

STATE OF ILLINOIS     )  
                                  )  
COUNTY OF BUREAU     )

In the Matter of the Petition  
                                  of

Kristin L. McComber  
  
Princeton Township  
Bureau County, Illinois

Testimony of Witnesses  
Produced, Sworn and  
Examined on this 15th day  
of May, A.D., 2025,  
before the Bureau County  
Zoning Board of Appeals

Present:

Troy Quest  
Jim Forristall  
Bill Jensen  
Mike Stutzke  
Barry Welbers, Chairman

Samantha Holt, Secretary  
Kristine Donarski, Zoning Enforcement Officer

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1 MR. WELBERS: That brings us to our next  
2 case. The next case is Kristin L. McComber.  
3 Parcel Number, 16-35-351-011 and 16-35-177-031.

4 The common location is the northeast side  
5 of the cul-de-sac, 915 Fairway Drive, Princeton.

6 This property is presently zoned as R-2.

7 This is a request for a Variation to  
8 install a 6-foot-tall solid vinyl privacy fence  
9 as close as 2 feet from the right-of-way of  
10 Sherwood Glen Road. Ordinance requires fences  
11 in the front yards to be only 3 feet tall and to  
12 be at least 50 percent open. The property has  
13 double frontage. Requesting a 3-foot height  
14 Variation and a Variation to have a solid fence  
15 in the front yard.

16 Present use is a single-family home.

17 Proof of publication is here.

18 The Princeton High School District Number  
19 500 has no objection to the above application.

20 Princeton Elementary School District  
21 Number 115 has no objection to the above  
22 application.

23 I bet you're the witness?

24 MS. MCCOMBER: I am, yes.

1 MR. WELBERS: Come forward.

2 KRISTIN McCOMBER,

3 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 MS. HOLT: Can you please state your name  
5 and address for the record.

6 MS. McCOMBER: Kristin McComber, 915  
7 Fairway Drive, Princeton.

8 MS. HOLT: Thank you.

9 MR. WELBERS: Would you like to tell us  
10 more?

11 MS. McCOMBER: Absolutely.

12 Good evening, and thank you for your time.  
13 I am requesting a Variation for a 6-foot solid  
14 vinyl privacy fence for my backyard. My  
15 backyard is a beautiful piece of land; however,  
16 the road for Sherwood Glen runs through it.  
17 There is constant traffic all day going by my  
18 backyard.

19 I have two gorgeous little girls, ages ten  
20 and seven. My husband is in a nursing home due  
21 to early onset Parkinson's. So it is just me  
22 and my little girls. I am an only parent who is  
23 always alert and watching them whenever they go  
24 outside. They love being in the backyard,

1 playing on the swing set, jumping on the  
2 trampoline, chasing each other with games of  
3 tag, running in their swimming suits while  
4 playing in the sprinkler and some day hopefully  
5 a pool.

6 I am fiercely protective of my girls.  
7 Having a fence would provide a peace of mind  
8 regarding their security. Many times we have  
9 had random cars stop on the road near the back  
10 of our home. They may be sitting there on the  
11 phone or texting, I don't know, but I often hear  
12 frantic words, "Mom, there's a strange car  
13 parked out back." We're always vigilant.

14 A number of years ago there was a  
15 registered sex offender living in Sherwood Glen.  
16 I think I can speak on behalf of all families  
17 that we were all on edge. We didn't go outside  
18 much, and they certainly were never outside  
19 alone.

20 Currently there is another sex offender  
21 living in Deer Run North, just yards from my  
22 backyard. It is not something I take lightly.  
23 With an open backyard, we are always on guard.

24 I want to enjoy privacy of a backyard,

1 something most everyone has. I want security  
2 and protection for my daughters.

3 With an open backyard, there are also golf  
4 carts that pass through my yard, making their  
5 way to the golf course, as well as other  
6 off-road electric vehicles that like to jump  
7 from neighborhood to neighborhood using my yard.  
8 Most of the time I do not know who these people  
9 are. I don't want to be held liable if  
10 something or an accident were to happen on my  
11 property.

12 Another reason I would like a fence, the  
13 back of my house has large windows. My bedroom,  
14 in particular, has a vaulted ceiling and a high  
15 window I cannot cover with a blind or curtain.  
16 I see headlights coming from cars going by at  
17 night, and a fence would greatly reduce the  
18 brightness in my bedroom.

