

Architectural Review Board Case 21-157 Regarding 143 S Riverview St  
Informal Review, November 17, 2021  
Comments by Denise Franz King, 170 S. Riverview St

The Applicant statement for this project is one of the best I have seen in sixteen years of following ARB's agenda. The Lyon family is a welcome and contributing part of the social fabric of S. Riverview. However, the new home as proposed for 143 S Riverview does not adhere to the new Historic Guidelines or Code that were adopted after years of public participation and effort. The residents of Historic Residential neighborhood live with the visual assault of the oversized height, enormous mass and lot coverage of 185 S Riverview and 143 S High (both of which were built high out of the ground and are tall to begin with) and the promises made but ignored at 110-112. Those properties were approved under the old standards. Those of us who actively participated in the development of the new guidelines and code expect them to be reflected in the proposal but they are not.

Specifically:

**2 Overview: Background:** According to Chi Weber (deceased) who built 179, 143 was a "kit house" where the entire home was delivered ready to be constructed with all the furnishings. I am familiar with the home as I rented it for two years, 2005-2007, and almost completed its purchase before the owner decided not to sell in 2006. It had a pink quartz fireplace and knotty pine dining room. A home inspector I hired said the main roof beam was bowed. There was no insulation under the ell which was very chilly, but the home was a snug nest for a small family and contributes to the neighborhood. The Lyons have taken good care of it. If the home is permitted to be removed, and I am not sure it should be, be certain the new home meets every aspect of the new code and guidelines. We do not need more homes out of scale, more loss of trees and greenspace and more flooding.

**2. Proposal: Site Layout:** The new home is forward of its neighbors to the north and south which contravenes the code and guidelines. The setback is even more significant given the quirks of very old property lines. The Franklin County Auditor's website shows my lot (170) extending under and across S Riverview and about 10 feet west into the yards at 179 and 143 and corners of 185 and 137. If a new home is permitted, this needs to be taken into account when calculating the setback and required front yard. The property line needs to be clearly understood by the staff, board and architect. Most important, the house and porch must be set back **to or behind** the front setbacks of 137 and 179 as required. This is essential to preserving the character of the historic neighborhood.

The staff report says "The front yard setback is required to be 20 feet." That is a selective reading as a setback aligning with the properties to the north and south is also required. This point was critically important to neighborhood representatives and we were assured throughout the process that it would be required.

A GIS map showing the proposed location of the proposed new home was included in the meeting materials. It is helpful but a map key is not included. **A map key identifying the purpose of the black, red, dotted or blue lines is essential.** Avoid confusion and include a key on every map, especially when the information is for the public. Also the print is so small a magnifying glass is required. Not everybody uses a screen all the time.

**2. Proposal: Lot coverage:** The staff report says “Lot coverage is stated at 37% whereas a maximum of 45% is required per Code.” First is the word “maximum” in error? Should it read “a minimum of 45% is required”? In any case, it is a small lot. It can accommodate a small home but not 2200 sq ft.

The report continues: “It appears that the existing driveway is partially on the adjacent property to the north. It may benefit the property owner to obtain a **driveway easement**, if not already existing.” I am unaware of a driveway easement across the portion of the 170 S Riverview lot on the west side of the street that includes a ten-foot strip across the 143 entire lot. That should probably be looked into as well.

**2. Proposal: Architectural Details: 1) East elevation:** The 1.5 story scale and design of the easternmost façade is appropriate and charming. What is jarring and inappropriate is the looming 2 story roof that dwarfs it. It is reminiscent of the oppressive and inappropriately scaled home at 185 being built under the old guidelines.

**4) West elevation,** same comments.

**Additional Comment:** When the staff recommends and the board approves new construction on S. Riverview or in the HRD, **construction activity and vehicles should be accommodated on the site.** This is not a new PUD in an old farm field. There is no parking on S. Riverview, none, and the street is narrow. I keep the gravel in front of my home which is not public, open so the school bus, garbage truck, and my neighbors can get through while the material delivery trucks and the crews clog the road. How will crew parking and deliveries be possible within the thin lot at 143? It’s not. All those vehicles will be the death of the large tree in the front yard. Just like at 185, the protective construction fence protecting the tree will be mangled in no time. I will take no satisfaction in being correct.

Another factor the city and ARB need to take into account when approving new homes is that **S Riverview south of Pinney Hill does not have storm sewers.** None. Decades ago Mayor Dixon who lived on the river at 180, advocated large yards and gravel drives to absorb the rain. That no longer works as most lots have concrete or asphalt driveways and the large scale new roofs and home additions combined with more frequent and intense rains (documented by the City Engineer) regularly cause wet basements, water in the garage, undermine historic retention walls and water ponding and freezing on driveways. Each application should contain an impervious surface rainfall calculation before it is approved and accommodate rainfall absorption.

In summary, we love the Lyon family and want them to stay. They are fantastic neighbors. But the proposal is a dream that is larger than the lot.