



Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Fwd: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

2 messages

Betsy Lehman <betsyl1@me.com>
To: csterling@cityofevanston.org

Sun, Mar 13, 2022 at 11:32 AM

Mr. Sterling—please see below. There was a typo in your address on my initial email.

Best,
Betsy

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mail Delivery System <postmaster@icloud.com>
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Date: March 13, 2022 at 11:29:51 AM CDT
To: betsyl1@me.com

This is a system-generated message to inform you that your email could not be delivered to one or more recipients. Details of the email and the error are as follows:

<csterling@cityofevanston.org>: Host or domain name not found. Name service error for name=cityofevanston.org type=A: Host not found
Reporting-MTA: dns; st43p00im-ztfb10063301.me.com
X-Postfix-Queue-ID: C16117004C3
X-Postfix-Sender: rfc822; betsyl1@me.com
Arrival-Date: Sun, 13 Mar 2022 16:29:46 +0000 (UTC)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; *****@*****
Original-Recipient: rfc822;csterling@cityofevanston.org
Action: failed
Status: 5.4.4
Diagnostic-Code: X-Postfix; Host or domain name not found. Name service error for name=cityofevanston.org type=A: Host not found

From: Betsy Lehman <betsyl1@me.com>
Subject: Re: **1727 Hinman Avenue**
Date: March 13, 2022 at 11:29:44 AM CDT
To: csterling@cityofevanston.org, cruiz@cityofevanston.org, Johanna Nyden <jnyden@cityofevanston.org>
Cc: Clare Kelly <ckelly@cityofevanston.org>, Daniel Biss <dbiss@cityofevanston.org>, Aleca <Alecasullivan@gmail.com>, Kelley Gandurski <kgandurski@cityofevanston.org>, Betsy Lehman <betsyl1@me.com>

Mr. Sterling, Mr. Ruiz, and Ms. Nyden:

I recently emailed you all regarding the proposed addition at [1727 Hinman Avenue](#). I was surprised to see that my comments were not included in the public information packet found online. On fact, the only included correspondence was from the architect, Thomas Ahleman. Even more surprising was the below, found on page 59:

Public Comment

City Staff has communicated with a neighboring property owner who objected to the proposal due to concerns with its proposed use – specifically a belief that the property will be used as a rooming house without special use approval. Staff communicated that the Preservation Commissions review is limited to

the standards for alteration and the standards for construction. The Commission has no purview over the use of a property or violations of the zoning ordinance that remain speculative.

This is disturbing on many levels, the primary one being an apparent effort by City staff to chill resident comment, and preemptively influence the decision of the Preservation Commission on a matter that has potentially grave importance to the quiet use and enjoyment of my property, and those in the immediate vicinity. The intended use of this property is not speculative. The immediate neighbors have heard from multiples sources—including the owner himself—that the intent is to expand the home to accommodate 5-6 Northwestern students, including the owners' daughter; the proposed plans are fully consistent with this use, especially given the fact that this is not the owners' primary residence.

Further, having now seen the plans in greater detail, I believe the proposal is out of scale and would harm my southern views and light, especially in my home office, which is directly adjacent to the proposed expansive two-story addition.

Peggy Reitz (the neighbor to the immediate south of 1727 Hinman) and I reached out to the Steve and Jessica Sarowitz, the owners, on behalf of all the neighbors in an effort to engage them in dialogue about this project. We had hoped they might be willing to at least hear our concerns. No one wants an acrimonious, unpleasant environment on our block; indeed, up until this point, and certainly with the prior owners of 1727 Hinman, respectful and affable relationships have been the norm. Unfortunately, the Sarowitz's did not even bother to acknowledge our outreach, let alone respond to it. It's highly disappointing, and, in our minds, suggestive of the fact that there is no interest in, or sensitivity to, our very legitimate concerns about the impact of an unsupervised de-facto dormitory on our block.

I would like to request that City staff and Alderman Clare Kelly facilitate a meeting on this proposal prior to the commission issuing a ruling. This has precedence with regard to other proposals with the potential for significant impact on the neighborhood. I believe it would be beneficial for both the owners and the neighbors to have the opportunity to hear each other out, and ideally, find areas of understanding and common ground.

At minimum, all opinions on this matter should be included in the posted materials. The neighborhood deserves transparency about this project, not the City staff taking action that implies they are putting their finger on the scale. Please confirm that my previous correspondence and this follow-up will be added to the public information available online.

