

My grandmother told me shortly after my daughter was born that being a mother forever changes you. She said, "You are now like a grizzly bear. You will find a strength that you never knew about within you to do anything to protect your child." I have thought about those words so many times over the past four years and have realized how true they are. When you feel that the safety of your child is at risk, you do become that mother grizzly bear, willing to risk yourself to save your child.

It is with this furry of a mother grizzly bear that I write this letter to you, members of our community. The safety of our children is currently at risk due to the proposed development of three duplexes on the vacant lots where the former Child Crafts daycare stood on Harris Avenue, across from Lee Elementary. Each duplex is to have a three bedroom and two bath configuration. Thus, this development creates 6 units with up to 18 unrelated people potentially occupying them. Therefore, this adds a potential 18 vehicles on the streets near Lee Elementary, where young elementary children walk and ride their bikes to school.

Their current proposal has the parking accessed by an alley, whereas the only entrance to that alley is from Woodrow. Many of you whose children walk and ride bikes to school go down Woodrow from Carolyn and Texas to get to Harris. I too will be making this same daily commute when my daughter begins attending Lee. Woodrow has no sidewalks, thereby forcing pedestrians to walk on the street. With the potential of 18 vehicles coming out of the alley onto Woodrow, our children commuting to school would be put in harms way. Therefore, the potential parking of 18 vehicles on either Harris or the alley accessed from Woodrow is a very real safety concern to families who commute to Lee.

The developers maintain that these are high end duplexes and that they do not want an "animal house" style dormitory on these lots. Yet, they maintain their rights to build the three 3-2 duplexes, which they intend on leasing for a few years before they sell it. My own experience and knowledge from real estate agents in our market tell us that this type of plan enables a developer to show a substantial revenue stream from the properties. They can then show this revenue stream to potential investors whose only interest is a return on profit based on the revenue stream. As we all know, the amount earned from students based per room, (approximately \$800 x 6 rooms per lot x 3 lots) is often more than what they could get in rent from a single family or professional occupying each unit. Therefore, even if we did not have 18 vehicles right away from this development, the potential is always there based on the current developers plan to lease and then sell it.

The developers do not have to max out their legal building and occupancy rights on a street so close to a school in a neighborhood which relies on pedestrian access to and from that school. They could make a good profit even building smaller scaled homes or condos that would attract families and professionals. They do not have to lease for a few years then sell. They could sell the properties as homes or condos to families and professionals once they are built. As such, if they were to exercise better judgment on this matter, they could reduce the potential traffic and safety risk by having fewer potential vehicles accessing these streets.

The HNA has a zoning committee that will be talking to the developers on our behalf. Yet, I still encourage you to continue to write to the developers, city council members, and our Neighborhood Association's leaders and other leaders in our community. Let them know that you encourage only responsible development, not one that would put our children's safety at risk. The developers still have an opportunity to act responsibly. Let us encourage them to do so. What developer would want to be known city wide as the developer that chose to put children's safety at risk simply for the sake of maximizing their profit?

The developers are:

Kevin Cutsinger, Builder/ Owner of lot 722 Harris Ave:

kcutsinger@cutsingercustomhomes.com

Cutsinger Custom Homes,

1979 CR 200,

Liberty Hill, TX 78642.

(<http://www.cutsingercustomhomes.com/>)

Ross Cole, Leasing Agent and Owner

ross@austincentricrealty.com

Austin Centric Realty (<http://www.austincentricrealty.com/>)

502 West 30th Street

Austin, TX 78705

City Council Members

You may send an email to all City Council members by using this form:

<http://austintexas.gov/mail/all-council-members>.

Sincerely,

Angela Pack Zia