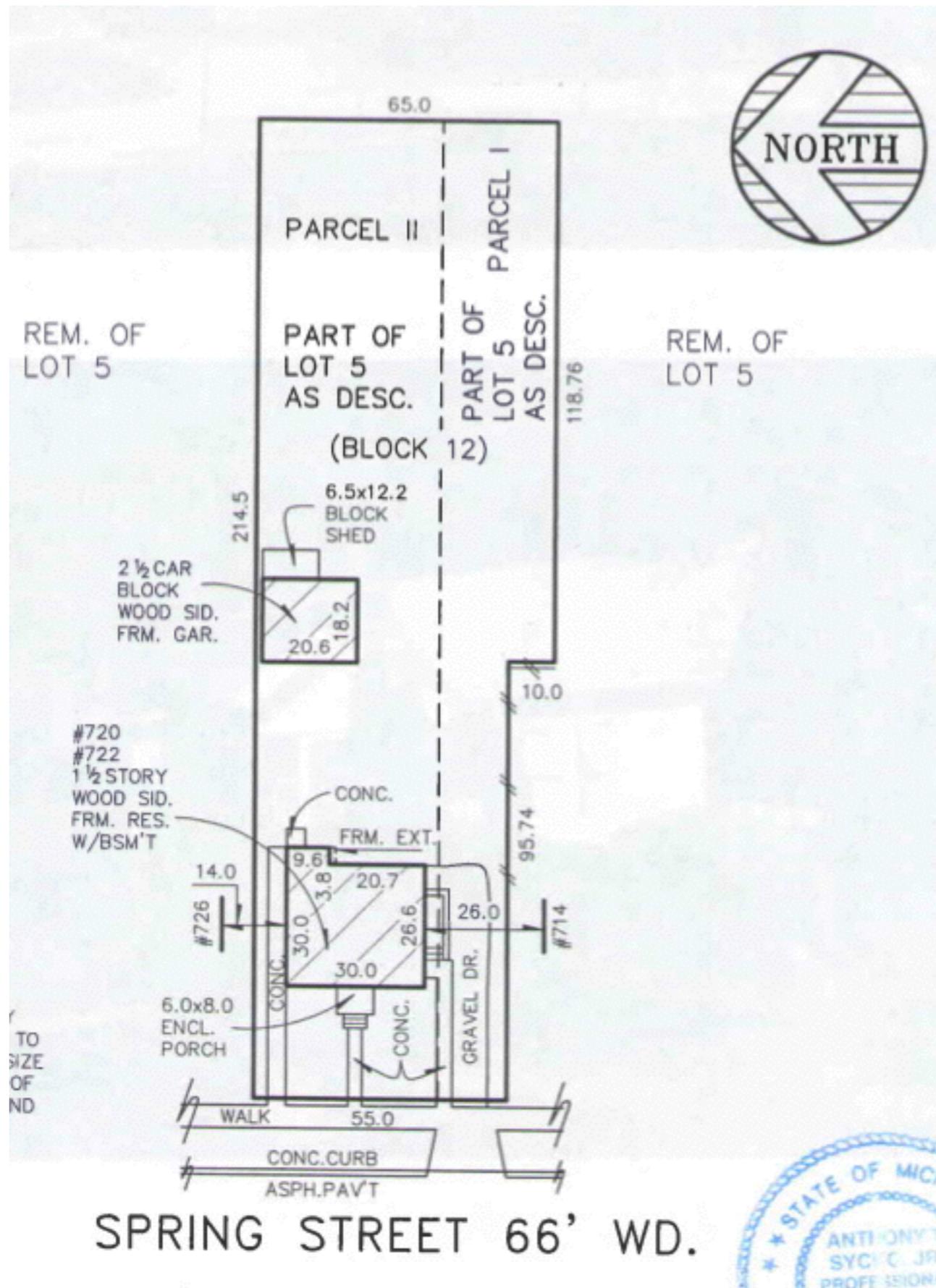




# **720-722 Spring Street ZBA Information Packet**

# MORTGAGE SURVEY OF 720 & 722 SPRING STREET



These forested lots have a steep drop off in the back half of the parcels.

