

April 22, 2014

Board of Aldermen,

We, the abutters, who reside in the two homes directly across the street from 78 Lovett Road, are not in favor of the existing rear wall at said address. A letter was submitted on behalf of one of us who could not attend the public hearing on February 11, 2014. The letter was given to Alderman Schwartz but it was not included in the packet distributed for the subsequent meeting on March 4th. Although this letter was resent electronically shortly thereafter, it was not shared publicly at the meeting on March 18, 2014.

We are the only abutters who are forced to look at this monstrous wall every day. The wall is in direct view of most of the windows in our homes. The height increase of the wall is not simply an extra foot but represents an additional 8 feet making the total height of the wall approximately 12 feet! The abutters on both sides of 78 Lovett Road have very large bushes and a fence that screens their view of the wall. One of the abutters does not have windows facing the side of the house and the other abutter has tall bushes that cover the windows. From our view, it will take some years before the newly proposed landscaping will prove substantial enough to become a visual buffer of the wall.

We remain concerned about a potential drainage problem affecting the entire neighborhood. The city engineer's memorandum dated March 4, 2014, requires installment of a dry well, a trench drain and a gas trap to protect ground water from possible gas and oil contamination. Additionally, an operations and maintenance plan is required for long-term maintenance of the drainage improvements by the homeowner. What is the mechanism for monitoring such a system?

At the March 4, 2014 meeting of the land use committee, the aldermen recommended a structural engineer to review and certify the rear wall. The engineer who certified the wall by affidavit dated February 7, 2014, is not a structural engineer. He is licensed as a mechanical engineer. The affidavit submitted states that the wall was reviewed on the following dates: August 13, 2013 and February 6, 2014. If this information i.e. affidavit, was available and accepted before the first two hearings (February 11th and March 4th), why did the land use committee request a structural engineer and why wasn't this affidavit presented prior to that meeting date? Additionally, how was the rear wall inspected by the engineer on August 13, 2013 if the wall was not completed until November 2013? Furthermore,

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how was the wall vetted on February 6, 2014, one day after the biggest snowfall of the winter on February 5, 2014 (10.9 inches)?

Mr. Gordon, who is a neighbor, not an abutter, spoke in favor of the wall at 78 Lovett Road at the March 4th meeting. He acknowledged that he only sees the wall when he drives by the property. Recently, in a Sunday Globe West article dated April 13, 2014, Mr. Gordon states that he sees the wall from his home. He cannot see the wall or the yard from his property because the wall is obscured by the neighbor's fence and mature landscaping.

Respectfully submitted,

Abutters of 78 Lovett Road

