individual in the woolly egg sacs beneath the branches. Larvae emerge in spring and can spread on the bwn or with the assistance of wind, birds and/or mammals. In the nymph stage, the adelgid is immobile and settles on a single tree.^{[7][8]}

Control methods

Forest level

The current leading biological control method of hemlock woolly adelgid is *Pseudoscymnus tsugae*.^[9] *P. tsugae* is a black lady beetle that is relatively host specific, feeding only on three known aldegid species, including HWA. This beetle was discovered in 1992 while feeding on hemlock woolly adelgid in its natural range of Japan. Since 1995, the DCNR's Bureau of Forestry has released hundreds of thousands of adult beetles into affected hemlock forests of the eastern United States to determine its effectiveness at controlling the unchecked spread of the adelgid.^[10] From 1995 to 1997, experiments in Connecticut and Virginia found that releasing adult *P. tsugae* beetles into infested hemlock stands resulted in a 47 to 88% reduction in adelgid densities within 5 months of introduction.^[10] The beetle's life cycle is in parallel to the life cycle of the hemlock woolly adelgid. Both lay eggs in the spring and hatching occurs nearly simultaneously. When hatched, *P. tsugae* larvae are highly mobile and feed on hemlock woolly adelgid eggs and larvae. Each *P. tsugae* larva can effectively consume approximately 500 adelgid eggs or nearly 100 developing adelgid nymphs.^[10]

Laricobius nigrinus is another predatorial beetle used as a biological control in response to hemlock woolly adlgid. Native to the western United States and Canada, *L. nigrinus* is known to prey exclusively on various woolly adelgids.^[9] *L. nigrinus* adults will lay their eggs on top of wintering adelgid larvae in early spring, and upon hatching the larval beetle feeds on hemlock woolly adlegid.^[9]

Also under study is *Laricobius osakensis* from Japan, a relative of *L. nigrinus*. They have shown promise in field trials.^[11]

Individual trees

The environmentally safest chemical control methods for treating individual trees are non-toxic insecticidal soap and horticultural oil. These are sprayed on the foliage and smother the insects as they dry. Most trees will need to be treated on a yearly basis.^[12]

Toxic systemic insecticides may be applied to the foliage and bark of a tree and will persist in killing the adelgid for up to two to four years after application. Caution must be used,^[12] and restraint exercised around bodies of water.

Soil drenches/soil injections/bark sprays are used in larger trees that cannot be completely sprayed with insecticidal soaps or foliage insecticides. Tree roots absorb and transport the product into the foliage and kill hemlock woolly adelgid. Soil drenches must be applied when there is adequate soil moisture for the tree roots to absorb the product. These products should not be used in areas that are in close proximity to bodies of water.^[12]

Trunk injections are used for large trees that are near water or where soils are too rocky for soil injections or drenches. The chemical is injected directly into the tree and transported to the twigs and needles where the hemlock woolly adelgids are feeding. Adequate soil moisture is also necessary for the tree to take up these products.^[12]

Significance

6/1/2017

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trer is also valued both as an ornamental and as an important source of lumber. Unlike the balsam woolly adelgid that attacked only mature balsam fir, HWA infests hemlocks of all ages. Where hemlock occurs in pure stands in that region, the most commonly observed tree species to succeed it is black (sweet) birch.^[13] Whereas in the southern extreme of its range, hemlock typically occurs not in pure stands but in linear riparian areas and other moist sites. Succession in these areas is affected by the presence of Rhododendron maximum which often coexists with hemlock, and because of a combination of influences restricts regeneration to shade and otherwise understory-tolerant plant species. Major changes in ecosystem structure and function, including hydrologic processes, are expected with the loss of hemlock.

Loss of the eastern and Carolina hemlock from hemlock woolly adlegid infestation will likely result in many ecological shifts in eastern North America. The understory of hemlock forests is characterized as dark, damp, and cool and is an ideal habitat to various other organisms.^[4] The moist environment is preferred by many native amphibian species, particularly newts and salamanders.^[14] Some species of birds have close association with the hemlock, especially during mating and nesting periods.^[15] Aquatic systems adjunct to hemlock stands are also impacted by the trees' decline. Brook trout is a native fish species to the eastern United States and is known to prefer the cool, shaded streams of hemlock forests during spawning events.^[16] Vulnerable animal populations are expected to diminish as a result of loss of hemlock habitat to the invasive hemlock woolly adelgid.

