

Agenda Item 4

**920 Church Road
Variance from the Rear Yard Setback**

Staff Report
Vicinity Map
Air Photos

Materials Submitted by Petitioner

Application
Statement of Intent
Site Plan
Elevations – Existing and Proposed
Photos of Existing Conditions

Materials shown in italics are included in the Board packet only. A complete copy of the packet is available from the Community Development Department.



STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

TO:	Chairman Bass and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
DATE:	July 28, 2025
ADDRESS:	920 Church Road
FROM:	Luis Prado, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT:	<i>Variance from Rear Yard Setback</i>

OWNERS

Jessica and Jason Wicha

PROPERTY LOCATION

920 Church Road

ZONING DISTRICT

R1 – Single Family Residential District

PROJECT REPRESENTATIVE

Neal J. Gerdes, Architect

Summary of the Request

This is a request for a recommendation in support of a variance from the rear yard setback to allow the addition of a small mudroom adjacent to the kitchen and a covered walkway between the house and detached garage.

Description of the Property

The property is located in the East Lake Forest Historic District, on the west side of Church Road, south of the intersection of Church Road and Wisconsin Avenue. It is located in the Williams' Subdivision which was recorded in 1900. The house was constructed in 1923 long prior to current zoning regulations and before the City's first Zoning Code was adopted on November 5, 1923. The house was constructed in compliance with the limited regulations that were in effect at that time.

Based on current zoning setback requirements, the rear of the home as originally constructed, at the point of furthest encroachment, is located 33'-1" from the rear (west) property line. The current rear yard setback requirement is 35 feet.

The existing detached garage encroaches into the accessory structure setbacks on the north and west sides and is sited two feet from the north property line and 2.5 feet from the rear property line. In 1989, a variance was granted to the then owners of the property to allow the current garage to be constructed in the footprint of a garage that was existing at that time. The required setback for

accessory structures today is five feet as it was in 1989. No changes are proposed to the siting of the garage.

On July 23rd, 2025, the Historic Preservation Commission approved the design aspects of the proposed addition and approved a building scale variance recognizing that the original home exceeds current limitations on allowable square footage.

FACTS

Compliance/Non-Compliance with Key Code Requirements

- ❖ The residence complies with the setbacks from the north, south and east property lines.
- ❖ As noted above the residence does not comply with the rear yard setback as measured from the west property line.
- ❖ As noted above, the garage does not comply with the setbacks from the north or west property lines.
- ❖ As proposed, the mudroom and covered walkway will be constructed between the rear door of the house and the detached garage, a distance of 13'-7".
- ❖ The mudroom addition and connecting walkway will be located entirely in the rear yard setback, approximately 11 feet further than the home.
- ❖ No changes are proposed to the garage in relation to the north and west property lines as approved through a variance granted in 1989.

Physical, Natural or Practical Difficulties

- ❖ The house was constructed prior to the current zoning regulations and prior to the City's adoption of a Zoning Code.

Staff Evaluation

The petitioner proposes to construct a mudroom and covered walkway within the 35-foot rear yard setback from the west property line. The addition is intended to enhance the functionality of the home.

Due to the original siting of the home and the later construction of a garage, both structures encroach into today's setback requirements. While the proposed addition will be constructed wholly within the rear yard setback, behind the house and tucked between the house and garage, it will have no visual impact on the streetscape or adjacent neighbors. The addition is screened from the street by being completely located behind the home. It is screened from the adjacent neighbors by the garage, fences and existing vegetation. The mass of the covered walkway is mitigated by the open design which allows for protection from the weather between the house and garage and access into the backyard.

Findings of Fact

Based on a review of the information submitted by the petitioners, an analysis of this request based on applicable portions of the Zoning Code, and inspection of the site, staff submits the following findings in support of a variance from the west setback.

1. The proposed addition is modest in scale and well screened from the streetscape and adjacent neighbors. The Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the project and recommended approval of the site plan and design aspects of the proposed addition. Based on the above, the proposed addition will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.
2. The historic nature of the property, the original siting of the home and garage prior to current zoning regulations, and the later approval of a variance to allow replacement of a pre-existing garage in 1989, create unique conditions upon which the variance is requested.
3. The hardship on which the request for a variance is based is the creation of the lot and the construction of the home prior to the adoption of the current zoning regulations.
4. No evidence has been submitted that indicates that the variance if approved, will increase congestion, endanger public safety, or diminish property values in the neighborhood.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Standard public notice of this request was provided by the City to surrounding residents and property owners. Notice was also published in the Lake Forester and the agenda was posted at public locations and on the City's website. As of the date of this writing, no correspondence or contacts have been received regarding this petition.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings presented above, recommend approval of a setback variance to allow a mudroom and covered walkway to be constructed in the rear yard setback extending no further than the east wall of the existing garage, a distance of 13'7" from the house and encroaching 11'-6" into the rear yard setback as reflected on the site plan presented to the Board. The recommendation includes the following conditions of approval.

