

**CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2020  
REMOTE WEB MEETING – 6:30 P.M.**

Call to Order	Chairman Mike Burdette called the Remote Web regular meeting of Wednesday, May 6, 2020 to order at 6:30 p.m. Physically present were Chairman Mike Burdette, P & D Director Jon Oliphant, B & Z Supervisor Becky Holmes, City Administrator Ray Forsythe, and City Clerk Pat Brown.
Roll Call	Present and answering roll call were Commissioners, Mike Burdette, Brian Fischer, Louis Milot, Tom Reeder, Hans Ritter, Joe Roberts, and Steve Scott.
Appv min 3/4/20 PZC meeting as presented	Commissioner Roberts moved and Commissioner Ritter seconded to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2020 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting as presented. <u>Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.</u>
Public Hearing: side yard & distance between structures variance request, Eric Strohl, 507 Catherine St.	<u>Case No. 050620-V-1</u> – A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:33 p.m. on the request of Eric Strohl for a side yard and distance between structures variance at 507 Catherine Street. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.  B & Z Supervisor Holmes provided a brief overview of the variance request noting the following: the petitioner is requesting a 5’ side yard and 3’ distance between structures variance in order to replace a dilapidated detached garage; would not encroach any further than what the existing garage does; and the current side yard setback requirement in R-1 zoning is 5’ and distance between structures requirement is 10’.  Petitioner comments: James Lynch spoke as the current tenant of the property stating they are replacing the existing garage and want to place it back in the same location which is requiring the variance considerations.  Public comments: None.
Close Public Hearing	At 6:35 p.m. the public hearing was closed.
Approve Case No. 050620-V-1, side yard & distance between structures variance request	Commissioner Scott moved and Commissioner Reeder seconded to approve the variance request as presented.  Commissioner comments: None.  There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was: <u>Ayes: 7</u> Burdette, Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott <u>Nays: 0</u> <u>Motion carried.</u>
Finding of Facts	<u>Findings of Fact</u> – application was made by owners of property; fees were paid; property is zoned R-1; and a 5’ side yard and 3’ distance between structures variance is requested to construct a detached garage. A public hearing was held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, all present were given the opportunity to be heard; there were no ‘interested parties’; property cannot yield a reasonable return because house currently has a detached garage; plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances due to the small width and length of the lot; and character of the neighborhood would not be changed as the new garage would not encroach any further than the existing garage.
Public Hearing: lot width variance, Charles & Lois Stamper, 301-303 Lincoln St.	<u>Case No. 050620-V-2</u> – A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:36 p.m. on the request of Charles & Lois Stamper for a lot width variance at 301-303 Lincoln St. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.  B & Z Supervisor Holmes provided a brief overview of the variance request noting the following: the petitioner currently has a buyer for the property and is requesting to split the one lot of record into two; the lot of record currently has two principal structures and the splitting will allow for two lots of record making it easier to sell the properties in the future; the splitting would result in an approximate lot widths of 84’ for 303 Lincoln St. and 57’ for 301 Lincoln St.; and the lot width requirement is 65’.  Petitioner comments: Joe LaHood on behalf of the Stamper’s shared that he did go ahead with the order to have the property surveyed in April and the result was a lot width of 55.63’ for the 301 Lincoln St. property.  Public comments: None.
Close Public Hearing	At 6:38 p.m. the public hearing was closed.
Approve Case No. 050620-V-2, lot width variance request	Commissioner Roberts moved and Commissioner Scott seconded to approve the variance request as presented.  Commissioner comments: Commissioner Scott asked if a side yard issue would come into play and B & Z Supervisor Holmes noted that each will need 5’ and there is 12’8” between both structures which keeps them in compliance with the required setbacks.  There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was: <u>Ayes: 7</u> <u>Nays: 0</u> <u>Motion carried.</u>

Findings of Fact – application was made by owners of property; fees were paid; property is zoned R-1; and an 8’ lot width variance is requested to separate one lot of record into two lots of record. A public hearing was held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, all present were given the opportunity to be heard; there were no ‘interested parties’; property cannot yield a reasonable return because there are two principal structures on one lot of record; plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances as the lot is a legal nonconformity with two principal structures on one lot of record; and character of the neighborhood would not be changed as there will not be a visible change.