One hopeful factor is that the adelgid does not seem able to survive prolonged or bitter cold.^[17] Following the winter of 1999-2000, a considerable dieback of adelgid and subsequent regrowth of infested trees was observed across Connecticut. The same phenomenon was repeated after the prolonged winter of 2013-2014, in time to save numerous nearly-succumbed forests.

A 2009 study conducted by scientists with the U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station suggests the hemlock woolly adelgid is killing hemlock trees faster than expected in the southern Appalachians, and rapidly altering the carbon cycle of these forests. According to Science Daily, the pest could kill most of the region's hemlock trees within the next decade. According to the study, researchers found "hemlock woolly adelgid infestation is rapidly impacting the carbon cycle in [hemlock] tree stands", and "adelgid-infested hemlock trees in the South are declining much faster than the reported 9-year decline of some infested hemlock trees in the Northeast."^[18] In fact, as of 2007 the rate of HWA expansion was recorded as 15.6 km/year south of Pennsylvania and 8.13 km/year (or less) in the northern section of the HWA's range.^[19]

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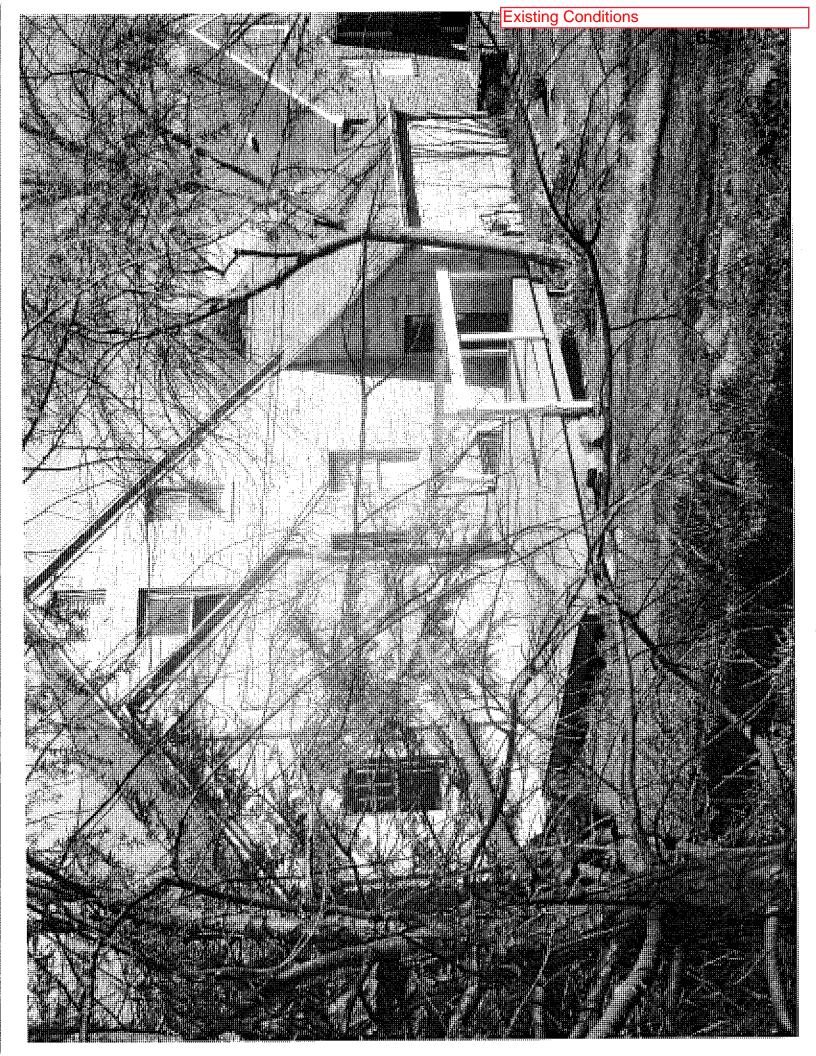
University of Vermont entomology website (http://www.uvm.edu/~entlab)

