

January 25, 2012

Dear Ms. Richardson,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed conversion of Lot No. 246 from residential to a parking lot. The proposed parking lot at Lot No. 246 will decrease the value of my home, increase the risk of danger in the neighborhood, and will not alleviate the problem of people parking on Great Ridge Pkwy. The proposed parking lots at Lot Nos. 446 and 480 will be more than sufficient to accommodate guest parking and an additional lot at No. 246 is not needed and will cause undue harm to myself and my neighbors. I ask that you not convert Lot No. 246 from residential to parking.

The proposed parking lot at Lot No. 246 will decrease the value of my home, and of my neighbor's homes around it. It will be directly behind my home and highly visible from it. I purchased my home in Briar Chapel with the understanding and expectation that it was situated in a residential area and would be surrounded by other homes--not a parking lot. The addition of a parking lot so nearby as to be almost in my backyard will certainly decrease the value of my home. My neighbors share the same concern.

A parking lot at Lot No. 246 also poses two safety concerns. If a parking lot is built at Lot No. 246 there will be an increased risk of a child or animal being struck by a vehicle, and an increased risk of a resident or child being attacked by stranger. Parking lots are inherently dangerous for small children and animals--they create an increase in traffic, especially that of people pulling in and out of the lot. When people are backing up or pulling out of a space, they are less likely to see if a small child or animal has run behind their vehicle. Lot No. 246 is right next to a park where small children play and where I frequent with my 6 month old puppy. Putting a parking lot right across from the park will automatically increase the likelihood of a child or an animal being struck by a vehicle.

In addition, a parking lot at Lot No. 246 will increase the likelihood of a resident being attacked by a stranger. A parking lot directly across from a children's park and right behind several residences will provide the ideal place for a predator to watch children playing, or to know when someone is home by themselves. If I am walking to my mailbox at night--which the parking lot directly abuts--I do not want to have to worry that a stranger may be waiting to attack me and drag me to his car which is waiting right there. I do not want to worry that a stranger may be parking right behind my house, watching my house, and waiting to see when my husband leaves for work and I am alone. It is impossible for the HOA to provide security 24/7 and equally impossible to ensure that the people parking in the lot are in fact guests of residents and not trespassers. Putting a parking lot so close to residences is just providing trespassers with a place to lurk and observe right next to homes and the children's park. It is highly noticeable when a strange car is parked on the street outside your house---it is impossible to tell a strange car from several parked in a "guest" parking lot. The addition of a parking lot at Lot No. 246 will create a highly dangerous situation for residents.

Furthermore, the proposed parking lot at Lot No. 246 will not alleviate the problem of people parking on Great Ridge Pkwy. The cars that are consistently parked on Great Ridge belong to RESIDENTS. Residents who live on Great Ridge Pkwy and who--either because it is simply more convenient for them, or because they would rather use their garage as a place to store workout equipment rather than their car--choose to park on the street in front of their houses. If these residents cannot be bothered to take the extra two seconds of time it takes to drive around their house and park behind in their garages, they will most certainly not drive all the way around the block to use the proposed parking lot at Lot No. 246. Therefore, the proposed parking lot at Lot No. 246 will not be used and will not alleviate the problem.

Finally, the proposed parking lots at Lot Nos. 446 and 480 will provide more than sufficient parking for the guests of residents of Great Ridge Pkwy. In addition to parking lot No. 446, there is ample street parking on Hill Creek Blvd and additional parking at the Briar Club. Briar Chapel is a residential community, and as such, guests of residents are temporary. There is no reason why any resident should ever need more parking for guests than would be provided with Lots 446, 480, additional street parking on Hill Creek Blvd, and additional parking at the Briar Club.

It is unnecessary and unjust to convert Lot No. 246 from residential to a parking lot. A parking lot at Lot No. 246 will decrease the value of my home and my neighbor's homes, will create serious dangers in the neighborhood, and will not resolve the problem of parking on Great Ridge. In addition, a parking lot at Lot No. 246 is not needed if Lot Nos. 446 and 480 are converted into parking. I ask that you hear my concerns and the concerns of my neighbors, and not convert Lot No. 246 from residential to parking.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak at a meeting or to have this letter submitted in lieu of speaking if I am not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict. Please share this with the Planning Review Board.

Thank you,

Ashley L. Olsson, Esq.  
(Lot No. 159)

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