

CITY OF WEST DES MOINES

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson Pfannkuch and Board of Adjustment Members

FROM: Brian Portz, AICP, Planner

DATE: August 19, 2020

RE: Item 3a – 117 S. 33rd Street – Request for a 3' 6" variance from the 35' front yard setback to add a 3rd stall to the garage

Attached is a comment that was received from a surrounding property owner that was notified of this variance request.

cc. Lynne Twedt, Director of Development Services

From: [Paul Babikian](#)
To: [Portz, Brian](#); [Development Services Inbox](#)
Subject: [EXT] Comment Re:requested variance for 117 S 33rd Street
Date: Monday, August 17, 2020 5:40:17 AM

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the zoning variance requested at 117 S. 33rd Street for purposes of building a 3rd car garage addition. We have lived at 201 S. 33rd Street, the neighboring house, for the past 22 years.

We do feel the Board of Adjustment should reject the requested variance, as the use for which the variance is sought will detrimentally affect the environment and be injurious to our property:

1. Granting the proposed variance will be injurious to our property and may be detrimental to the Jordan Creek watershed by negatively impacting water runoff and soil erosion.

Our home is located downslope from 117 S. 33rd Street and the proposed site of the 3rd car garage addition as well as from S 33rd Street, as a result of which we currently experience significant water runoff. Previous construction activities at 117 S. 33rd Street have already resulted in damage to our property due to soil erosion and water runoff by disrupting existing patterns of drainage. We have just completed extensive remediation efforts to repair the damage within the past few years.

The 3rd car garage addition will exacerbate these soil erosion and drainage issues by replacing the existing soil and vegetation -- which naturally absorbs and slows the rate of water runoff downslope -- with impervious construction materials like concrete and brick. This will result in more water draining onto our property at a faster rate, leading to further soil erosion and damage to our property. We will most likely be required to undertake significant and expensive further work to repair or prevent damage resulting from the increased water flows.

Our property may not be the only one to be damaged by increased water runoff. Water will flow downhill from 117 S. 33rd Street and across our property into Jordan Creek below. No assessment of the impact of the proposed construction on the watershed has been conducted, and the nature and severity of potential negative consequences on the environment, such as flooding, erosion of the creek's banks, and stress to wildlife inhabitants, are unpredictable.

2. Granting the variance will be injurious to our home by restricting our views of the street. Unfortunately, we do feel approval of the variance and the ensuing construction of the addition will negatively impact our existing uses and enjoyment of our home, by blocking our existing view of the street that we have enjoyed for the past two decades.

Consequently, we respectfully ask that the Board of Adjustment **reject** the zoning variance requested at 117 S. 33rd Street.

Very truly yours,

Paul and Amy Babikian

201 South 33rd Street
West Des Moines, IA 50265