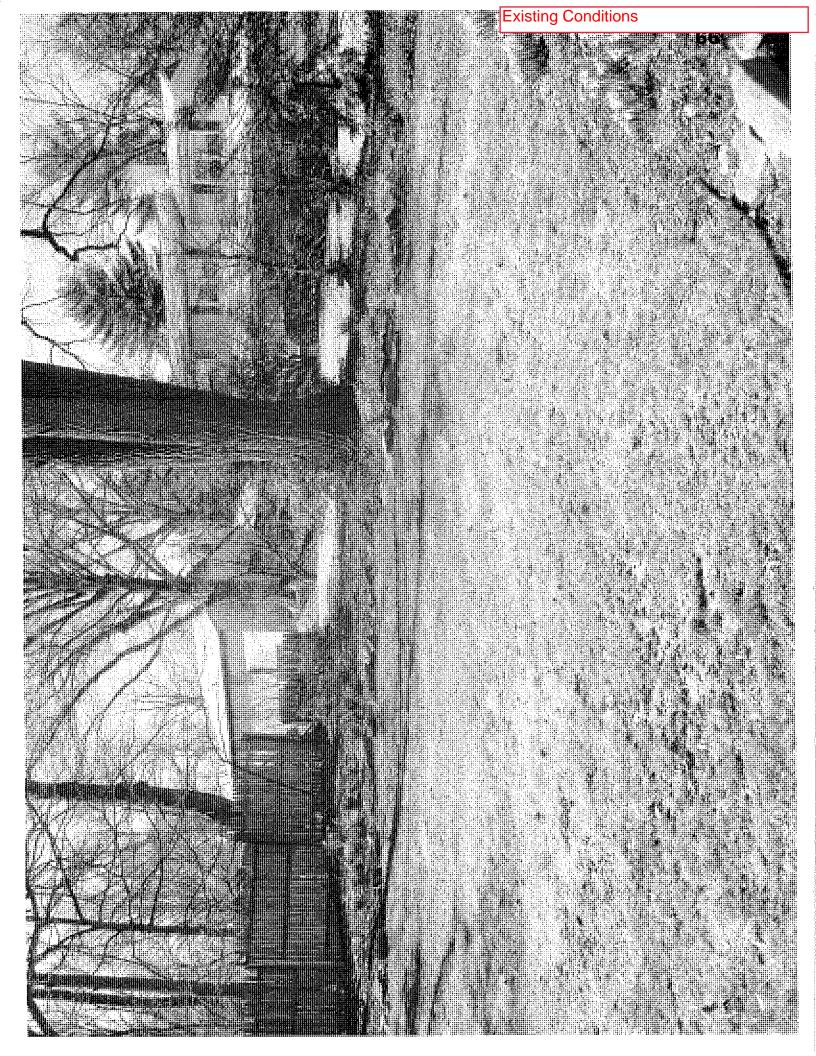
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- US Department of Agriculture HWA (http://na.fs.fed.us/fhp/hwa/)
- Save our Hemlocks (https://web.archive.org/web/20160113101732/http://www.saveourhemlocks.org/)
- Tree-Savers (http://www.tree-savers.com/), Biological Control for HWA

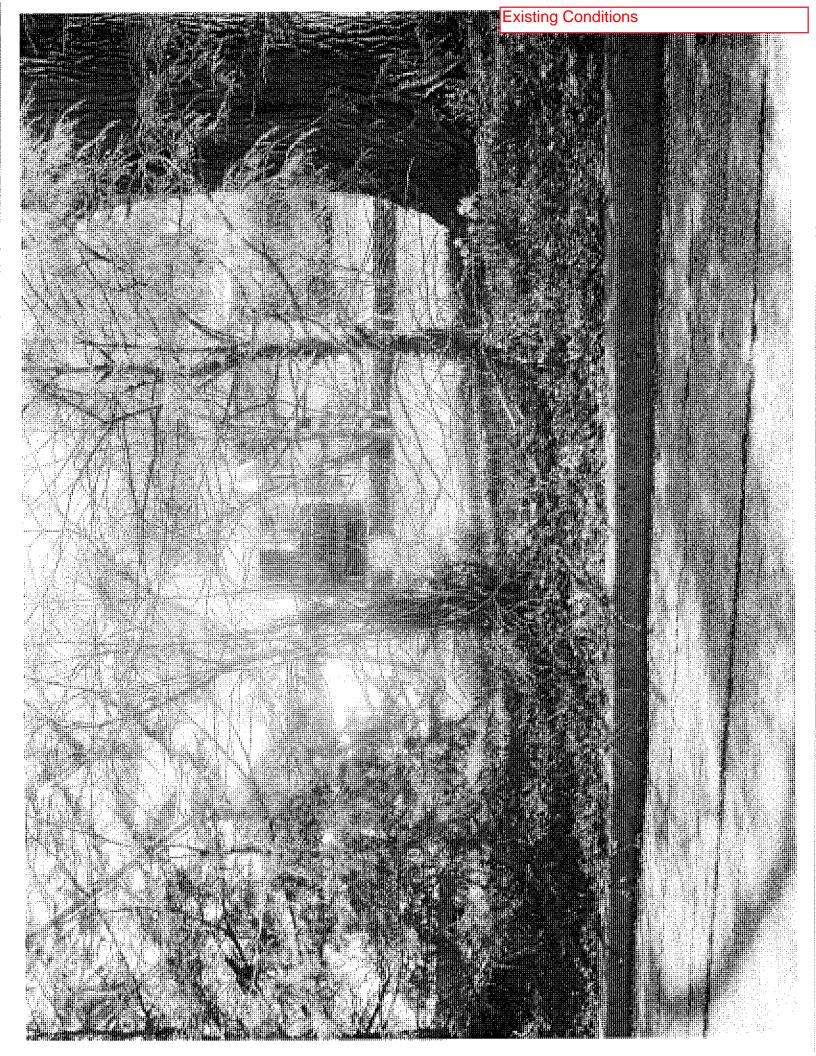
Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Hemlock_woolly_adelgid&oldid=781554368"

