

Good Evening,

I am Donna Tope, representative for Rick Richter, my son, who owns 601 East Hoover.

This is a student rental home which I have managed for him for many years. It has a City Certificate of Compliance, which we are renewing next week. We have kept it in good repair and up to code.

The zoning restrictions placed on it in the 50s included a 30 ft rear yard setback. The house and covered porch have been in place since 1901, so the zoning made it a Non-Conforming Structure...that is the only zoning regulation it does not meet. It is zoned R4C with an occupancy limit of 6. It currently has 5 bedrooms and one full bathroom. We rent to 5 tenants, we don't double up bedrooms and with one bathroom it is hard for the 5 tenants to get ready in the morning, afternoon, or evening, whenever they get up or go out. There is a kitchen that opens into a small living area.

Our proposal is to build a two story addition off the rear, replacing the existing covered porch, using dimensions that make a comfortable living space on both floors. We want to bring the laundry area out of the Michigan basement, where duct work for the furnace is 5 ft high and for tall people create a decapitation hazard if you are going to or from the laundry area. We want to put a nice laundry center, with two washing machines, two dryers and a work area on the first floor of the addition. We propose a full modern convenient bathroom, and extending the existing living area into the addition. We will have a second staircase to the second floor to a spacious 6th bedroom and closet. We will then have 6 occupants in 6 bedrooms and plenty of living space for them. We are adding AC...much needed in the summer.

Our architect is Lincoln Poley, longtime and well respected AA architect who designed our family development of 4 duplex condominiums at Baldwin and Cambridge next to our family home in Burns Park.

1. Addressing the **Standards for Approval to Alter a Non-Conforming Structure**: We are meeting the zoning Chapter except for the same placement non-conformance it currently has, and we are extending 3 more feet into the rear setback, which is minimal when you see the existing houses on our block and which back onto our rear property line...they all are nonconforming for the same reason as this home.

a. **The addition will not have a detrimental effect on neighboring property**: If you look at the exterior photo, you can see the house has lots of open space, and gets great sun all day long...especially in the afternoon. The lot is 34ft. wide and 66ft. deep, or 2,244 sq. ft. of lot area. The addition uses up 70 sq. ft. of open space...the existing is 1,454 sq. ft. and the addition will leave 1,384 sq. ft. of open space. All the other homes on our block have much less open space than we will have after the addition is built.

The adjacent homes on the block and their lot area and existing open space are:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Lot size</u>	<u>Lot Area</u>	<u>Existing Open Space</u>
601 E. Hoover	34' x 66'	2,244 sq. ft.	proposed 1,384 sq. ft.
603 E. Hoover	31' x 66'	2,046 sq. ft.	1,262 sq. ft. with a 325 sq.ft. concrete impermeable slab
605 E. Hoover	29' x 66'	1,914 sq. ft.	1,028 sq. ft.
607 E. Hoover	29' x 72'	2,088 sq. ft.	1,415 sq. ft. with 269 sq. ft. parking impermeable slab
611 E. Hoover	35' x 50'	1,750 sq. ft.	950 sq. ft. with a 190 sq.ft.parking impermeable surface

We provide 4 off street parking spaces and we DO NOT park on the front lawn. The houses on our block all provide fewer off street parking spaces AND ALL of them park in the front lawn and count those spaces as off street spaces.

2. Standards for Variance Approval:

a. The hardship is exceptional and peculiar to the property because they were created by the zoning placement regulations a half century after the property was built. The standards will never be met, and the rationale for making a property non-conforming with new zoning regulations is to eliminate undesirable properties...the fact that this house has existed for over 100 years as a student rental speaks to the fallacy of the rationale...and the house should not be kept from being upgraded and improved because of a false premise making it nonconforming.

b. The higher financial return of leasing to one more occupant does not offset the approximately \$50,000 cost of upgrading the property with the addition...we will not recapture the investment with higher rent for decades. The major upgrade in the quality of life for our tenants is a valid reason to eliminate the terrible inconvenience having one bathroom, an inaccessible laundry, and no AC the existing house creates for our tenants. The existing interior space does not allow for adding a bathroom or relocating the laundry to the first floor.

c. The upgrade in even one student housing unit with the attendant increase in quality of life for all the residents of the house is a public benefit in this neighborhood.

d. The existing interior space does not allow for adding a bathroom or relocating the laundry to the first floor, but we are able to add AC, so we will do that no matter what the decision here is.

e. The size of the addition makes a comfortable 10 ft. room width, and is only 3 ft. wider than the existing 5 ft. wide covered porch, which is the minimum interior room width to make a workable laundry area or bathroom with modern conveniences. The length just makes the addition consistent with the width of the existing house. We will make an attractive back door entry that will be more convenient for the residents coming from the adjacent parking area.

Thank you for staff for their succinct and clear report, and thank you for your careful consideration of our proposal. It is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Donna K. Tope

For 601 East Hoover