Finding of Facts

Case No. 050620-V-3 – A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:39 p.m. on the request of Kevin & Anna Koch for a side yard & distance between structures variance at 922 Birchwood Drive. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.

Public Hearing: side yard & distance between structures variance request, Kevin & Anna Koch, 922 Birchwood Dr.

B & Z Supervisor Holmes provided a brief overview of the variance request noting the following: the petitioner is requesting a 5’ side yard and 2’ distance between structures variance in order to construct a detached garage; the original garage was originally part of the principal structure but was converted to living space many years ago; they are wanting to use the existing concrete driveway to access the proposed garage; and the current side yard setback requirement in R-1 zoning is 5’ and the distance between structures setback requirement is 10’.

Petitioner comments: Kevin Koch agreed with the overview given and shared they are having a child and would like to have a garage.

Public comments: City Clerk Brown read a public comment received from Carol Kimpling that stated she would prefer a 5’ setback distance from the property line she shares with the Koch’s.

At 6:42 p.m. the public hearing was closed.

Close Public Hearing

Commissioner Milot moved and Commissioner Scott seconded to approve the variance request as presented.

Approve Case No. 050620-V-3, side yard & distance between structures variance request

Commissioner comments: Commissioner Scott asked if it was possible to do the 5’ and 10’ setbacks and Mr. & Mrs. Koch shared that in talking with the contractor it would be an extra \$5-8K to keep in compliance; the issue is financial for them; and they are trying to make it work with the existing driveway that is 6” from the property line. Commissioner Burdette appreciated the desire to save money but it is not common for buildings in this area to be located on the lot lines. Commissioner Fischer shared his concerns with placing the garage right on the property line abutting to the neighbors finished outdoor patio space and its impact on property values. He noted the following: when looking at requests he takes into consideration the impact on surrounding properties; as much as one owner wants to do something when an owner moves into a property it is assumed rules will stay in place to protect the value of the property; and a driveway and garage are two different structure types. Commissioner Milot asked if attaching the garage would make a difference and it was noted that the side yard setback issue would still exist. Commissioner Burdette noted the only way to meet requirements is to move the proposed garage further back and away from the property line. Commissioner Scott noted that he would be okay with reducing the distance between structures but would like to see the side yard setback at the required 5’. Commissioner Reeder noted it would need to be moved back at least 10’ to get the 5’ side yard.

There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was:

Ayes: 0

Nays: 7 Burdette, Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott

Motion did not carry.

Motion did not carry.

Findings of Fact – application was made by owners of property; fees were paid; property is zoned R-1; and a 5’ side yard and 2’ distance between structures variance is requested to construct a detached garage. A public hearing was held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, all present were given the opportunity to be heard; there were no ‘interested parties’; property cannot yield a reasonable return because most homes in the neighborhood have garages; plight of the owner is not due to unique circumstances that could not be rectified to meet setbacks; and character of the neighborhood may be changed as there are no other detached garages close to property line, however, there are many principal structures with reduced side yard setbacks.

Finding of Facts

Case No. 050620-V-4 – A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:48 p.m. on the request of Jon Kirby for a fence height variance at 100 Sterling Street. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.

Public Hearing: fence height variance request, Jon Kirby, 100 Sterling Street

B & Z Supervisor Holmes provided a brief overview of the variance request noting the following: the petitioner is representing his mother and is requesting a 6’ privacy fence in the front yard adjacent to Business Route 24; the property is a corner lot and has two front yards; the front yard facing Business Route 24 measures 28’ and because the principal structure does not face Business Route 24 they would be allowed to construct a 6’ privacy fence at half the distance of that front yard which is 14’; the petitioner is requesting to encroach an additional 5’ into that front yard with the 6’ privacy fence; and the fence height requirement is 4’ for any fencing that would encroach past the 14’ mark.

Petitioner comments: Mr. Kirby shared it makes sense to move the fence the additional 5’ over in order to have more property inside fence, the fence itself provides a buffer to foot traffic and extends the usable yard. B & Z Supervisor Holmes shared the location is actually less than privacy fence on the adjoining oil change property as well.