- The covered walkway shall remain open.



Area of Request
920 Church Road



Area of Request
920 Church Road



**THE CITY OF LAKE FOREST
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION OF ZONING VARIANCE**

PROJECT ADDRESS 920 Church Road _____

ZONING DISTRICT R-1 _____

Property Owner (s) Name Jason and Jessica Wicha
(may be different from project address) Address 920 Church Road, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045
Phone 734-395-0740 Fax _____
Email _____

Applicant/Representative Name Neal J. Gerdes
(if different from Property Owner) Title Architect
Address 34121 N. US Rt 45, Suite 201/210
Phone 847-356-8025 Fax _____
Email WWW.AKLARCH.COM

Beneficial Interests
Corporation See Exhibit A
Partnership See Exhibit B
Trust, land or other See Exhibit C

Staff Reports are Available the Friday before the Meeting
Email Report: Owner Representative
Fax Report: Owner Representative
Pick Up Report: Owner Representative

Signatures

I have read the complete application packet and understand the variance process and criteria. I understand that this matter will be scheduled for a public hearing when a determination has been made that my application is complete.


Owner _____ Date 7/8/25

Owner _____ Date


Applicant/Representative _____ Date 7/10/25

Statement of Intent

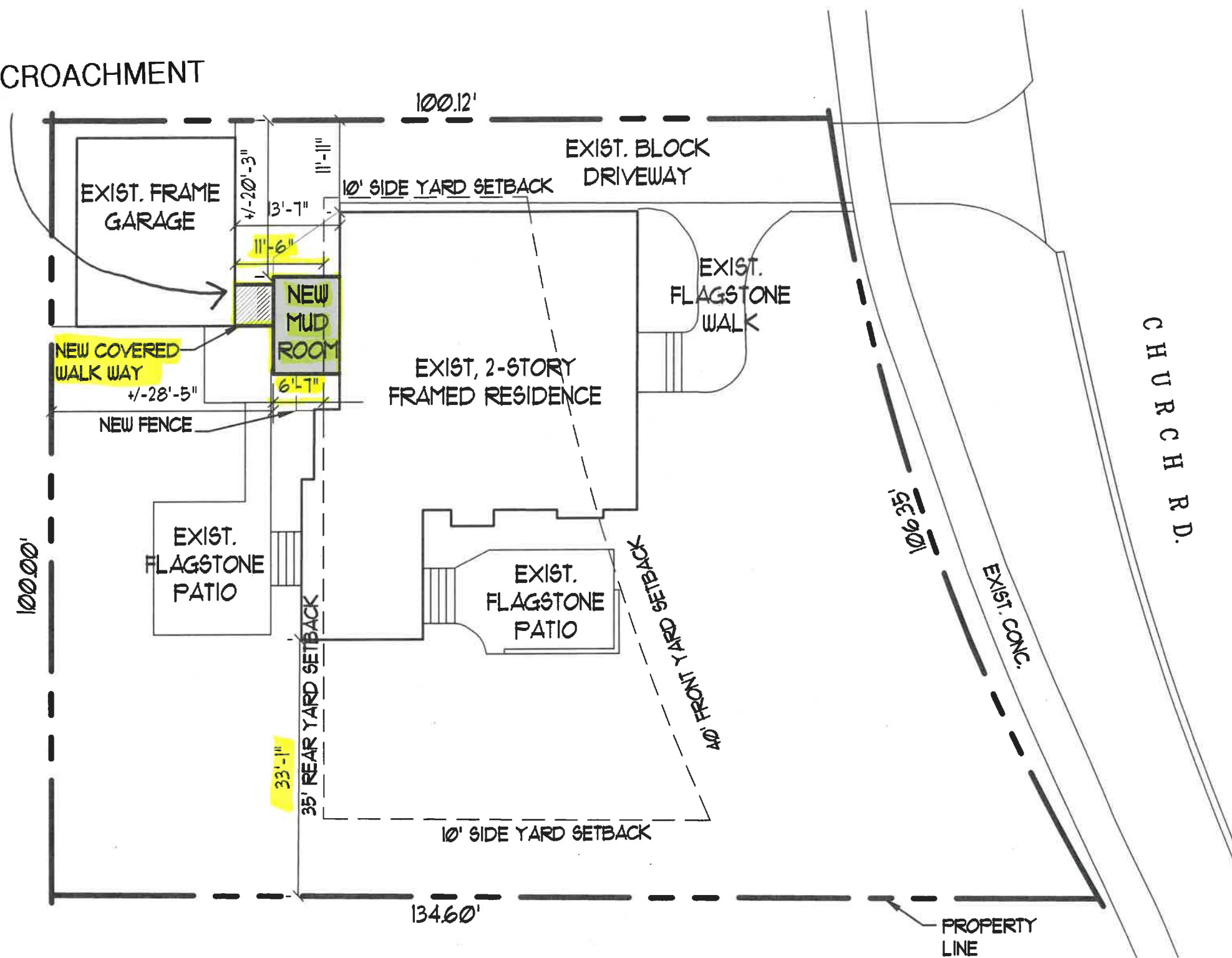
This month marks our five year anniversary living at 920 Church Road. Our family of four has truly enjoyed living in our home and we have developed a strong sense of belonging to our historic neighborhood and broader community. The home's layout has suited our lifestyle and needs well and we have grown to appreciate the unique character and charm of our more than 100-year-old home. The modest mudroom addition that we have planned at the rear of our house will improve the functionality of the space – providing a bit more room for daily living and the flexibility we need as a family – without impacting the visual appearance of the home from the streetscape. We are excited to see this long-awaited project come to fruition and to continue building our life here for years to come.