The low area at the back of the lot is forested with a mix of native and invasive trees

## 720 SPRING STREET

- Build-able lot with a tax ID number
- No house has been built on this lot

## 722 SPRING STREET

- A build-able lot with a circa 1925 house
- House outline is shown on survey
- 40' wide, 8580 square feet

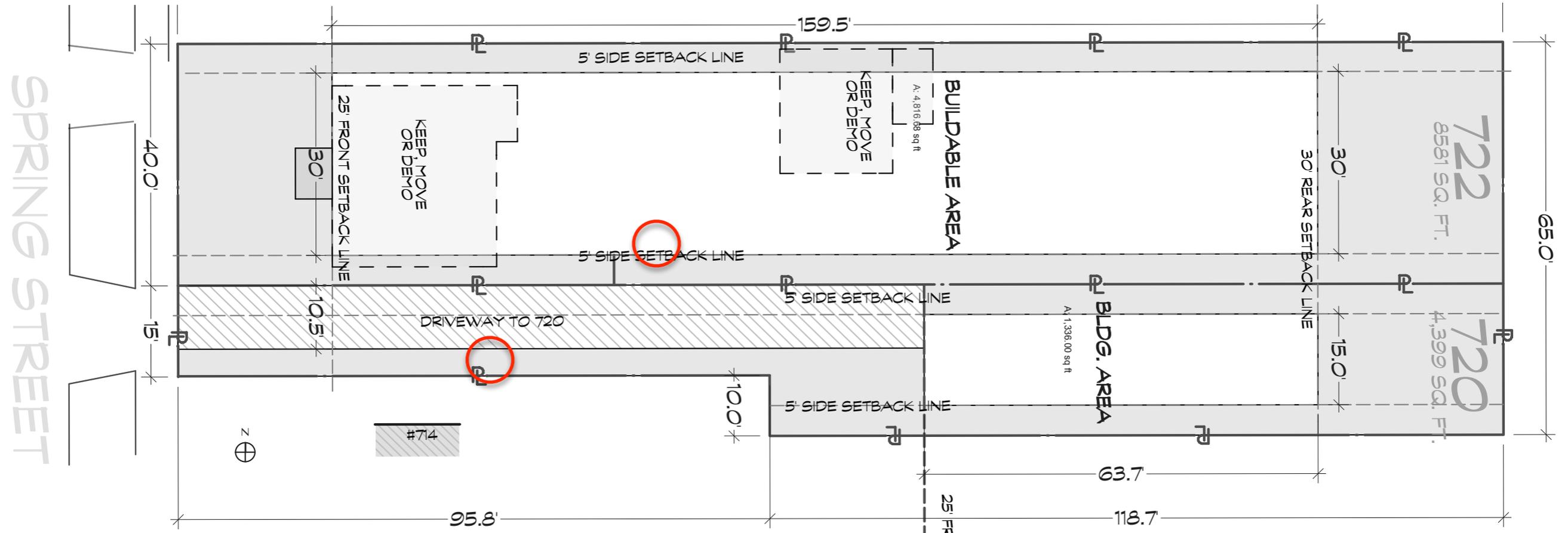
## COMBINED LOT

- 214.5 feet deep
- 55' wide at front, 65' wide at rear
- 60.1' average width
- 12,976 square feet in total

# ***STREET VIEW OF FRONT OF THE LOTS***



# LOT PLAN OF 720 & 722 SPRING STREET



## 2 BUILD-ABLE LOTS

- The white areas are the build-able area for each lot
- The red circles are 2 American Elm trees
- The driveway to 720 Spring must go through the diagonal hatching, along with water, sewer, natural gas and other utilities
- There are 2 curb cuts and 2 driveways within 30 feet of each other

## DRAWBACKS TO UNCONNECTED HOMES

- A driveway and utility hookups through the main root structure of the American Elm trees means killing both of them
- Increased impervious surfaces & greater storm water runoff
- Adversely affects the ecology of the low forested area.
- Rear house would lack good aesthetics

# ***THE MATURE AMERICAN ELM TREES***



The red circles on the lot plan represent two American Elm trees that may be older than the city of Ann Arbor itself

A driveway and utility hookups for a separate house at 720 Spring Street would go right through the middle of these trees, killing both of them

