

From: [Wrinn, Michael](#)
To: [Callahan, Rich](#); [White, Daphne](#)
Subject: FW: Erdmann Lane neighbor's complaint re: 14 Grumman Ave.
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2023 11:03:51 AM

Pls post

From: Adrienne Saint-Pierre <aesaintpierre@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2023 11:02 AM
To: Wrinn, Michael <Michael.Wrinn@WILTONCT.ORG>; White, Daphne <Daphne.White@WILTONCT.ORG>; Bunting, Timothy <Timothy.Bunting@WILTONCT.ORG>
Cc: Barry Rosenberg <barry.rosenberg@bar-curator.com>
Subject: Erdmann Lane neighbor's complaint re: 14 Grumman Ave.

BOO! EXTERNAL EMAIL. Hover over any button or link to see where it goes. |||

To: Michael Wrinn, Town Planner

My husband, Barry Rosenberg, and I (Adrienne Saint-Pierre) are the owners and residents of 14 Grumman Ave. since 2021. At the recommendation of Assistant Town Planner Daphne White, we are responding to the complaints from Barbara Pape posted to the Town website in regard to a variance request at 14 Grumman Ave., for inverters mounted on the rear of the carriage barn.

Ms. Pape characterizes the situation to put in screening plants on our boundary line as being at an impasse, though having viewed and agreed about the 20-foot area for the planting and the types of plants recommended. This was not an impasse. We acted in good faith to resolve this and in accordance with what the ZBA Chair stated we should do, noting at the hearing that it was not necessary to purchase full-size mature plants. Now we learn that she is dissatisfied with the planting. Since that is the case, we respectfully request a site visit to help us resolve this problem with new recommendations, as whatever else is added will have an impact on the setback area that is the subject of the variance request.

As I have noted in information previously provided, one of the characteristics sought for the plants was that they would be relatively fast-growing in a shaded, woods area, yet not invasive. I spoke with horticulturists at three nurseries where I sought advice, and again when I went to purchase the agreed-upon plants, which came from two excellent nurseries. I also was instructed how to space the three plants to fill out the 20-foot area and followed the advice. Ms. Pape refers to this as a "great story" implying that it is meant to be misleading or dishonest, which is very disrespectful of the time and effort we have dedicated to a resolution, meeting with her and providing a researched list of plant options. She approved the top three choices, of which two types were purchased: American Cranberry "Wentworth"(a type of viburnum that forms a thicket/hedge, each plant growing 8-10' x 8-10') and Canadian

Serviceberry (aka Shadbush) that grows wide and to 20' or more.

I am attaching a photograph taken from the back of the barn with a southwest view to Ms. Pape's home and pool area. The photo includes a side of the inverter as a reference point for the location. Only a portion of her pool fence is visible at one end, and she herself has shrubbery in that area. Her pool is not located such that the inverters pose an "in your face" view.

The magnitude of her complaint about the presence of the inverters devaluing her property is quite unreasonable to say the least. She also reported to you that she could hear them running while using her pool, which is impossible at that distance, as they are extremely quiet, and one has to stand within about three feet to really hear them when they are running, which is not constant. Even cranked up to full speed the noise is quite minimal. A site visit will demonstrate this. The two inverters are 27' to 30' feet from the boundary line, and the neighbor's pool area is easily twice that distance.

Ms. Pape also makes inflammatory statements that are unrelated to the variance request, saying the area behind the barn was "clear cut" and that we encroached on her property. Saying the area was clear cut is a complete mischaracterization and seems intended to be provoking. It does look different now with the removal of all the junk and invasive weeds that were there. Prior to the barn foundation being dug in Oct. 2022, one moderately sized (~6-inch diameter) catalpa was removed from the **northwest** side, an area beyond having any impact on her view of the inverters. A branch from another tree next to it was also removed; these measures were taken so the construction equipment could operate in the space, not because we wanted to get rid of trees. I will note again that the removed tree and branch have nothing to do with her sightline to the inverters. There are several mature trees and several young ones in the area; it is definitely not denuded. Last fall we cleared messy piles of rocks and broken cinder blocks, broken glass, two old, rusted lawn mowers sitting amidst the weeds, and several large piles of old branches and logs, and this spring we cleared out the invasive Japanese Knotweed which had obviously been there for years as it had grown quite tall. This is not "clear cutting." We are new owners of this property and it is a perfectly reasonable decision to clean up that neglected and junky area of our property.

Her assertion that we have a property line dispute and have encroached on her property is incorrect. The land survey measurements remain the same as they were when there was a subdivision in the 1970s, and there are iron pins at the corners, unchanged. The surveyors who did the as-built land survey marked several boundary locations with paint. She claims we have not addressed her assertion about a boundary dispute but there is nothing to say except the boundary has not changed, and we made the point at the hearing that we used the same surveying company who made the 1970s subdivision map she has of her property. The idea that debris was strewn over onto her property is untrue. We do know that when the lawn

crew was raking out topsoil for planting seed, post-construction, they moved aside a half dozen black bags containing massive Knotweed roots we had dug up and were trying to kill; the bags were moved aside but were not on her property. In any case they have long since been disposed of. This was hardly a catastrophic situation.

Ms. Pape's attitude is considerably less than polite and neighborly; long before the ZBA hearing she could have called or emailed to say she would like to discuss plantings for a screened area along the boundary line. Since the Spring she has complained about numerous things: the barn is "too big," it has windows on the second floor (stairway) which she fears allow us to see her in her pool (not possible); she stated repeatedly that she "would die" if we painted the carriage barn red," and so on. (All this despite the fact we invited her over in Fall 2021, to look at the structure plans, newly done land survey with the proposed siting, AND a photograph of a carriage barn in Fairfield that is exactly the same style and color but considerably larger.) She makes these remarks while out walking and has even done so in front of a guest. In June she angrily marched over to say we had encroached on her property, that the lawn crew had trashed her property in that area, and that we had changed the boundary line on paper (which she remarked that another neighbor had done to her at some point). She announced her intention to go to Town Hall about it, and we heard nothing more, assuming she had seen that the property line was unchanged between the old and new land surveys. We inspected the area behind the barn and did not find debris, and the black bags were not on her property, but we put them into bins. We periodically have the lawn crew remove a pile of dead branches that accumulate from the many trees on our property.

Just hours prior to the ZBA hearing we were informed of her request to deny the variance, due to her claim that her property was now devalued and to which she added her other issues; this can only be seen as contentious behavior. We would therefore appreciate having a site visit from the Town to offer recommendations--given that a different resolution will affect the setback area--and to put to rest the claims of boundary encroachment.

Adrienne Saint-Pierre

Barry A. Rosenberg