

March Zoning Committee Meeting Minutes

North Linden Area Commission

Prepared by Ben Keith

2023-03-09

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Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. No minutes from previous meeting
4. Demolition Agenda: DEMO2308422 2470 Azelda Street
 1. Applicant
 2. Committee discussion and questions
 3. Public comment and questions
 4. Motions
5. Variance Agenda: CV23-012, 201 W. North Broadway.
 1. Applicant
 2. Committee discussion and questions
 3. Public comment and questions
 4. Motions
6. Announcements
 1. The next meeting of the North Linden Area Commission will be March 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., at the Linden Community Center
 2. The next meeting of the Zoning Committee is anticipated to be April 13, 2023, time and location to be announced.

Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Initial committee attendance:

- Chair Michelle Dranichak
- Co-Chair Ben Keith
- NLAC Chair Carol Perkins
- Commissioner Dr. Daniel Ajayi

Commissioner Ebony Fadis arrived after the Azelda application was approved>

The agenda was approved without objection.

DEMO2308422 2470 Azelda Street

Permit application for 2470 Azelda St: <https://portal.columbus.gov/Permits/urouting.aspx?type=1000&Module=Building&capID1=23CAP&capID2=00000&capID3=0070N&agencyCode=COLUMBUS&HideHeader=true>

Demolition of a 1-story 500-sq. ft. accessory structure.

- Property record: <https://audr-apps.franklincountyohio.gov/redir/Link/Parcel/010-081993-00>
- Zoning: R - Residential
- Application submitted: February 21, 2023
- No city staff reviews as of March 4, 2023



Summary of 2023-03-09 committee meeting: Approved

Applicant was not present.

Co-Chair Ben Keith noted that the only accessory structure on the property is the garage.

One resident noted that the garage is in very poor condition, and that demolishing it would be a benefit to the neighborhood.

Motion to approve the demolition permit: **APPROVED** - NLAC Chair Carol Perkins: moved for - Commissioner Dr. Daniel Ajayi: seconded, for - Chair Michelle Dranichak: for - Co-Chair Ben Keith: for

CV23-015 3985 Far Hills Drive

Permit application for 3985 Far Hills Drive, with plan imagery in the “Attachments” section: <https://portal.columbus.gov/Permits/Cap/CapDetail.aspx?Module=Zoning&TabName=Zoning&capID1=23LAC&capID2=00000&capID3=00159&agencyCode=COLUMBUS&IsToShowInspection=>

Applicant Kim Mikanik of Create Collaborative, on behalf of owner Lam Construction Company, seeks to permit a 3-unit dwelling in a SR Suburban Residential District on a 1.07-acre lot. Lam Construction owns and operates more than 300 rental properties in Columbus and the surrounding areas.

- Property record: <https://audr-apps.franklincountyohio.gov/redir/Link/Parcel/010-125628-00>
- Zoning: SR Suburban Residential, among R2F
- Application submitted: February 16, 2023



The lot is approximately the same width as the neighboring 60' lots to the south, but includes a long extension along Overbrook Service Drive to the east, stretching along the entire neighborhood. This extension is less than 20 feet wide, and the application shows no planned development on the extension. This strip extends more than 1500' from the expected building placement, along the entire length of Overbrook Service Drive.

The neighborhoods:

- The neighboring 60' lots to the south are duplexes on Far Hills Road, with duplexes and one quadplex on Beulah Road.
- Along Overbrook Service Drive, to the east, there are mostly 75'-80' lots with single-family homes, and a couple of duplexes.
- At the intersection of Beulah Road and Janet Drive, there is one more duplex.
- Along Janet Drive, to the east, there are single-family homes on 69.24'-80' lots.
- Bordering the western edge of the property is bounded by a sound barrier, and the Cooke Road offramp from I-71N.
- On the north are the houses along E Cooke Road. The most-adjacent property is 869 E. Cooke Road, which has built a swimming pool against the shared fenceline. These properties are in Clinton Township, not in the City of Columbus.