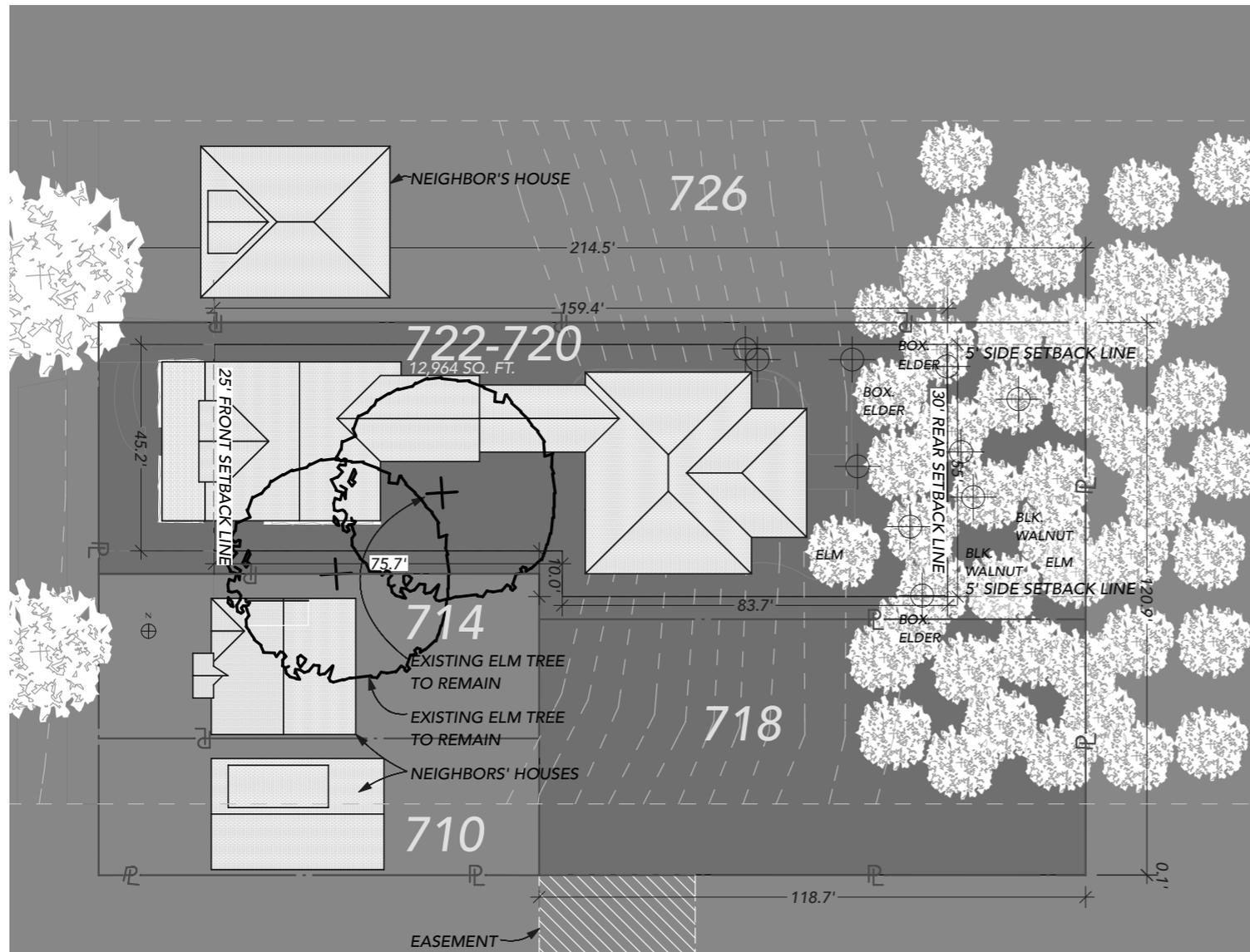
There are very few American Elm trees left in Ann Arbor that are as large as these. They are currently healthy

As part of the project, these trees would be trimmed, treated and carefully built around

Final placement of foundations, pier footings and grade beams would be dependent on the root structure of these trees. Encroachment upon main root structures will be avoided

The owners would be going to great lengths in complexity of the project and monetary investment to save both trees, improving the curb appeal and preserving the ecology of these lots.

# THE PROPOSED PROJECT - COMBINED LOTS with A 2-FAMILY HOME



Site Plan - Combining Lots 720 + 722

Article III, 5:24 requires 60' of frontage and 8500 square feet to build a 2-family structure.

The combined lot has only 55' of frontage (although 60.1' average width), 5' short of needed. The combined lot is 12,976 square feet, 35% larger than needed.

This variance request is to allow a 2-family home to be built on a lot with 55' of frontage if 720 & 722 Spring Street are combined into one lot.

This variance would make the lots more conforming to the intent of the zoning ordinances.

2-family duplex homes are ubiquitous throughout Water Hill.

# ***FRONT SETBACK FOR 722 SPRING STREET***



The Water Hill Neighborhood is full of large front sitting porches, which helps create the community spirit that our neighborhood is known for. This project aims to continue that neighborhood feature

We are also requesting a variance to set the front porch at 18.5 feet from the sidewalk.

The front wall of the new house would be at 26 feet, as are **8 out of 10** houses on the east side of the 700 block of Spring Street.

## **HOUSES WITHIN 100 FEET**

**Average setback of structure - 22.7 feet**

**Only 2 houses** have projecting front porches. Others either indent or do not have a porch.

Average setback of houses with projecting front porch - **19 feet**

Setback of 732 Spring porch - **18 feet**

## **HOUSES ON THE 700 BLOCK**

Most of the houses on the block have projecting front porches. You can see some of these porches looking North in the photo to the left

The new house front wall would be set at 26', the same as most houses on the east side

This will help us create a house that lives to the front, while helping protect the Elm tree in the back

# FRONT SETBACKS ON 700 BLOCK OF SPRING STREET



## HOUSES WITH 100 FEET ON EAST SIDE

Average setback of house or porch- **22.7 feet**

Only 2 houses have projecting front porches. Others either indent or do not have a porch.