The following goals guided the design decisions.

- Create a small entry space to avoid entrance directly into the middle of the kitchen. (The kitchen is modest in size.)
- Minimize disruption to the existing rear façade of the home.
- Work within the limited space between the house and garage to preserve a usable area in our back yard.
- Retain existing windows to the extent possible to preserve the character of the home.
- Maximize natural light into the home.
- Maximize functional space in the addition for the intended use, family entry to the home, area for wet shoes and clothing during inclement weather, and storage.
- Minimize the size of the addition overall.
- Use exterior materials that replicate those on the original home.

SITE PLAN

AREA OF ENCROACHMENT



PROPOSED SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1"=15'-0"

AKL architectural services
 WWW.AKLARCH.COM
 34121 N. U.S. RT. 45, SUITE 209, GRAYSLAKE, ILLINOIS 60030 847.356.8025

MUD ROOM ADDITION
 WICHA RESIDENCE
 920 CHURCH ROAD
 LAKE FOREST, IL

SITE PLAN
 SCALE: 1"=15'-0"

NO.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	INITIAL	DATE

DATE: 7/10/25
 DRAWN: HSA
 CHECKED: NLS
 PROJ. NO.: 24099

SHEET NO.: 1

EXISTING NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS



EXIST. NORTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"



EXIST. SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8"=1'-0"

architectural
services
WWW.AKLARCH.COM

AKL
34121 N. U.S. RT. 45, SUITE 209, GRAYSLAKE, ILLINOIS 60030 847.356.8025

NEW ADDITION FOR
THE WICHA FAMILY
920 CHURCH RD.
LAKE FOREST, IL 60045

EXIST. NORTH ELEVATION
EXIST. SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: AS NOTED

NO.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	INITIAL	DATE

DATE: 6/16/2015
DRAWN: HSA
CHECKED: DJD
PROJ. NO: 24099

SHEET NO.: 2

Agenda Item 5

927 Cherokee Road Setback Variances Related to a Modified Driveway

Staff Report
Vicinity Map
Air Photos

Materials Submitted by Petitioner
Application
Statement of Intent
Plat of Survey – Existing Conditions
Proposed Site Plan



STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

TO:	Chairman Bass and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals
DATE:	July 28, 2025
FROM:	Michelle Friedrich, Planning Technician
SUBJECT:	<i>Setback Variances for Modifications to a Driveway</i>

OWNER

James and Amy Mynhier
927 Cherokee Road
Lake Forest, IL 60045

PROPERTY LOCATION

927 Cherokee Road

ZONING DISTRICT

R-2

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

This is a request for approval of a front yard setback variance to allow expansion of the existing driveway beyond the width permitted within the front yard setback and a side yard variance to allow the expansion of the driveway within the extended side yard setback.