Public comments: None.

Close Public Hearing	At 6:50 p.m. the public hearing was closed.
Approve Case No. 050620-V-4, fence height variance request	<p>Commissioner Scott moved and Commissioner Fischer seconded to approve the variance request as presented.</p> <p>Commissioner comments: A brief discussion ensued on the fence placement and no concerns were mentioned.</p> <p>There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was:  <u>Ayes: 7</u> Burdette, Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott  <u>Nays: 0</u>  <u>Motion carried.</u></p>
Finding of Facts	<p><u>Findings of Fact</u> – application was made by owners of property; fees were paid; property is zoned R-1; and a 2’ fence height variance is requested to construct a 6’ privacy fence. A public hearing was held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, all present were given the opportunity to be heard; there were no ‘interested parties’; property cannot yield a reasonable return as a privacy fence will provide a yard buffer from Business Route 24; plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances due to the corner lot having two front yards; and character of the neighborhood will not be changed as the fence will not come out as far as the commercial property to the west.</p>
Public Hearing: Special Use request, Trent Kimble, raising poultry, 310 Ernest St.	<p>A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:53 p.m. on the request of Trent Kimble, 310 Ernest Drive, to permit the raising of poultry on a residential lot. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.</p> <p>P &amp; D Director Oliphant gave a brief overview of the request noting the following: the petitioner has submitted a special use application for the allowance of chickens on his property at 310 Ernest Street; a special use is required in order to allow for poultry on certain residential properties following approval of a special use; some of the conditions are as follow: no more than 5 chickens allowed on one lot, only allowed on owner occupied properties, roosters or other loud species of chickens are prohibited; chickens must be kept at all times in an enclosure in the rear yard; any enclosure including the run cannot exceed 60 s.f., and any enclosures cannot be placed closer than 10’ from any side or rear property line and must be 25’ from any residential structure on an adjacent lot; the proposed coop would be located inside the garage in the rear yard; and the total area would be about 20 s.f. in size; the 6’x6’ run would be next to the northwest corner of the garage and would be approximately 20’ from the rear property line, 21’ from the side property line, and 55’ from the principal structure at 308 Ernest Street which would meet regulations.</p> <p>Petitioner comments: Mr. Kimble commented that the coop itself will be located inside the garage with a 36 s.f. outdoor run.</p> <p>Public comments: None.</p>
Close Public Hearing	At 6:55 p.m. the public hearing was closed.
Recommend approval of Special Use request	<p>Commissioner Milot moved and Commissioner Reeder seconded to recommend approval of the special use request as presented.</p> <p>Commissioner comments: None.</p> <p>There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was:  <u>Ayes: 7</u> Burdette Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott  <u>Nays: 0</u>  <u>Motion carried.</u></p>
Public Hearing: Special Use request, Joseph & Romanie Lehman, raising poultry, 607 Westgate Road	<p>A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:56 p.m. on the request of Joseph &amp; Romanie Lehman, 607 Westgate Road, to permit the raising of poultry on a residential lot. Publication was made of the public hearing notice, and there were no “interested parties” registered.</p> <p>P &amp; D Director Oliphant gave a brief overview of the request noting the following: the petitioner has submitted a special use application for the allowance of chickens on their property at 607 Westgate Road; a special use is required in order to allow for poultry on certain residential properties following approval of a special use; some of the conditions are as follow: no more than 5 chickens allowed on one lot, only allowed on owner occupied properties, roosters or other loud species of chickens are prohibited; chickens must be kept at all times in an enclosure in the rear yard; any enclosure including the run cannot exceed 60 s.f., and any enclosures cannot be placed closer than 10’ from any side or rear property line and must be 25’ from any residential structure on an adjacent lot; the proposed coop would be located near the southwest corner of the lot near an existing 5’ privacy fence; the lot is a corner lot making the rear yard closest to the 600 Devonshire property and the side yard closet to the 609 Westgate property; the total area of the enclosure would be 33 s.f., would be approximately 17’ from the rear property line and 30’ from the house at 600 Devonshire, and approximately 15’ from the side property line and about 50’ from the 609 Westgate house; and the proposed location would meet the setback regulations.</p> <p>Petitioner comments: None.</p> <p>Public comments: City Clerk Brown read aloud four public comments that were submitted by Eric Sutton &amp; Nicole Fehr, Dave Stambaugh, James &amp; Tamara Saunders, and the Baileys sharing their concerns. The comments are attached and made part of these minutes.</p> <p>Petitioner comments: Mr. Lehman shared the following in response to the concerns: he and his wife have owned chickens before and are extremely responsible; the chickens would be housed in a very nice coop with a privacy fence that keep them from being visible to neighbors; they are not loud in any capacity and would argue the dogs in the neighborhood are much more verbose;</p>

