

Gary George
80 Newtonville Ave
Newton, MA 02458

May 14, 2014

Re: Petition 141-13 (3) Driveway adjustment
Nikzum Gordon at 72 Newtonville Ave

To: Newton Board of Aldermen

Dear Members,

I hope the Board can accept my apology for venting frustration at your recent meeting regarding the actions of our neighbor who objects to the petitioner's driveway project. As an abutting neighbor, also with a difficult driveway, though less steep than the petitioner's, I fully support their project because :

- 1) Their driveway is dangerous. Like ours it slopes severely to the street, which itself is sloped.
 - I've had numerous near-accidents when I've backed from our garage on icy days only to slide out of control into traffic that was also unable to stop.
 - I know of two occasions when visitor's cars have overcome their parking brakes on our driveways and rolled into the street to sit there until we get a knock on the door.
 - It's difficult and dangerous to open car doors on our steep driveways, particularly for children.
- 2) There are houses on our block with driveways configured as the petitioner proposes however they consist of un-finished raw concrete while the petitioner commits to using attractive and expensive finishes.

Regarding delays to the project. The petitioner has made every effort to adjust their plans to comply with the sometimes changing city requirements yet their improvement projects have been variously delayed for two years. Consequently the petitioner and neighbors continue to live with an eyesore. It appears that some of the delay is attributable to a single, non-abutting complainer and organizer. This driveway is not her first campaign.

While the following items mentioned at the board meeting may not bear on the Board's actions, allow me to correct some of the neighbor's statements here:

- a) There is no parking problem on Newtonville Ave.
- b) The petitioner did not remove trees not located on their property.
- c) The fence damage in question was done by trees not located on the petitioner's property. The condo owned fence remains broken down and unsightly in five places all caused by condo owned

trees that fell onto our properties yet the complainer encouraged the condo to write otherwise. The petitioner replaced the condo fence abutting the petitioner's property at the petitioner's expense.

d) There have been no after-hours noise or other construction disruption. (We live adjacent to the petitioner while the complainer lives across the street and down the hill.)

e) The condo owns an unmaintained, unsightly concrete pond which causes severe runoff across the petitioners property and onto the street. The petitioner's predecessor constructed a retaining wall that exacerbated the problem. The petitioner removed that wall and contracted a new wall whereupon the complainer called the police and building inspector repeatedly. The city required the petitioner to remove the new wall and replace it with two engineered walls and dry well system which required the excavation of the petitioner's entire front yard at a cost of over \$30,000. All to remedy a problem caused entirely by the condo.

Rather than go on, and in behalf of neighbors who know the petitioners to be lovely and considerate people who are trying their best to comply with the city's requirements, I request the board consider the petitioner's request on its merits and allow them to finish their project soon and get the site cleaned up.

Respectfully yours,

Gary George