Thank you,
Betsy Lehman
[1733 Hinman Avenue](#)

On Mar 1, 2022, at 5:56 PM, Betsy Lehman <betsyl1@me.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Sterling, Mr. Ruiz, and Ms. Nyden:

I am reaching out regarding the proposal for an addition to the property at [1727 Hinman Avenue](#). I have lived next door at [1733 Hinman Avenue](#) since 2000, and grew up in Evanston as well. This community, and its neighborhoods, are vitally important to me.

While I realize this is simply a hearing on the historical appropriateness of the addition, there is a more significant statutory/zoning issue to be considered. First and foremost, this is a property occupied by the teenage daughter of the owners (Steve and Jessica Sarowitz, who purchased the house under cover of an LLC). Their daughter is currently a first-year student at Northwestern University. The intent of the owners, as relayed to another neighbor, is to build a "5-6 girl dormitory," with the hope that Evanston's 3 Unrelated Rule will not be enforced. I have not spoken with the owners directly about this; in fact, I only heard about these plans from a worker at the home this past summer. When I expressed my concern for my own quiet use and enjoyment, it seemed to be enough to prompt a phone call from one of the Sarowitz's employees. I asked who would be living in the house, what the plans were to build an addition and for whom, and other related questions. Every step of the way, I received answers that were as opaque as possible. Indeed, even when I asked directly if the teenage

daughter would be living in the house the coming fall, the answer I received was, "We're not sure yet."

The plan has always been to build a de-facto dormitory at [1727 Hinman Avenue](#), one without even the the minor oversight of a Residential Advisor, as would be the case with a sanctioned university dorm. This is in clear violation of the 3 Unrelated Rule, as I know is the case at many other homes throughout Evanston where the presence of Northwestern students has dramatically, and negatively, affected the quality of life for the neighbors in close proximity.

Unfortunately, the Sarowitz's have shown little concern for the neighbors surrounding 1727 Hinman. There has been no proactive communication to solicit feedback, address potential concerns regarding the noise and litter that has been characteristic of other student properties in Evanston, or even to simply introduce themselves. It's very much antithetical to the feel of the neighborhood for the last 20 years, and, in my view, indicative of a lack of awareness/interest in how their plans may affect the homes next door/close by. There have already been a few incidences of noise disruption, including one evening where I was woken up in the middle of the night by a person pounding on the door, screaming profanities. I have no idea if this was a friend of the Sarowitz's daughter, or some other person staying at the home; there seems to be a regular stream of people coming and going. I did not reach out at the time, as I had hoped that a more collegial and neighborly relationship might be possible. I will note than on the two occasions where I reached out to the Sarowitz's or their employee (overgrowth of the front lawn and a question about snow plowing in the alley), they were very responsive. I had hoped that this might encourage further communication and transparency about the building plans, but that was not the case. The postcard announcing the 3/8/22 hearing was the first time I heard that architectural plans had been submitted. It's disappointing, to say the very least.

I understand that my concerns are already the reality in the area immediately west of Northwestern; noise, litter, and disruption are prevalent in the neighborhoods in and around Orrington Avenue. It's clear that real estate investors have already attacked there, and are circling the waters in many areas of Evanston. Their goals are not to diversify neighborhoods or make affordable housing more of a reality, two issues of importance to many Evanstonians, including myself. To the contrary, they are chopping up houses and charging exorbitant rents to NU students, who, more often than not, see these spaces not as homes, but as temporary raucous social environments, leaving their neighbors with little recourse other than reaching out to the police. This is not what most people want to do, nor is it in the best interests of the community at large or the students.

Additionally, my worries go beyond the potential noise disruption and quality of life issues. I have real concern about how this might impact my own property values, and those of my neighbors. As the parent of a 21, 19, and 16 year-old, I can say absolutely that I would never knowingly purchase a home next to a group of teenagers living without adult supervision: I am concerned that future buyers may feel the same. In fact, I very much doubt the Sarowitz's would choose to do so either. I hope that the City and Northwestern will stand up against this.

It's one thing to buy a home, intended to be a permanent residence, make improvements, and join the community/neighborhood at large. It's entirely another to create a small college dormitory, which, I imagine once the Sarowitz's daughter has graduated, will transition to a true rental property, one where a relative of the owner is no longer in residence.