roosters are not allowed by code; in the five years they had chickens they never had a rat problem or a smell problem; and have invested \$15K in the home increasing the value of the neighborhood.

Public Hearing: Special Use request, 607 Westgate Rd., Cont.)

At 7:08 p.m. the public hearing was closed.

Close Public Hearing

Commissioner Fischer moved and Commissioner Milot seconded to recommend approval of the special use request as presented.

Recommend approval of Special Use request

Commissioner comments: Commissioner Burdette clarified that this is not a variance but a special use request and we are not being asked to change the rules. P & D Director commented that the request will go before City Council for consideration. Commissioner Milot asked how the food will be handled and Mr. Lehman shared it will be secured in an enclosed area only accessible to the chickens and maintained with a level of cleanliness. He shared they plan on doing an extremely nice coop that is contained and managed indicating they have done this in the past and have experience with it. He noted his wife is a veterinarian and has experience with chickens and animals in general and as far as proximity goes in placement of the coop we are exceeding the city guidelines but are willing to move a little more to give the most breadth. Commissioner Scott asked if the attached coop picture is what they are planning and Mr. Lehman shared they are leaning toward something in that similar vein. Commissioner Scott asked about the height of the coop and it was noted it is approximately 85" in height. Commissioner Burdette asked with the number of concerns shared has the City had any of the problems occur that have been shared and P & D Director Oliphant shared none that we have been made aware of noting that we only have one legally approved coop but knowing there are more out there. Commissioner Scott asked if everything meets requirements in the Code and Oliphant replies yes. Commissioner Fischer commented that most of us were on the Commission when we recommended approval of the original code that allows this to occur, and to the people who wrote the letters if they are listening, I would just say I understand those are concerns but feel like in the writing of this code we allowed for them and believe what they will find is their concerns will be hopefully unfounded. Commissioner Burdette also noted that roosters are of no concern as they are not allowed under the code.

There was no additional discussion and on roll call the vote was:

Ayes: 7 Burdette, Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Chairman Mike Burdette asked for P & D Director Oliphant to present the details of the preliminary plat request to the Commission. P & D Director Oliphant shared the following: 1) Denny LaHood of ATL Enterprises is proposing the subdivision of the 4.72-acre lot on IL Route 8 into two lots; 2) the newly created lot would total 1.54 acres just off the southwest corner of the property adjacent to Route 8; 3) the property is zoned C-2 (General Retail); 4) the plat meets all subdivision code requirements; the property would be accessed from Route 8 at an existing curb cut on the adjacent lot to the east following approval by IDOT; ATL also owns that lot and an ingress-egress easement will be recorded to provide perpetual access to the proposed Lot 1, which ensures that there is not another curb cut onto Route 9; and 7) staff supports approval of preliminary plat. He indicated that Mr. Gary Zumwalt from Zumwalt & Associates who prepared the plat is present to answer any questions as well.

Preliminary Plat – Blue Spruce Subdivision

Commissioner Roberts moved and Commissioner Reeder seconded to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat for Blue Spruce Subdivision as presented.