Average setback of houses within 100 feet with projecting front porch - **19 feet**

Setback of 732 Spring (within 100') - **18 feet**

## HOUSES ON THE 700 BLOCK OF SPRING

Average setback of building - **19.7 feet**

Range of setbacks - **12.5 feet to 25'**

## NARRATIVE

There is no set pattern on the block for porches or for house setbacks. Although most houses on the east side of the block within 100 feet of the subject property do not have projecting porches, those that do are at or close to the porch setback we are requesting.

On the block, there are fully **10 houses** that have porches projecting near the setback we are requesting or less, some nearby homes across the street being much closer to the sidewalk



# ***PROPOSED PROJECT BENEFITS***



The house at 722 Spring Street has been neglected for decades. The foundation is crumbling and the framing is compromised throughout the home.

While the existing house would be torn down, the windows, framing and most finishes will be used in the new home - everything salvageable will be recycled.

A craftsman-era bungalow style of the front home (renderings to the left) would maintain the current streetscape & roofline height to be consistent with the other homes on the block.

A curb cut at the street would be removed.

The large Elm trees and low height rear house will keep the green space in the back accessible to the street & neighbors

These homes will blend into the neighborhood well.

The new homes will be a model of energy-efficient green building.



# PROPOSED PROJECT BENEFITS



The rear house would be a low-pitched hip roof prairie-style home

The rear house would be small, under 2000 square feet, to keep it the least obtrusive possible

The American Elm trees would be trimmed & treated in an effort to keep them free of Dutch Elm Disease

All possible care will be taken during construction to preserve the health of the Elms

Native trees in the rear forest area will remain intact while invasive species are removed

The same number of homes would be built on the property, but this configuration is more in keeping with the neighborhood and the lot size

718 Spring Street would remain forested green space



## ***OTHER CONSIDERATIONS***

- The goal of this project is to keep the development as low-impact as possible, retain the character of the neighborhood and beautify the house and lot.
- We strongly feel that destroying these ancient American Elms would harm the fabric of the neighborhood. Many neighbors are very fond of these trees, and have asked us to save them. We would prefer to build around them, and have them trimmed and treated for Dutch Elm Disease.
- Some flexibility on exact building footprint would be required until the root structure can be mapped out more thoroughly.
- This variance request is primarily for permission to build a 2-family structure on a lot with 55' of street frontage if 2 single homes lots are combined.
- We also request a variance to build the front porch at 18.5 feet from the sidewalk to match the other homes with projecting front porches on the east side of the 700 block
- This variance would not reduce the density of the housing that can be built on the lots currently, but only creates a better-looking home that also protects green space, site ecology & water infiltration.
- The affected neighbors are highly in favor of this project

# ***CONTACT INFORMATION***



**MEADOWLARK**

**DOUG SELBY**

P: (734) 332-1500

F: (734) 332-1515

C: (734) 262-0825

doug@homewithmeadowlark.com

- Meadowlark Builders would be performing all building activities on the property.
- These are intended to be quality, energy-efficient homes that are built to a high quality standard.
- Both Meadowlark co-founders are Water Hill residents and live one block away from this site.

12/26/2014

Ann Arbor Zoning Board of Appeals,

This letter is to express my support for the plan proposed for 720, 722, and 718 Spring street.

I own and live at 714 Spring street, which is adjacent to all of the properties in question. Any development on the 720/722/718 properties could significantly impact the enjoyment and value of my property. I believe that the plan put forward by Doug is in the best interests of the neighborhood and I support the plan.

Doug has listened to the neighbor's concerns and adjusted his plans, which is commendable. Some of these changes may have resulted in a plan that may be harder for the ZBA to approve. This includes saving a 150+ year old elm that would likely have to be removed under most development scenarios. For this reason I would encourage the ZBA to consider and approve the requested zoning variances.

My support is in reference to the plan shared by Doug Selby on December 21, 2014. This plan includes saving both of the 150+ year old elm trees, and the commitment to purchase 718 Spring St and maintain it as a forested lot. If these plans change I would reconsider my support.

I plan to attend the ZBA meeting where this is considered, but please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Aaron Hula  
714 Spring St.  
(734) 846-1808  
ahula33@gmail.com

November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014

To the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I support the zoning appeal to combine 720 & 722 Spring Street and allow 2 connected homes to be built on the combined lot within the parameters as outlined in the ZBA application document.

I believe this project is the best possible use of these individual lots, and would help retain the neighborhood character and natural features of the land

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
JOHN SWERDLOW	729 SPRING ST.	
<del>RICHARD ANDERSON</del>	726 SPRING ST.	
SCOTT & LINDA PHILLIPS	723 Spring St.	