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## City Ordinance 04-24

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Jodie Westin <myjojo99@gmail.com>  
To: electedofficials@bexley.org

Tue, Mar 26, 2024 at 6:38 AM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am sending this email as I have decided not to attend the city council meeting on Tuesday and instead attend the Buckeye Men's Basketball game.

I have many concerns about the ordinance change that the city wants to make mainly because there is no transparency and I feel we are being lied to. We have been told that this ordinance change has nothing to do with the lower income housing. Yet, Catherine Cunningham stood up at the second reading of this ordinance and stated that she was making changes to this ordinance so it would read the way the courts told her it needed to read after the city was sued and they wasted taxpayer money fighting it. If this did not have anything to do with the housing wanting to be built on Livingston then we would not be moving the variance from College to Francis, the ordinance would stop at college. If we are not changing it to allow the builders to bring this back up then why change it? You don't need this ordinance to put in the sidewalks and by putting in the sidewalks, you will not make Livingston safer or cleaner.

I keep being told that if I just get online and read everything that is up there, I would understand what is going on. Well, if you really wanted residents to understand what is being changed, it would be much easier to understand if we did not need to pull up the old ordinance and compare it to the new one. The new one would state clearly what is being changed. It appears that we are going to give BZAP even more leeway on their decisions vs. having concrete guidance for them to follow and for neighbors to understand what a builder or homeowner wants to change. I have sat in on way too many BZAP meetings to know that BZAP just makes it up as they go. 424 S. Columbia, BZAP told us that since the direct neighbors were okay with it being 7 feet over code and everything else that was not built to the plans, that they would pass it. When a house down the street went in to request to be torn down, the homeowners could not find direct neighbors to agree to it, so they went across the street and BZAP said well since the neighbors across the street are okay with it, we will pass it. Why the difference? I asked a council member when did BZAP ever turn something down. I was told that St. Charles was told no to their building being over 5 stories, but the building on Main was allowed to go through. WHY? What's the difference? Homeowners are allowed to put in plans and get them approved then build what they want and ask for forgiveness later. Some more egregious than others. Homeowners are allowed to lie under oath and when I reached out to the Bexley lawyer, I was told the city cannot do anything about it, but I could take them to court. I even came in two years ago requesting that the city council look into these differences and not being able to enforce the "rules" of BZAP and put concrete directions into an ordinance for BZAP to follow. Only now I am reading that we are changing the way things read for BZAP from they must consider these things when ruling to they may consider these items listed. We are allowing non-elected officials to make substantial changes to the city with no repercussions. Why not change the ordinance to make it more clear on when and why BZAP can approve something? Why do we

want this to be more vague?

The funny thing is that I was told two weeks ago that if I was not willing to engage, I was a terrible awful person. Yet, how many of you engaged with anyone who came into the meetings to talk with them on how they felt about this ordinance change and why. I was not against the apartment building on Main, I am against how large it is (as was ARB, but they have no power). I am not against the lower income housing; I am against where the builder wants to put it. I asked at the last meeting that maybe the city should work with the residents to come up with something that all of us could agree with. Why is it so hard and terrible to engage with residents? Why do we need to be called names? Yes, there are open hours to come and talk, have you reached out to the residents who are upset and asked them to come and engage with you? If not, why? Again, I was told this is a terrible thing not to engage with those you do not agree with.

Has anything been changed in the ordinance since it was first proposed? We tabled it all these weeks, so did we make changes? If we did, was this explained to the residents? Again, I do not see a reason why there needs to be a change except for what Catherine Cunningham said the reason was for, the courts told her this is how it need to be read to allow the builder to bring forth the building again, which the residents that you represent now, don't want in that area. It feels like we the residents are constantly being told that our elected officials know better than us. It is the elected officials vs. resident's, all the time. Like I stated at the last meeting and another couple stated, it feels like it is not worth attending meetings and stating our cases as no one ever listens and it is a waste of our time. That is why I chose to get tickets to the basketball game Tuesday night and not attend a meeting that I feel I am wasting my breath and time.

Sincerely,

Jodie Westin