Recommend approval of preliminary plat

Commissioner's Comments: Commissioner Fischer commented the original lot is very deep and this lot occupies the front of the lot and asked if the City has any long term plan as it seems like by just selling off the front of it there is a risk of limiting access to the back in the future. P & D Director Oliphant shared that certainly longer term we would envision that being a commercial development and the proposal for Lot 1 would be for it to be a commercial lot. He shared in terms of access to the back, the access would continue to be from that existing curb cut for the remainder of both of the lots and the access easement allows for further access to the rear and certainly as long as Mr. LaHood has ownership it makes it easier, but if he was to sell part or either of those lots in the future we would want to ensure at that point there was access given to the remainder of the lot but for now it is not an issue and in all likelihood should not be an issue in the future. Commissioner Scott confirmed there is going to be an easement for access coming from the east and P & D Director Oliphant replied yes, it is noted on the plat, will be recorded with the final plat, and would be owned and maintained by Mr. LaHood because it would be coming through his property noting it was intentionally made larger in size to ensure there is sufficient space with not knowing exactly where the approach would be coming into Lot 1.

There being no further discussion on roll call the vote was:

Ayes: 7 Burdette, Fischer, Milot, Reeder, Ritter, Roberts, Scott

Nays: 0

Motion declared carried.

Building & Zoning Supervisor Holmes indicated that there will be a meeting next month with one variance case and one special use case.

Commissioner/Staff Comments

At 7:20 p.m. Commissioner Milot moved and Commissioner Ritter seconded to adjourn.

Adjournment

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.



Here is our list of reasons against Joseph & Romanie Lehman's request for chickens.

- Chicken coops are known for terribly strong Ammonia odors, especially during summer months. We like to have our windows open and enjoy fresh air. Their fence is approx. 18ft from our kitchen window and dining table and could possibly be closer if they decide to move their fence onto their property line. It currently sits a few feet off of the line. Who wants to smell manure while eating dinner?
- Our bedroom window along with our daughter's is right above our kitchen window. Who wants to wake up hearing chickens squawking and smelling chicken manure?
- My daughter and I also have allergies and chicken dander is known to cause reactions.
- Chicken coops are known for nuisance, noise, and sanitation issues. It will be pretty hard to enjoy our own backyard when there will be an abundance of chickens squawking, flies, mice and rodents along with other predators finding their way in to try and get their food.
- What about our property value? I don't think too many people looking at a house in town are going to want to buy a house with all of the above living 18 ft. or closer next to them.
- Our homes are on a very busy intersection already, what will happen when the chickens get out (and they will) and their dog starts chasing them and they run into the street? People speed down our road already and I am concerned they will cause an accident.

Our thoughts on their request is that it's selfish and not very neighborly, when you live in very close proximity to your neighbors, to request raising poultry in the center of town when homes are already close together.

Eric Sutton & Nicole Fehr

**Patricia Brown**

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**From:** Dave Stambaugh  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2020 12:14 PM  
**To:** Patricia Brown  
**Subject:** Objection to permit to raise poultry at 607 Westgate Road

I live approximately 200 yards straight line distance from the Westgate Road property in question. I believe it would be detrimental to the neighborhood to approve this zoning request. It is not in keeping with the general nature of the other residences in this and neighboring subdivisions.

David Stambaugh  
1201 Hampton Rd, Washington, IL 61571

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## Patricia Brown

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**From:** Becky Holmes  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 6, 2020 9:06 AM  
**To:** Patricia Brown  
**Subject:** FW: Variance request of 607 Westgate

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**From:** James Saunders  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 21, 2020 11:05 AM  
**To:** Becky Holmes <bholmes@ci.washington.il.us>  
**Subject:** Re: Variance request of 607 Westgate

Hello Becky

Thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns regarding the city of Washington issuing a variance to allow poultry to be raised at our immediate neighbor's house(607 Westgate Road).

As a point of context, the backyard privacy fence that would most likely be the area the chicken coops are located in is literally a few feet from our lot line with 607 Westgate. Our homes are very much right next to each other.

We have concerns and fears regarding this possibility:

1) This one is in the concern category. We love to sleep with the windows open in the summer to enjoy the fresh air. If the chickens begin rustling around at sunrise(a very early hour in the summer) this would be disturbing to us. If a rooster is involved, this rises to a higher level. Our house is very close to the wooden fence that would probably be the containment area for the animals so noise would not be muffled by distance.