The three-unit development consists of three townhouse-style two-story single family dwellings of 1,587 sq. ft., each with a one-car garage, open front porch, and rear concrete patio. The garages face onto a 10' driveway paralleling the existing driveway on 3973/3971 Far Hills Drive. The total construction is 24' tall.

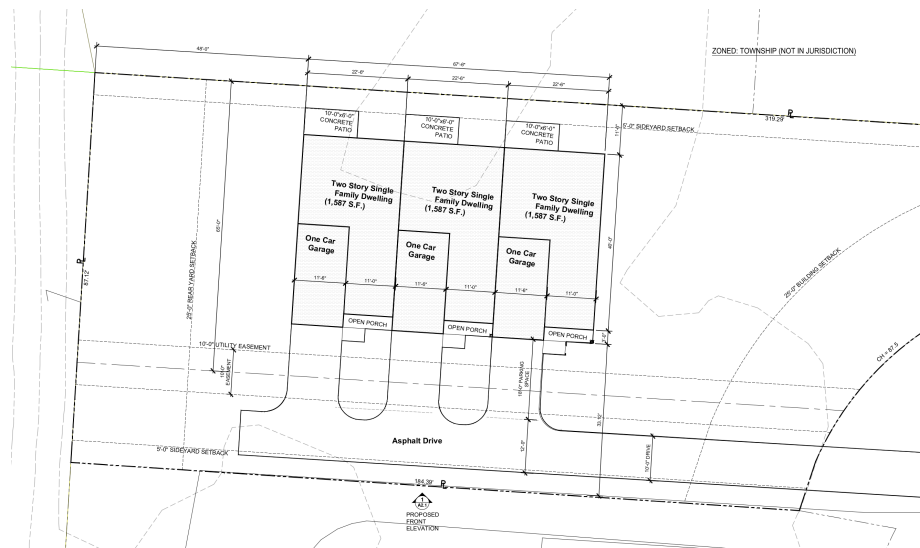


Figure 1: The plan of the lot

Common themes in public comments received via email, Facebook, and in person:

- Proximity and lot placement:
 - The townhouse structure is too close to the fence on the north side, and looks over the fence into the pool on the neighboring property



Figure 2: The front of the building

- Whether and how the construction vibrations and dust will affect the neighboring pool
- The sideways placement of the structure on the lot means it has very little “back” yard
- The sideways placement exposes the gable end of the building to the street, which doesn’t match other houses in the neighborhood
- Size:
 - A two-story structure is an inappropriate design for the neighborhood
 - A three-unit apartment building is too dense for the neighborhood: some say 2 units is OK, matching adjacent duplexes; other want the property limited to a single unit (which would not require a variance)
- Environmental:
 - Desire to preserve the existing large tree on the north fenceline
 - Concern about how the structure on this lot will affect, and deal with, drainage. Rainwater heads down Overbrook Service Drive and drains through this lot into Adena Brook.
- Design concerns
 - Dislike for vertical siding
 - 3’ deep front “porch” is too shallow
- Effects on neighbors:
 - Questions re: the plans for the 17’ strip of land running along Overbrook Service Drive. Who will be responsible for maintaining its vegetation? It’s currently maintained by neighbors on an ad-hoc basis. Are there development plans?
 - Whether two parking spaces (one garage, one driveway) is enough for a 3-bedroom unit, and whether this will lead to street parking
 - Whether and how the building will encourage pedestrian cut-through from the neighborhood, through a gap in the sound barrier, onto Cooke Road
 - Whether renters will be invested in the neighborhood
 - Whether the property owner and management company have the resources to adequately deal with a 3-unit apartment building.
 - Whether the apartment building will have a dumpster
- Money concerns
 - General opposition to greed
 - Concerns about the affordability of rent.
 - Preference for owner-occupied apartments, not managed

Summary of 2023-03-09 committee meeting: Tabled

At the March 9 meeting of the Zoning committee, the applicant requested that we table their application until the April meeting. The proposed design had received a large amount of opposition from neighbors, and the developer plans to revise the proposal to address neighbors' objections. There may be an update in April.