19 Lastly, we have a young, hyperactive dog,  
20 who is a hunter by nature; I am not. He needs  
21 to run to expend his energy. He has escaped our  
22 home and run around the neighborhood several  
23 times, and it's never fun having to catch him.  
24 Having a fenced yard will provide him with a

1 secure and fun space.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. WELBERS: Questions, Kris?

4 EXAMINATION

5 BY MS. DONARSKI:

6 Q. Kristin, how long have you owned this property?

7 A. Been there for a little over 11 years.

8 Q. 11 years, okay.

9 And then when you're saying -- can you  
10 tell us a little bit about the type of fence  
11 that you were wanting to install there?

12 A. Just a vinyl privacy, solid, 6-foot fence.

13 Q. Okay. Will it be white?

14 A. It will be white.

15 Q. Okay. And then when you were saying you were  
16 going to have it be, like, inside your property  
17 line a couple feet --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- how far would it be from the fence to the  
20 actual pavement where cars drive? How far would  
21 that be?

22 A. I had originally asked for 2 feet past the  
23 right-of-way, which is the pin, the property  
24 pin, and that property pin is 13 feet. So then

1 I was looking at a total of 15 feet from the  
2 curb. I spoke with Spud, who is our road  
3 commissioner, and he would like it 4 feet. So  
4 from the road, it will be 17 feet.

5 Q. So it would be a total of 17 feet from the  
6 pavement?

7 A. On the north side. On the south side, he was  
8 fine with 2 feet from the pin, which is still  
9 15 feet from the road.

10 Q. So 15 to 17 feet --

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. -- from the pavement?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Okay. And then you said you had gotten  
15 approval from the township road commissioner?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Okay. And then what are the existing land uses  
18 on the adjoining properties around you?

19 A. There's a field to the north of me. Don  
20 Hubbard owns that. I don't exactly know what he  
21 plans to do.

22 Across from me is some trees and  
23 residential on the other side.

24 Q. Okay. So is there a house directly across

1 Sherwood Road from where the fence is or are  
2 they --

3 A. They are down a bit.

4 Q. They are down a bit, okay.

5 MS. DONARSKI: That's all the questions I  
6 have right now. Thank you.

7 MR. WELBERS: Do we have people that are  
8 interested in this application with questions of  
9 this witness?

10 MR. LeSAGE: I do.

11 MR. WELBERS: State your name and ask your  
12 question.

13 MR. LeSAGE: Todd LeSage. I live across  
14 the street.

15 EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. LeSAGE:

17 Q. One of my questions is, is the way it's written  
18 is it's 2 feet from the right-of-way. I would  
19 like further explanation on what the actual  
20 right-of-way is. Is the right-of-way the curb,  
21 or is it the pin?

22 Because the ambiguity of the letter of the  
23 Variance request is -- I'm sorry, I don't  
24 understand it. So I'm looking for some

1 clarification?

2 A. I am with you, I didn't understand it as well.

3 After going through this application  
4 process with Kris, she told me that the pin is  
5 considered the right-of-way, not the curb. So  
6 it is confusing, but it will be set 15 to  
7 17 feet off the road.

8 MR. LeSAGE: Okay. Thank you.

9 MS. MCCOMBER: You're welcome.

10 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions?

11 (No verbal response.)

12 MR. WELBERS: Board?

13 (No verbal response.)

14 MR. WELBERS: Well --

15 MS. DONARSKI: You can have her -- nobody  
16 has questions for her.

17 MR. WELBERS: Yeah, you can sit down.

18 MS. DONARSKI: I think there's people here  
19 who might want to testify, too.

20 MR. WELBERS: Is there anyone who would  
21 like to testify on this one yet? If they would  
22 like to do that, this would be our opportunity  
23 if you would like to say something, has  
24 testimony rather than questions.

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PATTI POWER-LEPAGE,

being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

MS. POWER-LEPAGE: I'm Patti Power-LEPAGE, and I live at 1135 Sherwood Glen, and I'm here to read letters from people who can't be here. So I don't think I will be able to answer any questions of what they say, so hopefully it's clear.