Categories: Phylloxeroidea Parasitic bugs Insect pests of temperate forests Tree diseases Tsuga Insects described in 1928

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Issued by Staff to the Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission

ADDRESS 1302 E. 2nd St.: Elm Heights

For the following work:

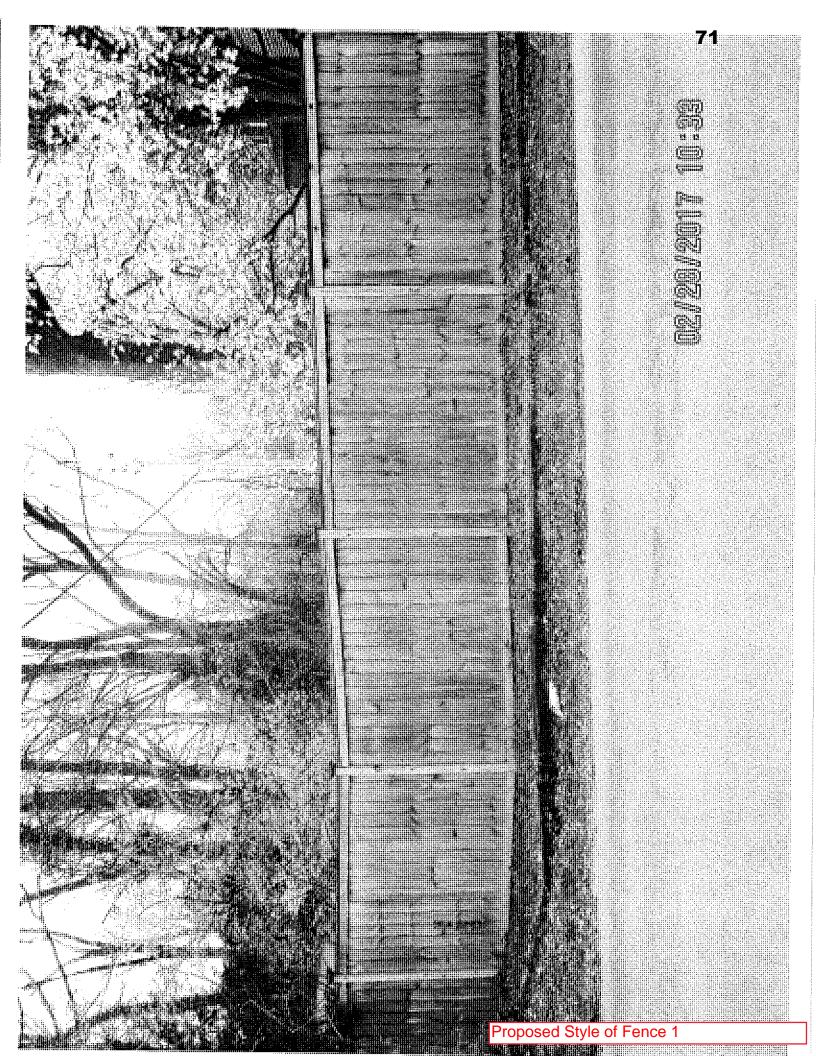
Removal of Evergreen trees along Highland Ave. and construct a 6' wooden fence along the back of the property and along Highland Ave. only 8' from the rear of house.