At the March 9 meeting, the developer said that the sideways arrangement on the lot was because of a utility easement running through the middle of the lot, which cannot be built on top of.

Lam Construction anticipates that these units, as initially proposed, would rent at around \$1500/mo.

Motion to table this application until April: **approved**

- Carol Perkins: moved, for
- Dr. Daniel: seconded, for
- Michelle Dranichak: abstained, as she's a neighbor to this development
- Ebony Fadis: for
- Ben Keith: for

The item will likely be revisited at the next Zoning Committee meeting.

Minutes of discussion at the 2023-03-09 meeting

Because Zoning Committee Chair Dranichak had a conflict of interest, she passed the running of this portion of the meeting off to Co-Chair Keith.

Committee questions Dranichak: Easement showing existing utility easement?

Mikanik: Easement run underground, so they're not allowed to build over it. Can only pave over it. Previous proposals for this property were made difficult by the easement.

Dranichak: Plans for development of the strip of land along Overbrook?

Mikanik: No current plans other than maintaining it.

Keith: Possible to flip the lot along the long axis, so the townhouse is built along the south fenceline instead of the north fenceline?

Mikanik: Maybe possible

Dranichak: Why not 2 or 1?

Mikanik: Money. The housing is more affordable to build per unit if more units are built.

Keith: Why stop at 3 units?

Mikanik: More seemed out of character for the neighborhood.

Dranichak: Do you have plans for the big tree on the northern fenceline?

Mikanik: Need to surey but don't plan to cut down the tree

Keith: Affect on cut-through pedestrian traffic going to Cooke? This was a concern raised online and in emails that the committee received. Mikanik: Development of this lot will probably reduce foot traffic.

Dr. Daniel: From health + safety perspective, what are the implications on health and safety of community moving forward? Mikanik: Hoping that this will be an opportunity to add more affordable housing on lot.

Dranichak: What's the target rent? Lam: 1500/mo for a 3br

Immediate Neighbor Comments Neighbor 1 who lives in the house to the north, 869 E. Cooke Dr.:

- pool is well established since 1977; he doesn't like the windows looking down over their yard
- likes moving the block of building closer to the street so it's not overlooking the pool
- likes 2-unit alternative raised by Dranichak
- slope down to the stream will be affected by this construction
- he plans to build solar panels along the fenceline (partially under the tree) and is worried about cast shade
- wants to keep oak tree; thinks keeping that is possible with 2-unit building located more towards the street
- doesn't like people going around the back now; thinks that development would result in more transients
- bought the house a year ago
- also worried about increased traffic on Overbrook, which doesn't connect to or run past his house on Cooke Road

Neighbor 2 who lives in the house to the north, 869 E. Cooke Dr.:

- she and Brian had previously bid on this empty lot, and lost their bid.
- they sold their Clintonville house, bought 869 E. Cooke for additional land, and to house her mother, but their house also hosts their grandkids on occasion
- doesn't like people
- likes privacy and peace for her mom
- concerned about flooding, construction runoff

Neighbor 3 on Cooke:

- predicts that the application will be tabled
- wonders if it's possible to remove the utility easement, and turn the building to face the street
- thinks seeing the gable end of the apt looks ugly
- thinks that the development will cause parking issues on Overbrook

Neighbor 4 on Cooke:

- did the developer buy the whole lot, including that strip? (yes)
- planning to do anything with the curve or strip? (no)
- opposed to building units looking into someone's back yard

Neighbor 5, Overbrook:

- who's the final owner of property, who'll provide property management services? (Lam Construction)
- how many units do you currently service (300+)
- based out of where? (everywhere)
- rent? (\$1500 for this location)
- generally in support of more housing
- why this building shape? (Lam: it's mostly in relation to the easement)
- concerned about property maintenance: fee simple, utilities, dumpster? (Lam: no dumpster)

Neighbor 6, 3973 Far Hills Drive, next door to the south:

- will there be a privacy fence along the driveway? (Lam: We can build one)
- doesn't want people parking in her driveway or looking into her backyard

Neighbor 7:

- maybe turn the building and put it on an angle, matching the curve?