2) This one is in the fear category. Would the storage and/or feeding of the poultry draw in vermin. Rats and mice are always drawn to grains and the like that would be used to feed chickens. They will eat open bags that may be stored in the outside shed that is on the property. If the feeding process involves food being spread on the ground or is dropped on the grass by mistake as feeding trays are filled, the rats will find that quickly and are smart enough to come back again and again for a free meal

Rats and mice are a real health and sanitation risk. They carry diseases. Their feces lead to bacteria spread.. The topography of the land between our houses will bring rain water runoff onto our property as drainage runs between our two houses. We have a dog, she would be at risk as she walks in this area of the yard. I maintain our yard in the summer, I would also be at risk as I mow and maintain our yard. This is a serious potential risk.

Would the spread of waste from the chickens result in foul smells that we would have to put up with during the hot central Illinois summers? I think this is a real issue also.

Lastly on this point. During the winter, rats and mice look for safe and warmer homes. Would this be in our basement? I think they would end up there. Farms address this problem by having farm cats so this is a very real issue.

3) This one is also in the fear category. We moved into our home at 609 Westgate right after the tornado in 2013. We have spent many thousands of dollars upgrading our abode with a new sun room, new patio, remodeled kitchen, moving the laundry room from the basement to the first floor to name the major items. Other smaller improvements have been done.

Having poultry being raised immediately next door will negatively effect the value of our home and the effect would be drastic. Imagine if you were shopping for a home and your realtor told you the house next door to one you are interested in buying was raising chickens, would you even take the time to view the property. Many would not.

This fear falls in the probability of a decrease of tens of thousands of dollars being lost.

Raising poultry in a yard that is in fact a few feet from our property line is really a bad situation. I strongly encourage the City to not grant the variance for the above reasons and for other concerns that may have been brought to the fore by other neighbors.

Thank you for your understanding.

James and Tamara Saunders  
609 Westgate Road  
Washington, IL 61571

On Mon, Apr 20, 2020 at 1:37 PM Becky Holmes <[bholmes@ci.washington.il.us](mailto:bholmes@ci.washington.il.us)> wrote:

James,

The variance request to allow chickens at 607 Westgate will be heard at the May 6, 2020 Planning and Zoning Meeting. We will be holding a zoom remote web meeting. You had called me back on March 31 and expressed your opposition to the variance. I would like to be able to share your concerns at the meeting and can include an email from you in my packet to the Board. Please respond with your concerns at your earliest convenience.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

**To:** Washington City Council

**From:** The Baileys

**Subject:** Zoning variance request for 607 Westgate to raise chickens on property

**Date:** May 6, 2020

We love chickens, second only to the bald eagle as America's bird. We love the eggs chickens produce even more, and take a back seat to no one in our affection for a fluffy Denver omelet.

But we *hate* the idea of a chicken coop potentially coming next door, its inhabitants waking us up at dawn (if a rooster were to be in the mix), pooping on our property line, kicking up a constant stink, drawing flies and other unwelcome critters (who like the taste of chicken, too), creating a sanitation and potential health problem, and diminishing the value of the home in which we have invested a great deal of money over the years. We may want to sell this beloved home someday. Would it be worth less with chickens and the mess they make next door? Probably.

For now, we want to enjoy our back yard, too – to sit out in the fresh air on our deck and watch our grandkids play and have a chat with friends and family. That experience would likely be considerably less pleasant with the smell and the squawking and the predators lining up to eyeball a potential meal.

We've become accustomed to wearing face masks during this coronavirus. With chickens doing what they do next door, would we need to wear them all the time?

Chickens can't just fly away (at least not very far). We'd be stuck with them.

We understand the appeal of having a ready supply of farm fresh eggs, or a drumstick or a wing. And you know what? We already have that – at Lindy's, or at Kroger, or at Walmart, or at the farmers market. And they're inexpensive, to boot.

In short, chickens are cute – on a farm, which is where they belong, not in an urban or suburban neighborhood where people live in close proximity, and where the problems that will inevitably arise cannot be confined. We're not convinced it's good for the chickens, either.

We don't live on the same block as these petitioners do, but we're close, and our concern is that once this door is open to one, it can't be closed to others.

We respectfully urge you to weigh the pros and the cons of the zoning variance request before you that would allow poultry to be raised at 607 Westgate in Washington, to conclude that the cons have it, and to come back with a resounding "no."

Thank you for listening.

The Baileys  
8 Somerset Ct.  
Washington, IL 61571