Okay. I'm going to read it just like they wrote it. It says:

Dear Zoning Department,

My name is Bill Gilane. I work in Northern Wisconsin, so I am not able to physically attend this meeting. My spouse, Troy Woodley, and I reside at 1134 Sherwood Glen Drive, the entrance road that leads to the Sherwood Glen Subdivision.

The McComber property backyard is next to our front yard, which faces Sherwood Glen Drive. The proposed 6-foot-tall vinyl privacy fence will not only be an eyesore as you enter the Sherwood Glen Subdivision, it will butt up

1 right against our front yard property line  
2 all the way to the street as proposed.

3 We do not want this next to our  
4 property or as an entrance blockade to  
5 Sherwood Glen Subdivision. It will  
6 obstruct the view from our home as well.  
7 We work hard to make our property  
8 aesthetically pleasing, and would agree to  
9 a wrought iron 3-foot see-through fence  
10 with tree plantings for the proposed  
11 privacy.

12 The proposed 6-foot synthetic fence  
13 is not contiguous with the open space feel  
14 of our neighborhood areas. It will be a  
15 hindrance to our property values.

16 If pets are a concern, I suggest an  
17 electric fence.

18 Thank you for your consideration, as  
19 we are definitely against this proposed  
20 Variation to the Zoning Code.

21 Sincerely, Dr. William Gilane.

22 And I have another one. It's from -- and  
23 I think they gave those to you, right, Kris?

24 MS. DONARSKI: Yes, I have a copy to put

1 in the record.

2 MS. POWER-LeSAGE: All right. This is  
3 from Linda Moore, at 1030 Sherwood Glen.

4 It says:

5 May this letter serve as my  
6 opposition to the proposed Variance for  
7 the 6-foot vinyl fence requested for the  
8 property located at 915 Fairway Drive.

9 I recently purchased a home on  
10 Sherwood Glen Drive in the subdivision  
11 specifically for the natural beauty. The  
12 charm and the natural essence of the  
13 neighborhood captured my heart. It is  
14 rare to find a community with such  
15 wonderful homes without any -- or many  
16 visual trappings of city-type structures.

17 I feel the integrity and value of the  
18 neighborhood will be greatly diminished if  
19 this proposed fence is the first thing you  
20 see while driving or walking into the  
21 subdivision on Sherwood Glen Drive.

22 Since I will not be able to attend  
23 the meeting, I do authorize my neighbor,  
24 Patti Power-LeSage, to read it on my

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1           behalf.

2           I don't know if there's any questions?

3           MR. WELBERS:  It's difficult for you to  
4 answer questions --

5           MS. POWER-LeSAGE:  I know.

6           MR. WELBERS:  -- regarding their letters.

7           MS. POWER-LeSAGE:  I know.

8           MR. WELBERS:  So the letters are in the  
9 record for consideration, and you have read them  
10 anyway.  I don't think you can answer any  
11 questions.

12          MS. POWER-LeSAGE:  Probably not.

13          MR. WELBERS:  If you have any comments of  
14 your own, you can do that.

15          MS. POWER-LeSAGE:  My husband was going to  
16 actually do that.

17          MR. WELBERS:  We'll let him do that.

18          MS. POWER-LeSAGE:  Thanks, Barry.

19          MR. WELBERS:  Do you want to come forward?

20          MR. LeSAGE:  Yes, please.

21                           TODD LeSAGE,  
22 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

23          MS. HOLT:  Can you please state your name  
24 and address for the record.

1 MR. LeSAGE: Todd LeSage, 1135 Sherwood  
2 Glen, here in Princeton.

3 We live kitty-corner across the street.  
4 And as was said earlier, is this property is  
5 very unique because your backyard is everyone  
6 else's front yard.

7 MS. McCOMBER: Correct.

8 MR. LeSAGE: We're not opposing that a  
9 fence is up. We oppose the 6-foot Variation.

10 We understand -- our children are grown.  
11 We have been through what you're going through  
12 right now. It's enjoyable. It's wonderful.

13 MS. McCOMBER: Sometimes.

14 MR. LeSAGE: There's more good days than  
15 bad.

16 MS. McCOMBER: Yeah.

17 MR. LeSAGE: But having a 6-foot fence  
18 that would -- is truly the entrance of our  
19 subdivision, it would be the first thing that --  
20 where your property is located, where you pull  
21 in, it would be the first thing that you see.  
22 It would hide the openness and the natural  
23 beauty of our subdivision.