The property is located on the east side of Cherokee Road, north of Linden Avenue. The property is in the Whispering Oaks Subdivision which was approved in 1958. The property is developed with a residence which was built in 1962.

FACTS

Compliance/Non-Compliance with Key Code Requirements

- ❖ The residence complies with the setback requirements.
- ❖ The existing driveway does not comply with the 16 foot width limitation within the front yard setback.
- ❖ The existing driveway complies with the extended side yard setback.
- ❖ The proposed driveway expansion will increase the width of the driveway from 19.5 feet to no more than 29.5 feet wide within the front yard setback, 13.5 feet wider than permitted by the Code.
- ❖ The proposed expansion will locate the driveway approximately 4.5 feet from the side (south) property line, within the front yard setback, rather than the required 12 feet.

Physical, Natural or Practical Difficulties

- ❖ The original siting of the house and garage nearly at the 40 foot front yard setback and 12 foot side yard setback limits the options for modifying the

driveway to create additional parking to accommodate family vehicles on the property, consistent with the Code.

STAFF EVALUATION

As noted above, the residence and attached two car garage comply with the setback requirements for the property. The existing driveway is wider than permitted within the front yard setback and as proposed, expands further south to create a parking space along side the garage and within the front yard setback. The proposed driveway expands into the 12 foot side yard setback to provide space to maneuver into the newly created parking area.

The proposed expansion of the driveway, from the existing width of 19.5 feet, to a width of 29.5 feet, allows for a driveway that will better meet the needs of the homeowner by allowing a vehicle to park along side the garage, away from the streetscape, and outside of the front yard setback. The proposed expansion locates the driveway 4.5 feet from the south property line, adjacent to extensive landscape screening along the south property line that will remain.

This property was developed prior to current zoning regulations which limit the width of driveways within the front yard setback and does not permit driveways within the extended side yard setback. The purpose of these Code provisions is to discourage expansive paving and parked cars in front of homes, immediately adjacent to the streetscape. In this case, the proposed expansion is simply creating a way to maneuver to the new parking space along side the garage. As noted above, there is extensive landscape screening along the south property line that will remain, screening the expanded driveway from views from the west and south. Similar expanded driveways are found on other properties in the neighborhood.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Based on review of the information submitted by the petitioners and an analysis of this request based on applicable portions of the Zoning Code, a review of the history of the area, and site visits, staff submits the following findings.

1. The variances will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. Similar conditions are found on nearby properties. While the expanded driveway would allow parking within the setback area, the current property has stated, that is not the intent.
2. The conditions upon which the variances are requested are generally unique to this neighborhood and to this property and are not generally applicable to other properties in the same zoning district throughout the City. There are properties developed with similar driveways in this neighborhood.

3. This house is sited nearly at the front and side yard setbacks, in compliance with the setbacks in effect at the time of construction, limiting the available area to modify the driveway.
4. The hardship in conforming to the required setbacks is a result of a change in the setback requirements since the original construction.
5. The variances and the resulting driveway modifications will not impair light or ventilation to adjacent properties, increase congestion, endanger public safety, or diminish property values. Drainage can be accommodated in the 4.5 foot space between the expanded driveway and the property line and the existing landscape screening will remain. The expanded driveway will allow for a parking space in compliance with the Code, behind the front yard setback.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Standard public notice of this request was provided by the City to surrounding property owners. Notice was also published in the Lake Forester and the agenda was posted at five public locations. As of the date of this writing, correspondence was received from four neighbors in support of the expanded driveway.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings presented above, recommend approval to the City Council of a variance to allow expansion of the driveway of up to 29.5 feet in width within the front yard setback and no closer than 4.5 feet to the side (south) property line, consistent with the site plan submitted to the Board.