A copy of the complete approved plans may be obtained from the City of Bloomington, 401 N. Morton, Department of Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development under case number <u>COA-17-20</u> This Certificate is effective for two years following the date of issue. Exterior work outside the scope of this approval is not permitted and subject to fines outlined in Municipal Code, Title 8, Chapter 8.16.020.

Buttraug M Emenhiser, staff

Bethany Emenhiser, staff Bloomington Historic Preservation Commission

Approved: March 29, 2017





BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS STAFF REPORT LOCATION: 1000 S. Lincoln

CASE #: V-12-17 DATE: June 22, 2017

PETITIONER: Tim Kennedy 1000 S. Lincoln St., Bloomington

REQUEST: The petitioner is requesting a variance to allow a fence in excess of the Unified Development Ordinance maximum height requirements.

REPORT: The petitioner owns the single family home at the southwest corner of S. Lincoln St. and E. Allen Street. The property is zoned Residential Core (RC) and located within the Bryan Park Neighborhood.

On March 30, 2017, the Department's Zoning Compliance Planner issued a Notice of Violation to the property owner for a fence in excess of the maximum height requirements. The petitioner has repaired and expanded an existing non-conforming privacy fence, measuring 70" in height privacy fence along both street frontages. The new portions of the fence measure 72" in height.

The standards for maximum height in the UDO state that "forward of the front building wall of the primary structure, fences and walls shall not exceed 4 feet in height." The "front building wall" is defined as "the building elevation which fronts on a public street." Located on a corner, this property has frontages along both S. Lincoln St. and E. Allen St., while the functional front of the house is along S. Lincoln St. The area between the house and the sidewalk can be fenced with a 4-foot fence, but not the 6-foot fence that has been built.

The property owner removed existing privacy hedges that were along E. Allen St., and replaced the hedges with a 6 foot tall fence. A portion of the fence is lawful nonconforming or "grandfathered," while the newly constructed extension of the fence along E. Allen St. where the hedges previously were is in violation of UDO standards.

Along with his petitioner's statement, the petitioner submitted a list of 14 fences on corner lots. A majority of these are legally nonconforming or conforming, and four are potentially in violation.

CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

20.09.130 (e) Standards for Granting Variances from Development Standards:

A variance from the development standards of the Unified Development Ordinance may be approved only upon determination in writing that each of the following criteria is met:

1. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.

Proposed Findings: No adverse impacts anticipated by the proposed fence.

2. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general

welfare of the community.

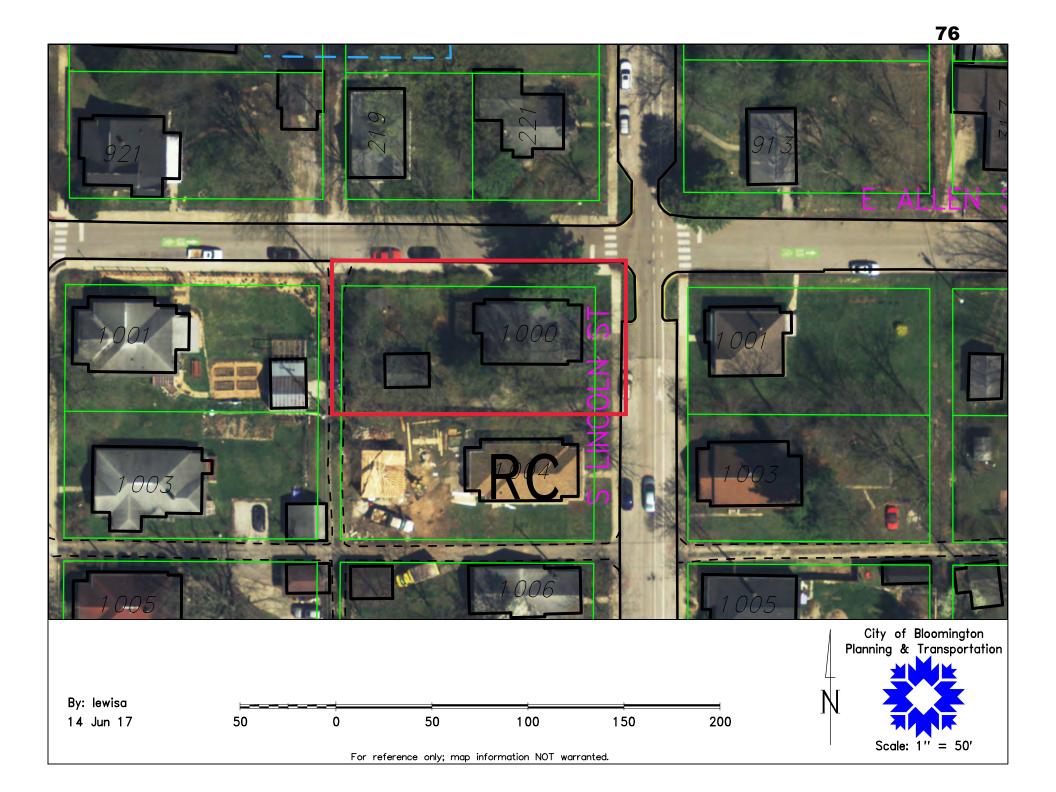
Proposed Findings: There is a negative impact on the public space which the standard was designed to protect. A 6-foot tall privacy fence within the front yard at this location would adversely impact the streetscape. There are existing sidewalks along both street frontages. The proposed fence would likely have a negative impact on the comfort level of pedestrians, primarily along E. Allen St.

