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February 12, 2020

To Neighbors of 204 Haralson Lane (home of Brianne and Kevin Erwin),

I am working with Bri and Kevin to turn the unfinished space over their existing garage into an office (with bathroom) where Bri can work now that she has been pushed out the spare bedroom by the continued growth of their family! Normally, this would be a simple staff review by the Urban Design Commission staff to add side-facing shed dormers onto the roof of this existing non-historic (2 years old) accessory structure. In this case, while the structure itself is the same footprint size as the newly built accessory structures under construction at the final four lots of this subdivision, there was no accommodation for stairs inside the structure when it was built. Neither I nor the Erwins were involved in the earlier design or its construction (though I did design the four homes currently under construction).

You may read on for the specific reasons why, but the bottom line is that the only place that makes sense for the stairs is outside the rear face of the garage. The current exterior rear face is a blank gabled wall, a little less than 20' from ground to top of ridge, and we propose a new door on the upper floor and new stairs down from this door. There is space enough for wooden exterior stairs between the building and the 3' setback line established for accessory structures by the special zoning that was approved for this subdivision (called a PD-H) but that same special zoning conditioned that a 5' landscaping buffer must be established between all the structures and the surrounding neighborhood. The new stairs would encroach into this buffer by about 18". The stairs are open underneath and wooden, so light and water will still get to the dirt below and no plantings that are currently there will need to be removed though some will move within the buffer area, out of the spots where we need wooden posts. One reason for the buffer strip is to maintain privacy for all concerned and we would provide a wooden lattice around the landing and there would be no glass on the rear face of the building except for frosted glass within the top half of the door itself. There are existing tall privacy fences, an adjacent existing accessory shed, and some medium sized existing trees which also buffer the view of the new door and stairs.

Since allowing this encroachment into the buffer would violate the conditions of the PD-H that the City Council had established, we have to request a change to the actual zoning itself, a Rezoning through the Zoning Review Board, rather than a variance through the Urban Design Commission which would be typical in historic districts or through the normal variance process the rest of Atlanta uses, the Board of Zoning Adjustment. This ZRB process is much more involved and expensive in city fees so the need is real and there is no way to get access to this space that is already existing other than going through this most difficult process so we ask that you sign and return the attached letter of support in order to help streamline our approval. The easiest way to do so would be to sign it with your address, take a good photo with your cell and send it to me in a text to 404-245-4244. Otherwise you could scan it and email it to me at the address above or just write an email with the same general verbiage (noting the date of the plans you saw) and email that. Whatever works for you.

I am mailing this letter on Wednesday the 12th and on Sunday the 16th at 4:30, we will have an Immediate Neighbor Meeting at 204 Haralson Lane along with folks from your own IPNA to

discuss the project. Please feel free to come over (bring the letter then if you like!). Feel free to join us at the other following meetings:

- February 19: **IPNA general meeting:** 7:30 p.m., Trolley Barn
- February 27: **NPU-N meeting:** 7 p.m., Little Five Points Center for Arts and Community
- Either March 5 or March 12 (I don't know yet): **Zoning Review Board Public Hearing:** 6 p.m., Atlanta City Hall, City Council Chambers, Second Floor
- March 25: **Zoning Committee:** 6 p.m., Atlanta City Hall, City Council Chambers, Second Floor – I don't know if the public is allowed to speak
- April 20: **City Council:** 6 p.m., Atlanta City Hall, City Council Chambers, Second Floor – I don't know if the public is allowed to speak

Read on if you would like to know the reasons we must put the access door and stairs where we are proposing:

The garage door is centered on the structure (right side) which leaves insufficient room to install interior stairs on either end and there are doors and windows on the front of the garage which would make stairs there very odd looking and would take up most of the space of their small yard. The driveway is on the right side and we are 3' from the property line on the left so no room there. This leaves the rear face of the garage where we have 7' to the property line (3' is the accessory bldg. setback from sides and rear per our PD-H) so we have room within the setback to install rear stairs but there is also a 5' landscaping strip which we would slightly encroach.

The existing floor system bears on the header above the existing garage door and the short walls on both sides of the door are reinforced (to resist twisting in a strong wind) so moving the garage door and providing an interior stair hole would be almost as difficult as rebuilding the entire structure so the easy, practical alternative is to place exterior stairs on the rear. We will also be installing new dormers on the existing right and left roof faces but there will be no change to the existing ridge and no change to the existing walls and details of the front and both sides. This will provide space for an office (since there are now two babies in the house!) in the short term and, long-term, an ADU similar to the four neighboring houses currently under construction on Haralson Lane.

Thanks for your consideration

Sincerely,