24 So if there's any other consideration of a

1 fence, we can certain -- I would certainly  
2 welcome the discussions and whatever.

3 The -- I have to say, the arborvitaes that  
4 you have are absolutely beautiful. So to hide  
5 those from the rest of us and keep our -- to  
6 keep the beauty of our neighborhood is -- I know  
7 you're struggling, but it's -- we enjoy seeing  
8 the nature in the neighborhood.

9 I have to say that we do -- once again, I  
10 do -- or we do oppose the 6-foot privacy fence.

11 MS. McCOMBER: I understand.

12 MR. LeSAGE: But if there's another  
13 variation of a fence, we would certainly  
14 consider that.

15 MR. WELBERS: Is that what you have to  
16 say?

17 MR. LeSAGE: That's all I have to say.

18 MR. WELBERS: Kris, do you have questions?

19 MS. DONARSKI: I do have one question.

20 EXAMINATION

21 BY MS. DONARSKI:

22 Q. So there's a Variation to have it being a  
23 3-foot height Variation and then to having it be  
24 solid. So are you opposed to the height of it

1 or the material of it? Or can you just kind of  
2 clarify that?

3 A. Yes, I should be more specific. I oppose the  
4 6-foot vinyl privacy fence.

5 Q. Okay. So it's the material and the extra  
6 3-foot tall?

7 A. And the board-on-board or solid or however --

8 Q. The solid, okay.

9 MS. DONARSKI: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. WELBERS: Any questions from --

11 Please state your name and ask your  
12 question.

13 MS. GRAY: Carmen Gray, 910 Sherwood Glen,  
14 Princeton, Illinois.

15 EXAMINATION

16 BY MS. GRAY:

17 Q. You stated it's the first thing in our  
18 neighborhood. Isn't it true that there's a  
19 large field that's open when you first come in  
20 our neighborhood? Isn't there several empty  
21 lots before you would get to this fence? Is  
22 that true?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay.

1 A. It's the first building or structure you would  
2 see as soon as you pull in the subdivision.

3 Q. There's another home on the other side of  
4 Sherwood Glen when you first pull into the  
5 subdivision.

6 A. And I apologize, on the --

7 Q. I mean, it really isn't the first.

8 A. -- west side of the street it would be the  
9 first structure you would see.

10 Q. After a large open field?

11 A. You would see a 6-foot vinyl privacy fence.

12 Q. After a large open field?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. I just wanted to clarify the large open  
15 field.

16 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions?

17 (No verbal response.)

18 MR. WELBERS: I think you can sit down.

19 MR. LeSAGE: Wonderful. Thank you.

20 MR. WELBERS: I have been forgetting to  
21 tell people that.

22 Mike?

23 MR. STUTZKE: Yes.

24 MS. DONARSKI: Are you going to see if

1           there's anybody else?

2                   MR. WELBERS:  Is there anybody else with  
3           testimony?

4                   MR. TESTER:  Yes.

5                   MR. WELBERS:  You have some?

6                   MR. TESTER:  Yes.

7                   MR. WELBERS:  Come forward, please.

8                                   TOM TESTER,  
9           being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

10                   MS. HOLT:  Can you please state your name  
11           and address for the record.

12                   MR. TESTER:  Tom Tester, T-E-S-T-E-R,  
13           830 Sherwood Glen Drive.

14                   MS. HOLT:  Thank you.

15                   MR. TESTER:  Okay.  Thank you.

16                   I have known and worked professionally  
17           with Kristin and her husband, Rick, for some  
18           years at Jostens and MTM Recognition, and I know  
19           them to be fine, upstanding people.

20                   My wife and I and our two sons lived for  
21           14 years in the western Chicago suburbs, namely  
22           Bolingbrook and Naperville.  In 1991, we  
23           relocated to Princeton and bought a lot in  
24           Sherwood Glen.  In '92, we constructed the house

1 that we currently live in. We have lived in  
2 Sherwood Glen for 33 years.

3 Coming from the suburban track homes on  
4 postage stamp-sized lots and fencing for  
5 privacy, we were looking for a different  
6 experience. We chose Sherwood Glen because of  
7 its natural surroundings, its amenities and  
8 openness with 1- to 2-acre lots. And at the  
9 time, those lots were described as country  
10 estates.