3. The strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property; that the practical difficulties are peculiar to the property in question; that the variance will relieve practical difficulties.

Proposed Findings: There are no peculiar conditions on this property. The property in question is on a corner lot, meaning it has two front building walls. This is not a peculiar condition as there are many corner lots throughout the city facing the same issue. The UDO does not prohibit a fence in this location, rather it just limits the height of the fence to a maximum of 4 feet.

RECOMMENDATION: The Department recommends that the BZA adopt the proposed findings and deny V-12-17.





Request for a Fence Variance at 1000 South Lincoln Street



Fences at 1000 South Lincoln Street

This is in regard to the dog eared fence in the back yard of our property at 1000 South Lincoln Street. I recently learned from the city that the height of the fence violates a city ordinance. I am hoping that the city will grant me a variance and allow me to keep the fence in its present form.

First, I understand that ignorance of the law is no excuse, but it never occurred to me that we would not be allowed to build a fence in that location and that I should have asked the city first. One reason is that there already is a stockade fence on the property just to the east of the fence in question. This stockade fence was in place when we bought the property twenty years ago. Apparently, this portion of fence is not in violation of the law, perhaps since it existed before the law was instituted. Another reason that it didn't occur to me that privacy fences were not allowed is that they are such a common feature in our neighborhood – even in corner properties. I found fourteen examples of these types of fences in a cursory, forty-five minute drive around the neighborhood.

What existed before we put in the new fence was a very ratty and overgrown privacy hedge that was much taller than the fence that we have replaced it with. We tore out the hedge to be able to cut down an enormous, dying maple tree behind the house – which was in danger of falling either on our house or into Allen Street. Without the hedge the house and the deck behind the house was completely exposed and our tenants still wanted the privacy that the hedge afforded, so we put in the fence. As you can see, this has become a viscous (and expensive) cycle.

There seem to be two key problems with the new fence in the eyes of the city. First, our fence is 72" tall and city law only allows for a 48" fence. The existing stockade fence is 70" tall. The second problem seems to be one of naming. In my mind our back yard has always been our back yard, but since our lot is at the corner of Lincoln and Allen Streets the city considers it a "front" yard. I think the purpose of the law may be to prevent people from barricading themselves and obscuring a view of their houses.

The existing stockade fence really obscures a view of the house more than the new portion of fence does. To be clear, I really do believe that a fence in this location *should* obscure the house a little to afford some privacy. This has to do with the inherent nature of the location. Since the property is located on the down slope of a hill, the sidewalk that runs along Allen Street is significantly higher than our property and people walking along Allen Street can look down into the house and the deck behind the house. If you are sitting on the deck behind the house you are pretty much at eye level with or a little below eye level with people walking long Allen Street.

Petitioner's Statement

Without the fence or with a shorter fence it would not be very nice or very private. The deck behind the house is a key feature of the property. When we lived in the house we spent a lot of time there having parties or cookouts or even just relaxing. I know that our tenants use the deck a great deal too. Without the 72" fence this sense of privacy is diminished and I would argue so is the value of our property.

Over the years we have done extensive work to maintain and improve our property at 1000 South Lincoln Street. In 2003 we did an extensive renovation to the exterior of the house by removing the aluminum siding and restoring the original wood exterior. As I mentioned, we removed a potentially dangerous tree which cost us \$1870.00, we removed an unsightly and overgrown hedge for \$675.00 and installed a very nice fence in its place for \$1240.00.

We hope that the city will allow us to keep the new fence that we have installed in its present form.

Tim Kennedy and Eve Mansdorf May 8, 2017