I look forward to your response, but am hoping to get specific answers to the following:

-Can you, given your role in overseeing property standards with the City, ascertain the intended use of this home before it is too late and the home is in occupancy violation with little remediation other than the usual ineffective hearings and insignificant corresponding fines? It's been abundantly clear from other student housing-related violations that these "consequences" do little to address the problem and, in this specific situation, I am quite sure fines will not be a disincentive to moving forward with their home expansion and occupancy plans, as the owners have extremely deep pockets.

-Will you please recommend that the Preservation Committee deny this certificate of appropriateness? It is not difficult to understand what the underlying purpose of this application is; indeed the owners and their employees have admitted as such. There will undoubtedly be negative consequences for our neighborhood, and perhaps would give other real estate investors or ultra-wealthy people with children at Northwestern a playbook for future student housing expansion into this, and other areas of Evanston, beyond those where they have already bought up numerous properties. I hope you believe that it is important to

support the Evanston residents living on this block and throughout the City.

Finally, I want to be clear that I deeply value the diversity that Evanston offers, including the prevalence of college students. I would be more than happy to have mixed-income housing in my neighborhood, and, in fact, live across the street from a number of condominium complexes and the national headquarters of a fraternity. My interest is in having neighbors who see our shared physical space as home. Further, I recognize that many Evanston housing statutes are not reflective of modern living arrangements, not to mention almost certainly have a history of discrimination at their root. I am fully supportive of updating our statutes, but I also feel that it's essential to think proactively about the unintended negative consequences of wiping away statutes without a thoughtful process of evaluation/assessment of the needs of all constituents, including current homeowners.

Thanks in advance for your attention and consideration.

Best,
Betsy Lehman

Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>
To: Betsy Lehman <betsyl1@me.com>
Cc: Carlos Ruiz <cruiz@cityofevanston.org>

Mon, Mar 14, 2022 at 9:18 AM

Ms. Lehman,

Thank you for sending your comments. I will circulate these amongst the Commissioners and post the two emails on the Commission website to be included as part of the public record.

Cade W. Sterling

Planner

Historic Preservation

City of Evanston

847-448-8231

Note: The contents of this electronic mail to/from any recipient hereto, any attachments hereto, and any associated metadata pertaining to this electronic mail, is subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et. seq.

[Quoted text hidden]



Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Proposed Expansion-1727 Hinman

3 messages

laura kimrey <lkimrey@comcast.net>

Mon, Mar 14, 2022 at 4:58 PM

To: "csterling@cityofevanston.org" <csterling@cityofevanston.org>, "cruiz@cityofevanston.org" <cruiz@cityofevanston.org>, "jnyden@cityofevanston.org" <jnyden@cityofevanston.org>

Cc: "ckelly@cityofevanston.org" <ckelly@cityofevanston.org>, "dbiss@cityofevanston.org" <dbiss@cityofevanston.org>, laura kimrey <lkimrey@comcast.net>

Dear Mr Sterling, Mr Ruiz, and Ms Nyden:

I live on the block that includes [1727 Hinman Avenue](#). After review of the design proposal, I am concerned with the scale of the expansion as well as the proposed use of the property. This is not a primary residence for the owners or for any of their family members. There is no evidence that it will be used as multigenerational housing. It is currently used as housing for Northwestern freshman students. It is clear that the proposed expansion would turn the house into, essentially, a private dorm for Northwestern University students. The proposed expansion would result in a McMansion eyesore in a historical district that already has seen too much irreplaceable architecture destroyed and encroached upon by nondescript buildings poorly conceived of and executed and that diminish the charm of Evanston's architecturally significant core. I strongly urge you to reject the design proposal.

Sincerely,

Laura Kimrey
lkimrey@comcast.net

Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, Mar 15, 2022 at 8:22 AM

To: laura kimrey <lkimrey@comcast.net>

Cc: Carlos Ruiz <cruiz@cityofevanston.org>, Johanna Nyden <jnyden@cityofevanston.org>

Thank you Laura,

I will circulate your comments amongst the Commission as well as add your comment to the public comment addendum on the Commissions webpage as to include it in the public record. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Cade W. Sterling
Planner

Historic Preservation

City of Evanston

847-448-8231

Note: The contents of this electronic mail to/from any recipient hereto, any attachments hereto, and any associated metadata pertaining to this electronic mail, is subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et. seq.