Area of Request
927 Cherokee Road

S GRANDVIEW LN

S CHEROKEE RD

E GRANDVIEW LN

S BEVERLY PL

E LINDEN AVE

E LONGWOOD DR





E GRANDVIEW LN

S CHEROKEE RD

S BEVERLY PL

Area of Request
927 Cherokee Road

E LINDEN AVE



THE CITY OF LAKE FOREST
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION OF ZONING VARIANCE

PROJECT ADDRESS 927 Cherokee Rd, Lake Forest IL 60045

ZONING DISTRICT R-2

Property Owner (s) Name James D. and Amy Mynhier
(may be different from project address) Address 927 Cherokee Rd, Lake Forest IL 60045
Phone 913-220-9303 Fax _____
Email mynhieramy@gmail.com

Applicant/Representative Name _____
Title _____
(if different from Property Owner) Address _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
Email _____

Beneficial Interests
Corporation See Exhibit A
Partnership See Exhibit B
Trust, land or other See Exhibit C

Staff Reports are Available the Friday before the Meeting
Email Report: Owner Representative
Fax Report: Owner Representative
Pick Up Report: Owner Representative

Signatures
I have read the complete application packet and understand the variance process and criteria. I understand that this matter will be scheduled for a public hearing when a determination has been made that my application is complete.

[Signature] Owner Date 6/24/25
[Signature] Owner Date 6/24/25
Applicant/Representative Date _____

JD & Amy Mynhier
927 Cherokee Rd
Lake Forest, IL 60045
913-220-9303
mynhieramy@gmail.com

June 27, 2025

City of Lake Forest – Planning and Zoning Department
800 Field Drive
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Re: Request for Zoning Variance – Driveway Width and Setback at 927 Cherokee Road

Dear Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission,

We are writing to formally request a zoning variance for our property at 927 Cherokee Road to allow for modifications to our existing driveway. Specifically, we are requesting:

1. A variance to allow the driveway to exceed 16 feet in width within the front yard setback area; and
2. A variance to allow the driveway to encroach into the side yard setback.

The area in question in front of the property setback line will not be used for parking, but rather to provide access to the driveway addition. We want to emphasize that this request is based on our desire to improve the visual appeal, safety and functionality of our property.

We believe the expanded driveway will complement the aesthetic of our home and will not alter the character of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the project will improve safety by reducing the need for street parking on Cherokee Road, which is often congested.

Due to the position of our home on the lot—constructed close to the property line—we do not have viable alternatives to achieve this improvement. Additionally, the expanded area will maintain existing trees and shrub screening along the south property line to preserve privacy (see picture below) and minimize impact on our neighboring property.

There are several existing examples of similar driveway configurations in our neighborhood, some of which are included in the attached photos for your reference. We have also spoken with our immediate neighbors, who have expressed their support for this project.

We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of our variance request. We look forward to presenting this information to you in person at the City Hall meeting on July 28. In the meantime, we are happy to provide any additional documentation or answer questions you may have prior to the meeting.