11 There are 30 homes in Sherwood Glen. Five  
12 have some type of partial fencing. I would go  
13 into more detail, if you would like me to, on  
14 that, but the commonality here is none of them  
15 are as encompassing or englarging (phonetic) as  
16 to what's being proposed. Also, none of those  
17 fences are forward-facing to Sherwood Glen  
18 Drive.

19 Conversely, the other side of it, is that  
20 83 percent of the lots in Sherwood Glen Drive  
21 are -- or in Sherwood Glen have no fencing at  
22 all. And this is great in maintaining, as has  
23 been referenced, the shared element of openness.

24 I'm opposed to the Variation requiring a

1 front yard 6-foot-tall solid vinyl fence as  
2 close to 2 feet from the right-of-way of  
3 Sherwood Glen Drive, though that has been  
4 redefined and I appreciate that.

5 And I'm assuming that the McComber  
6 property has no backyard, because there's no  
7 backyard listed in the Variance. It has two  
8 frontages. So my assumption is everything is a  
9 front yard.

10 My reasons for the opposition are just  
11 threefold. One is, a Variation is going to set  
12 a precedent for front yard fencing. And again  
13 as I stated, currently no Sherwood Glen property  
14 has front yard fencing.

15 Secondly, aesthetically it will be the  
16 only fence on Sherwood Glen Drive -- on the  
17 Sherwood Glen Drive right-of-way. Being the  
18 only fence, its uniqueness will appear to be a  
19 glaring error in subdivision planning and will  
20 be one of the first images everyone will see  
21 entering our subdivision.

22 Its -- and thirdly, its presence runs  
23 contrary to the natural openness and feel of  
24 this particular community of country estates.



1 McComber property?

2 A. I am six lots south.

3 Q. Six lots south, okay.

4 MS. DONARSKI: Thank you.

5 MR. WELBERS: Anyone have any questions?

6 Go ahead, state your name once more.

7 MS. GRAY: Again, Carmen Gray,

8 910 Sherwood Glen.

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY MS. GRAY:

11 Q. You said that there were no other fences like  
12 this in our neighborhood, but there is another  
13 6-foot vinyl fence in our neighborhood --

14 A. I mentioned --

15 Q. -- correct?

16 A. Carmen, I mentioned --

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. -- that there were five fences in our  
19 neighborhood.

20 Q. Around a pool somebody has a 6-foot vinyl fence  
21 in their side yard around a pool, correct?

22 A. There are five fences, and I will address that.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. There's a property that has a 6-foot privacy

1 fence in their backyard that runs in the  
2 backyard, north side only, single road.

3 There's another property that has a 3-foot  
4 decorative side yard fence, wrought iron, and  
5 encloses that portion of the yard.

6 Carmen, as to what you referenced, there's  
7 a 6-foot privacy fence, side yard, again as an  
8 in-ground pool enclosure.

9 There is also -- if you really want to get  
10 diminutive with it, there's a 3-foot split rail  
11 side yard fence that contains a small garden.

12 And the fifth one is, there's a six-foot  
13 stockade backyard fence, runs along the north  
14 side of their property, single road, in the  
15 backyard.

16 So those are the five that I referenced  
17 previously.

18 MR. WELBERS: Next question.

19 MS. GRAY: Can I ask a follow-up, yeah?

20 Q. (By Ms. Gray:) Is that split rail fence in the  
21 front yard or the backyard that encloses the  
22 garden?

23 A. That encloses the small garden is in the front  
24 yard.

1 MR. WELBERS: Good now?

2 A. 3 feet and 50 percent open.

3 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions of this  
4 witness?

5 MS. ELLIS: Yes.

6 MR. WELBERS: State your name, please.

7 MS. ELLIS: Kathleen Ellis, 820 Saxon  
8 Drive in Princeton, Sherwood Glen neighborhood.

9 EXAMINATION

10 BY MS. ELLIS:

11 Q. My question is, as far as the fence goes, I  
12 know you said it would start a trend of some  
13 sort of having fences in the front yard area.

14 A. Set a precedent, yes.

15 Q. Set a precedent.

16 But just so that the Board understands,  
17 this, functionally, is Kristin's --

18 MR. WELBERS: Let me stop you one second.  
19 I'd like for you to come up, if you want to  
20 testify, to be sworn in and testify.

