

**From:** Thomas Lyon  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 22, 2018 1:27 PM  
**To:** Planning <[Planning@a2gov.org](mailto:Planning@a2gov.org)>  
**Subject:** Concerns about Request for Waiver for 2505 Londonderry Road

Dear Ann Arbor Planning Staff,

I live in Ann Arbor Hills at [2417 Londonderry Road](#). Neighbors of mine at [2505 Londonderry Road](#) are requesting permission to build an addition to their home which would be out of conformance with city development codes. I am unable to attend the public hearing tonight but would like to register my concerns about this matter.

According to a postcard I received from the City, [2505 Londonderry Road](#) is currently out of conformity with neighborhood norms for setbacks from the street. The norm is 35 feet, but 2505 Londonderry is only set back by 25 feet. Thus, the home is already out of conformance with city guidelines for the neighborhood.

Now the owners wish to receive permission for another nonconformity, which would involve adding a second story to a portion of their house. This is a 5-bedroom, 5-bathroom house of 3,577 square feet. It is not a small house. Yet the owners now seek to turn it into a massive 7-bedroom, 6-bathroom structure.

The Ann Arbor Hills neighborhood is a wonderful place to call home, and is one of the most beautiful residential areas in the city. It is home to many unique mid-century modern homes designed and built by architects such as George Brigham, David Osler, Robert Pond and Robert Metcalf. The yards here are large and most of them are very well landscaped. Most of the homes here are carefully designed to fit well on their properties, and many of the modern homes in particular are built with an aesthetic of connecting the inner and outer parts of the home. It is a beautiful neighborhood whose property values are based in part on the landscaping, large lots, and homes that are well conformed to their lots.

I am very concerned that Ann Arbor Hills may fall victim to the recent national trend of tear-downs replacing charming mid-century homes with McMansions that crowd their lots and the lots of their neighbors. A related trend is that of building massive extensions to existing homes that alter the atmosphere of well-established neighborhoods. Allowing 2505 Londonderry to waive city building and development codes would set a precedent that would encourage exactly this sort of trend. If this home is allowed to do a large-scale expansion, what is to prevent my next-door neighbors from adding another story to their home? I greatly value the feeling of privacy in my back yard that comes in part because my neighbors' homes are not towering above my house and backyard. I strongly oppose any actions that would waive city guidelines and place this distinctive neighborhood, and my own property values, at risk.

This is absolutely not personal with respect to the owners of 2505 Londonderry and has nothing to do with them as individuals. However, they knew what they were purchasing when they bought the home. It is already one of the largest houses in our part of Ann Arbor Hills, and already out of conformance with neighborhood norms for setbacks. I see no reason to violate city zoning restrictions again to encourage a massive expansion of an already-large home. If the owners really need a 7-bedroom home with 6 baths, there are plenty of new subdivisions with McMansions that may be more suitable. There is no need to turn Ann Arbor Hills into yet another of development of that type.

Sincerely,

Tom Lyon

-- Thomas P. Lyon

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