[Quoted text hidden]

13 March 2022

TO: The Evanston Preservation Commission

FROM: Janet Steidl (1401 Davis Street), Mary McWilliams (1606 Wesley Avenue), Joan Safford (1618 Wesley Avenue) and Amanda Ziehm (1632 Wesley Avenue)

RE: The proposed additions to the house at 1624 Wesley Avenue

We four neighbors—Janet Steidl (1401 Davis Street), Mary McWilliams (1606 Wesley Avenue), Joan Safford (1618 Wesley Avenue) and Amanda Ziehm (1632 Wesley Avenue)—received notice that the new owners of the house at 1624 Wesley Avenue had applied to make alterations to their house. Having seen the plans for the proposed addition of a second-floor, screened porch at the southeast corner of the house, we feel compelled to register our concerns that this addition will seriously detract from the symmetry of the east façade—the public face—of the house.

The original house was constructed in 1868 and underwent an extensive exterior remodeling in 1907, the work of architect William A. Otis. The house is an Evanston Landmark that "exhibits a high quality of architectural design that is the result of a change or a series of changes to an original structure" (*Criterion A6 in the original list of standards for designation as an Evanston Landmark*) and a contributing structure in the Ridge Historic District. William Otis designed several buildings in Evanston. They include one other contributing building in the Ridge Historic District, two contributing buildings in the Lakeshore Historic District and three individual Evanston Landmarks not in any district. All the Otis-designed houses in the historic districts are also individual Evanston Landmarks.

1624 Wesley Avenue (ERHD/EL)	1704 Hinman Avenue (EL) (demolished)
1232 Asbury Avenue (ERHD/EL)	2016 Sheridan Road (EL)
1707 Hinman Avenue (ELHD/EL)	2033 Sheridan Road (EL)
1424 Judson Avenue (ELHD/EL)	

The Otis-designed public façade of 1624 Wesley consists of a primary two-story center mass with a one-story mass on either side. This arrangement establishes the strong sense of symmetry that defines the public façade that is clearly evident to passersby. On both the first and second floors there are masses extending from both the north and south sides. These secondary masses are well setback from the front plane of the public façade—polygonal bays to the south and rectilinear extensions to the north. While the roof of the second-floor mass on the north is visible from the street, it does not detract from the strong symmetry because of its generous setback. The photograph below taken on 12 March 2022 by Janet Steidl, shows the public façade of the house and confirms the defining symmetry of the public façade. Important in this discussion, it also shows the complementary second story masses do not interfere with its visual presentation. If the complementing masses were not well set back from the primary façade, the character defining symmetry would not exist.



That imbalance is clearly evident in the drawings shown on page A306, as seen below.



EAST ELEVATION - FROM THE SOUTH



EAST ELEVATION - OVERALL



EAST ELEVATION - FROM THE NORTH



EAST ELEVATION - SOUTH END



EAST ELEVATION - OVERALL



EAST ELEVATION - ENTRY

When looking at the various plans and layouts submitted, it is obvious that 1624 Wesley is incredibly complex and sophisticated in its massing. In addition, the variety of materials and their transparencies (glass, screen, lattice, solid etc.) adds yet another layer to that complexity and sophistication. The proposed screened porch, however, disrupts the overall design and symmetry of the public façade. Any addition or alteration should improve the overall design, not diminish it.

In conclusion, we Wesley Avenue neighbors oppose the construction of the screened porch on the second-floor balcony at the southeast corner of the landmark house at 1624 Wesley Avenue.



Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

1624 Wesley Avenue – Ridge Historic District - Landmark - 22PRES-00212 messages

Cory King <dellcor76@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 15, 2022 at 12:15 PM

To: Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Cade,

I am writing to provide my support for the proposed project at 1624 Wesley. I believe the project is fitting with the general character of the house and neighborhood. The architect has been thoughtful in the designs and approach and the proposed projects will maintain the historic integrity of the house while providing more functionality in living space. This project will provide increased value to the owners as well as to the neighbors in the area. I urge the Commission to swiftly approve this project.

Thank you,
Cory King
1414 Church Street
Evanston, IL 60201

Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, Mar 15, 2022 at 12:18 PM

To: Cory King <dellcor76@gmail.com>

Thank you Cory,

I will circulate this amongst the Commissioners as well as post it to the public comment addendum on the Commissions website.

Cade W. Sterling
Planner

Historic Preservation

City of Evanston

847-448-8231

Note: The contents of this electronic mail to/from any recipient hereto, any attachments hereto, and any associated metadata pertaining to this electronic mail, is subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et. seq.

[Quoted text hidden]