21 And you too, Carmen. Because, Carmen, you  
22 did a great job of testifying by leading the  
23 witnesses.

24 MS. ELLIS: I missed my calling, I guess.

1 MR. WELBERS: So what you want to do is  
2 ask this witness a question. Now, if you have  
3 something you want to actually state for the  
4 record, then I want you to state it. But be  
5 careful that you're not leading the witness --

6 MS. ELLIS: Okay. I think I got it now.

7 MR. WELBERS: -- into stating -- you know,  
8 ask him a question that he would know, or if he  
9 doesn't know the answer, he has to tell you he  
10 doesn't know the answer.

11 Q. (By Ms. Ellis:) Although Kristin's property  
12 has two frontages, would you agree that where  
13 she wants the fence is functionally her  
14 backyard?

15 A. Functionally her backyard.

16 MS. ELLIS: Okay. Thank you.

17 MR. WELBERS: Other questions of this  
18 witness?

19 And state your name, please.

20 MS. HARGIS: Jodi Hargis, 616 East Marion  
21 Court, Princeton.

22 EXAMINATION

23 BY MS. HARGIS:

24 Q. Are there -- of the houses that you listed that

1           have fences, do any of those in that same  
2           neighborhood have a dual frontage?

3   A.    No.

4   Q.    They are all allowed a private backyard,  
5           correct?

6   A.    They have a private backyard.

7           MS. HARGIS:   Okay.

8           MR. WELBERS:   Any other questions?

9                            (No verbal response.)

10          MR. WELBERS:   I think you can step down.

11          MR. TESTER:   Okay.

12          MR. WELBERS:   I think we are good.

13                 So now you might as well come up and  
14                 testify.

15                            CARMEN GRAY,

16                 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

17                 MS. HOLT:   Can you please state your name  
18                 and address for the record.

19                 MS. GRAY:   Carmen Gray, 910 Sherwood Glen.

20                 I guess I have made myself clear, but  
21                 needless to say, I'm very much -- we live five  
22                 houses down -- very much in support of this  
23                 fence. I have five children. I can't imagine  
24                 living in the middle of the world and not having

1 any privacy for my kids.

2 And it needs to really be noted that she's  
3 really not even a part of our subdivision. Her  
4 address is part of a different subdivision. So  
5 we just, you know, drive by the backyard.

6 And we desperately want her girls to be  
7 safe. So we are fully in support of this fence  
8 for her girls' safety.

9 So any questions?

10 MR. WELBERS: Yes.

11 MS. POWER-LEPAGE: Patti-Power LeSage  
12 again.

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY MS. POWER-LEPAGE:

15 Q. We are part of that neighborhood, so we  
16 actually have a vested interest in the look.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. And not just the look of --

19 MS. DONARSKI: This is questions.

20 MS. POWER-LEPAGE: But I wanted to ask  
21 her --

22 MR. WELBERS: Go ahead, ask, yes.

23 Q. (By Ms. Power-LEPAGE:) Driving in, it's not --  
24 it's not something that you would mind, seeing

1 the back of a white solid fence in an open area?

2 A. Not at all, because there's an enormous open  
3 field before you ever get to the fence. We  
4 don't know what's happening with the field.

5 Q. Well, we don't, right, and that's my point?

6 A. Right.

7 Q. So she right now -- she has beautiful trees  
8 right now which act as a semi-fence.

9 A. Not enough to keep her children safe.

10 Q. Yes, it is. Wouldn't you be okay with having  
11 the 3-foot fence with -- you know, obviously  
12 that's security, the 3-foot fence, that's open  
13 as per the Code?

14 A. Absolutely not. Those arborvitaes will not  
15 grow quick enough to protect her young children.  
16 They just won't grow quick enough. They don't  
17 grow fast enough. She planted them several  
18 years ago. She tried. They don't grow fast  
19 enough to protect her kids, they just don't. I  
20 couldn't do it, I couldn't, yeah.

21 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions of this  
22 witness?

23 Go ahead, sir.

24 EXAMINATION

1 BY MR. TESTER:

2 Q. Carmen, you stated --

3 MS. DONARSKI: Name.

4 MR. TESTER: Tom Tester, 830 Sherwood Glen  
5 Lane.

6 Q. (By Mr. Tester:) You stated the division of  
7 Sherwood Glen Subdivision. When driving into  
8 Sherwood Glen, do you know the difference  
9 between Deer Run South and Sherwood Glen?