Neighbor 8, Overbrook:

- Why 2 stories when everything else in neighborhood is single-story?
- concerned about property values from triplex among duplexes
- opposed to greed
- think the current design is an eyesore

Neighbor 9, Overbrook:

- On slab or basement? (Slab)
- the lot is very swampy and building there that will affect drainage
- in favor of 2 stories facing street, two units

Neighbor 10, Overbrook:

- Gonna have to deal with the strip of land somehow. You'll be responsible for maintenance and tearing down the invasive species
- Drainage is huge concern. The more you cover the lot with construction, the less surface area there is for water to soak in. That lot has been its own bioswale this whole time.
- Regarding the house that was trying to build there before Lam bought the lot: the Columbus sewer departments had concerns; Borghese would love to know why they were concerned about a 1-family 3br 2.5ba

Neighbor 11, Overbrook:

- aesthetically doesn't match the neighborhood, 2 stories
- calling the lot a 1-acre lot doesn't reflect reality of it, since more than half is because of the strip
- Overbrook Service Drive is like a river when it rains; major drainage questions
- even if there's a fence for privacy, the yard is not big enough

Neighbor 4, again:

- That acre includes the whole strip. It's not really an acre lot.
- Did you have any concern about the neighbor?
Lam: when it was overgrown, we couldn't see the pool.
Brian McCoy: come swim in our pool!

Neighbor 12, on Eisenhower Road (T-intersection dead-ending on Overbrook Service Drive):

- good luck with the vegetation on the strip
- One Linden plan points 1+2 prefer owner-occupied structures. wonders why this building is not owner-occupied.
- Doesn't match conformity of neighborhood
- Doesn't think 3-family is good for neighborhood

Neighbor 13:

- There are other 2-story buildings in the neighborhood, along Beulah Road within the immediate block.
- The One Linden Plan doesn't come this far north

- The Area Commission can vote no tonight and Zoning could still approve the development.
- Rental housing doesn't mean that property values will drop
- Single-family homes can be rental, doubles can be rentals too: The size of the building doesn't mean anything about who lives in it.
- Our zoning code has a long history of keeping people out: low-income people, people of color. Let's think about how we can encourage appropriate zoning adjustments to fit the character of the neighborhood

Neighbor 14, Overbrook:

- How many square feet per unit?
- overall footprint? (67'6" by 40')
- Zoning? (R2F next door, SR here)
- This lot has historically been problem property to develop because of the shape of the lot
- I've been there since 1970
- Notifications: didn't receive the postcard, didn't see a sign up. Cites city code 3307.17A, 3307.15A (Keith: Take that up with the post office; the postcards were mailed by Perkins a week before the meeting)
- Doesn't agree with trying to change complexion of neighborhood

Neighbor 15, Overbrook:

- parking is insufficient, at 2 parking spots per unit for a 3-bedroom unit

Chair Michelle Dranichak: There's been discussion of people along overbrook or Cooke buying the sections along Overbrook. What would that entail?

Lam: Lot split, then reincorporation.

Dranichak: Note that some of lots along Overbrook are Clinton Township, which would complicate merging or joining lots from this split.

Conclusion Lam says that he wants to find a way to develop this property which is agreeable to the neighborhood.

Co-Chair Keith presented options to Lam:

- Proceed with vote at this meeting
- Withdraw application
- Table the application until the application can be adjusted to find something agreeable with the neighbors.

Lam requested that the committee table the application until April.

Motion to table this application until April: **approved**

- Carol Perkins: moved, for
- Dr. Daniel: seconded, for
- Michelle Dranichak: abstain
- Ebony Fadis: for
- Ben Keith: for

Announcements

Delivered by Ben Keith:

The next meeting of the North Linden Area Commission will be March 16, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., at the Linden Community Center

The next meeting of the Zoning Committee is anticipated to be April 13, 2023, time and location to be announced.

Closure

Motion to close: **Approved** by unanimous acclaim.

Minutes and custody of recording

Ben Keith took minutes.

The meeting was recorded on Ben Keith's GoPro, and he has the video files.