10 A. I don't know. I mean, you turn down the  
11 street, we're in Sherwood Glen.

12 MR. TESTER: That was it.

13 MS. GRAY: Okay.

14 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions?

15 (No verbal response.)

16 MR. WELBERS: Board, no questions?

17 (No verbal response.)

18 MR. WELBERS: Thank you.

19 MR. TESTER: Thanks.

20 MR. WELBERS: Come forward and testify a  
21 little bit too. Do you want to -- something you  
22 would like to say? You don't have to, but I'm  
23 just offering.

24 MS. ELLIS: Okay.

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KATHLEEN ELLIS,

being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

MS. ELLIS: My name is Kathleen Ellis. I live at 820 Saxon Drive, Princeton, in Sherwood Glen neighborhood.

Truthfully, the only thing I wanted to testify to is that, like someone had mentioned, that Kristin has had her daughters for a long time, and this seems to be something maybe out of the blue, in certain people's opinions. However, Kristin was married and had a husband who could also help her. She continues to be married, but her husband is in a nursing home. He cannot take care of himself. She is, for all intents and purposes, a single mom.

And that's all I wanted to say.

MR. WELBERS: Questions?

Go ahead, Patti.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. POWER-LESAGE:

Q. Just want to ask again --

MR. WELBERS: Patti.

MS. POWER-LESAGE: Patti Power-LeSage.

Q. (By Ms. Power-LeSage:) A 3-foot fence is

1 security. There is no need for a 6-foot fence.

2 MS. DONARSKI: That's not a question.

3 MR. WELBERS: That's not exactly a  
4 question.

5 Q. (By Ms. Power-LeSage:) I'm asking you, you're  
6 saying it's okay to have a 6-foot fence, even  
7 though the 3-foot fence is the security you  
8 would need. It's not about security, is it?

9 A. I would be okay with a 6-foot fence.

10 Q. Okay.

11 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions?

12 (No verbal response.)

13 MR. WELBERS: Thank you.

14 Does anyone else care to testify?

15 MS. McCOMBER: Can I rebuttal too?

16 MR. WELBERS: If we're all done with  
17 questions -- or testimony, not questions, go  
18 ahead and explain, if you would like to.

19 MS. McCOMBER: Several of the complaints  
20 that I have heard tonight, calling my fence an  
21 eyesore, I find looking into other backyards as  
22 an eyesore. Seeing their junk and messy things  
23 in the yard is more of an eyesore to me than a  
24 cohesive fence.

1 I think Carmen also mentioned, but there  
2 is that 7-acre field that is the entrance. So I  
3 am confused as to people's understanding of an  
4 entrance. My property is 200 feet from that  
5 entrance.

6 The 3-foot fence that I hear as  
7 opposition, that defeats the purpose of privacy  
8 and also my dog. He has jumped a 4-foot fence  
9 before. If he sees through it, he can see cars  
10 and runners and bark at them.

11 Yes, our neighborhood is open and it's  
12 beautiful, but no one in our neighborhood has an  
13 open backyard that traffic goes by. I didn't  
14 lay out the yards. It was zoned back in the  
15 day. Otherwise I would have positioned it very  
16 differently.

17 Someone had mentioned a hindrance to  
18 property values. I disagree. I have talked  
19 with a local realtor who has said a fence would  
20 be a great asset to my house and bring value to  
21 my property. I believe beauty is in the eye of  
22 the beholder.

23 As far as an electrical fence for my dog,  
24 I have tried a shock collar. That does not

1 work. I find electrical fences dangerous to my  
2 children and other children in the neighborhood.

3 That's all.

4 EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. WELBERS:

6 Q. Could you tell us just a little about your  
7 dog's breed, its size?

8 A. He's large. He's Portuguese Water Dog. He's a  
9 hunter. Loves to run, loves to run, and I just  
10 would like to provide an open space for him to  
11 do so.

12 We have taken him to the dog park here in  
13 town. He has tried to jump that 6-foot fence  
14 and learned the hard way that 6 feet --

15 Q. Is too high.

16 A. Is too high, yes.

17 Q. What is his weight?

18 A. 60 pounds.

19 Q. So he's a very athletic dog. Not extremely  
20 huge, but very strong.

21 A. Yes, very strong.

22 MR. WELBERS: Okay. Just out of  
23 curiosity.

24 Anything else?

1 MS. DONARSKI: I have nothing.

2 MR. WELBERS: Does anyone have any  
3 rebuttal questions?

4 MR. LeSAGE: Todd LeSage.

5 EXAMINATION

6 BY MR. LeSAGE:

7 Q. Since we are on the topic of dogs, everybody  
8 knows that we have two English Green Golden  
9 Retrievers who are also hunting dogs and high  
10 energy. If we want to get into weights, right,  
11 we have 85 and 80 pounds. So they're big dogs.  
12 Has -- looking at attempting to enclose the dog,  
13 et cetera, et cetera. We don't have a fence.  
14 Our dogs stay in our yard because we've -- they  
15 have been through extensive training.

16 Have you looked into some sort of  
17 disciplinary training, et cetera, for your new  
18 pup?

19 A. Yes. We have had him in training. I also  
20 continue to work with him.

21 I must say, Todd, I do appreciate how much  
22 your dogs stay in your yard. I mean, you say  
23 "freeze" and those dogs are just -- I wish I had  
24 that, I really do.

1                   Our dog is just strong.

2 Q.   Bring him over, we'll help.

3                   MR. WELBERS:   Any other questions?   Are we  
4 done with questions?

5                   MR. QUEST:   I might have one more.

6                   MR. WELBERS:   Okay.   Go ahead.

7   EXAMINATION

8 BY MR. QUEST:

9 Q.   How set are you on the routing of the fence?

10 A.   I'm sorry, what -- how does that -- on the  
11 routing?

12 Q.   Of how the fence is laid out.   I mean, have you  
13 given consideration to maybe moving the fence to  
14 the other side of the house, maybe to bring  
15 it --

16 A.   Yes, I have thought of other options.   I would  
17 just like as much yard as possible.

18 Q.   Sure.

19 A.   Like I said, perhaps maybe a pool someday and  
20 other things and would give more room for him to  
21 run, yes.

22 Q.   I guess just looking at this, I didn't know,  
23 you know, what the size limit from this side to  
24 this side, you know, if it could be redrawn?

1 A. There's over 500 feet of fencing that I'm  
2 asking. So I think if I did a see-through  
3 fence, that is a lot of trees to plant. That's  
4 feasibly not -- I feasibly can't do that, on top  
5 of doing a fence.

6 MR. WELBERS: Any other questions?

7 (No verbal response.)

8 MR. WELBERS: Done with questions, you can  
9 sit down.

10 Michael, that's your thoughts?

11 MR. STUTZKE: This is a unique piece of  
12 property, to say the least. Yet at the same  
13 time, with all due respect to the neighbors,  
14 what's been shared with us and what the intent  
15 is here, I will move to recommend approval for  
16 the Variation to install a 6-foot-tall solid  
17 vinyl privacy fence as close as 2 feet from the  
18 right-of-way of Sherwood Glen Road. Ordinance  
19 requires fences in front yards to be only 3 foot  
20 tall and to be at least 50 percent open.  
21 Property has double frontage. Requesting a  
22 3-foot height Variation and a Variation to have  
23 a solid fence in the front yard.

24 MR. WELBERS: Okay. A motion is made. Is

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there a second?

MR. JENSEN: I'll second that.

MR. WELBERS: Bill is the second.

So you're free to call the roll.

MS. HOLT: Mr. Jensen?

MR. JENSEN: Yes.

MS. HOLT: Mr. Forristall?

MR. FORRISTALL: Yes.

MS. HOLT: Mr. Stutzke?

MR. STUTZKE: Yes.

MS. HOLT: Mr. Quest?

MR. QUEST: Yes.

MS. HOLT: Mr. Welbers?

MR. WELBERS: Yes.

(By voice vote five ayes.)

MR. WELBERS: So I guess it can be done.

(The hearing was concluded at  
8:12 p.m.)

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Now on this 15th day of May, A.D., 2025, I do  
signify that the foregoing testimony was given  
before the Bureau County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Barry Welbers, Chairman

Kristine Donarski,  
Zoning Enforcement Officer

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*Callie S. Bodmer*

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