Sincerely,

JD & Amy Mynhier











555 Cherokee Rd



793 Cherokee Rd



927 Beverly Place



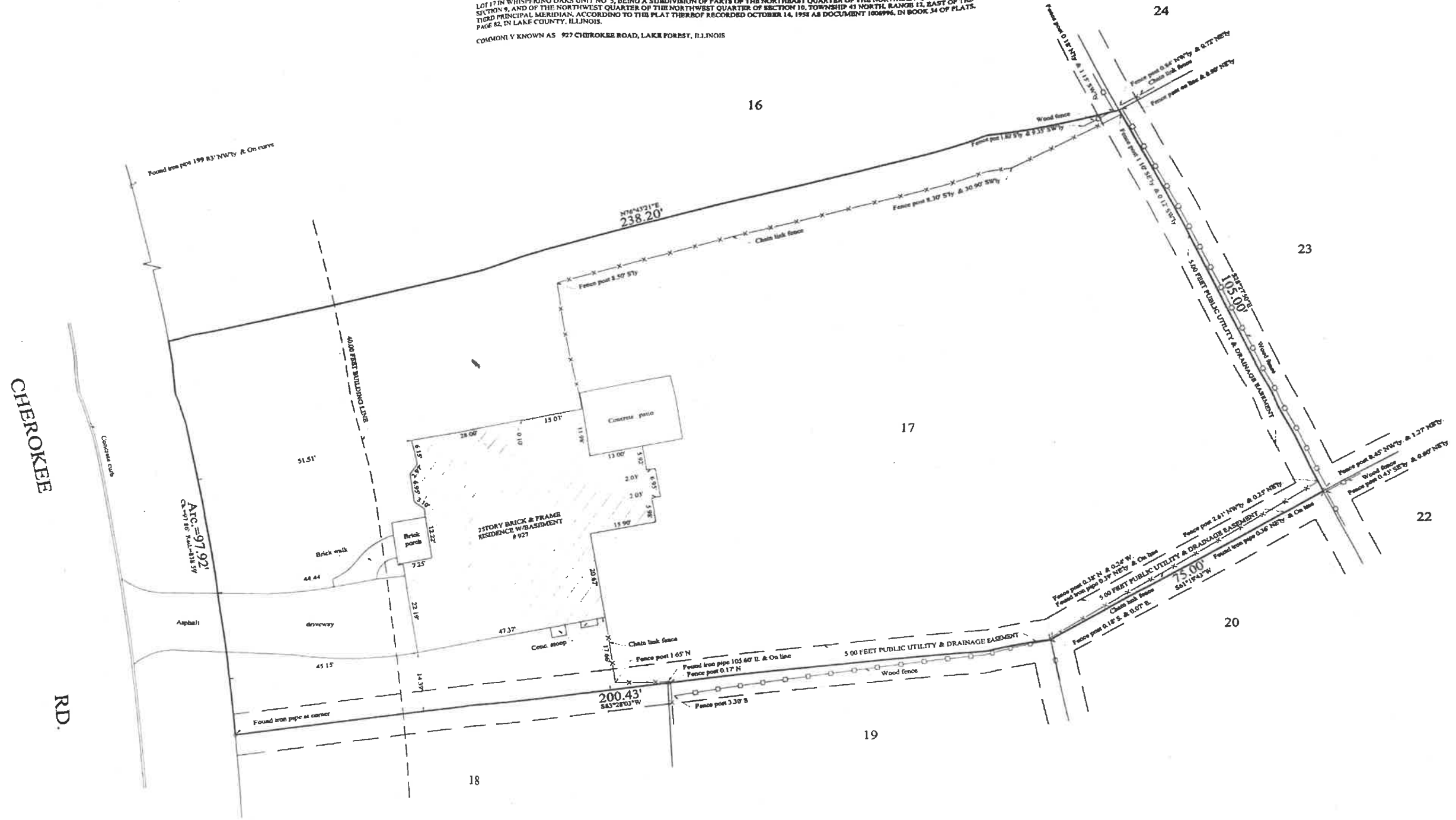
751 Linden Ave



A. P. SURVEYING COMPANY, PC.
 LICENSE No. 184-003309
 PROFESSIONAL DESIGN FIRM - LAND SURVEYING CORPORATION
PLAT OF SURVEY
 OF

PLAT OF SURVEY - EXISTING CONDITIONS

LOT 17 IN WHISPERING OAKS UNIT NO. 5, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PARTS OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 9, AND OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 10, TOWNSHIP 43 NORTH, RANGE 12, EAST OF THE TIGARD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THIS PLAT THEREOF RECORDED OCTOBER 14, 1998 AS DOCUMENT 1006996, IN BOOK 34 OF PLATS, PAGE 82, IN LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.
 COMMONLY KNOWN AS 927 CHEROKEE ROAD, LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS



MOST MENTIONED OR WITNESS POINTS WERE NOT SET AT THE CLIENT REQUEST UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED HEREON, THE BEARING BASIS, ELEVATION DATUM AND COORDINATE DATUM IF USED IS ASSUMED THE TITLE COMMITMENT NO. P119-0771 WAS FURNISHED FOR THIS SURVEY DIMENSIONS ARE NOT TO BE ASSUMED FROM SCALING

Order No. 19-7428
 Scale: 1 inch = 16'
 Date: MARCH 5, 2019
 Ordered by: ZUCKER & BOYD, LTD
 ATTORNEYS AT LAW

THIS PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONFORMS TO THE CURRENT ILLINOIS MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A BOUNDARY SURVEY. DISTANCES ARE MARKED IN FEET AND DECIMAL PART THEREOF. BUILDING LINES AND EASEMENTS ARE SHOWN ONLY WHERE THEY ARE SO RECORDED IN THE MAPS, OTHERWISE REFER TO YOUR DEED OR ABSTRACT. COMPARE ALL POINTS BEFORE BUILDING BY SAME AND AT ONCE REPORT ANY DIFFERENCE.

State of Illinois
 County of Cook

We, A. P. SURVEYING COMPANY, PC. do hereby certify that we have surveyed the above described property and that, to the best of our knowledge, the plat hereon drawn is an accurate representation of said survey.

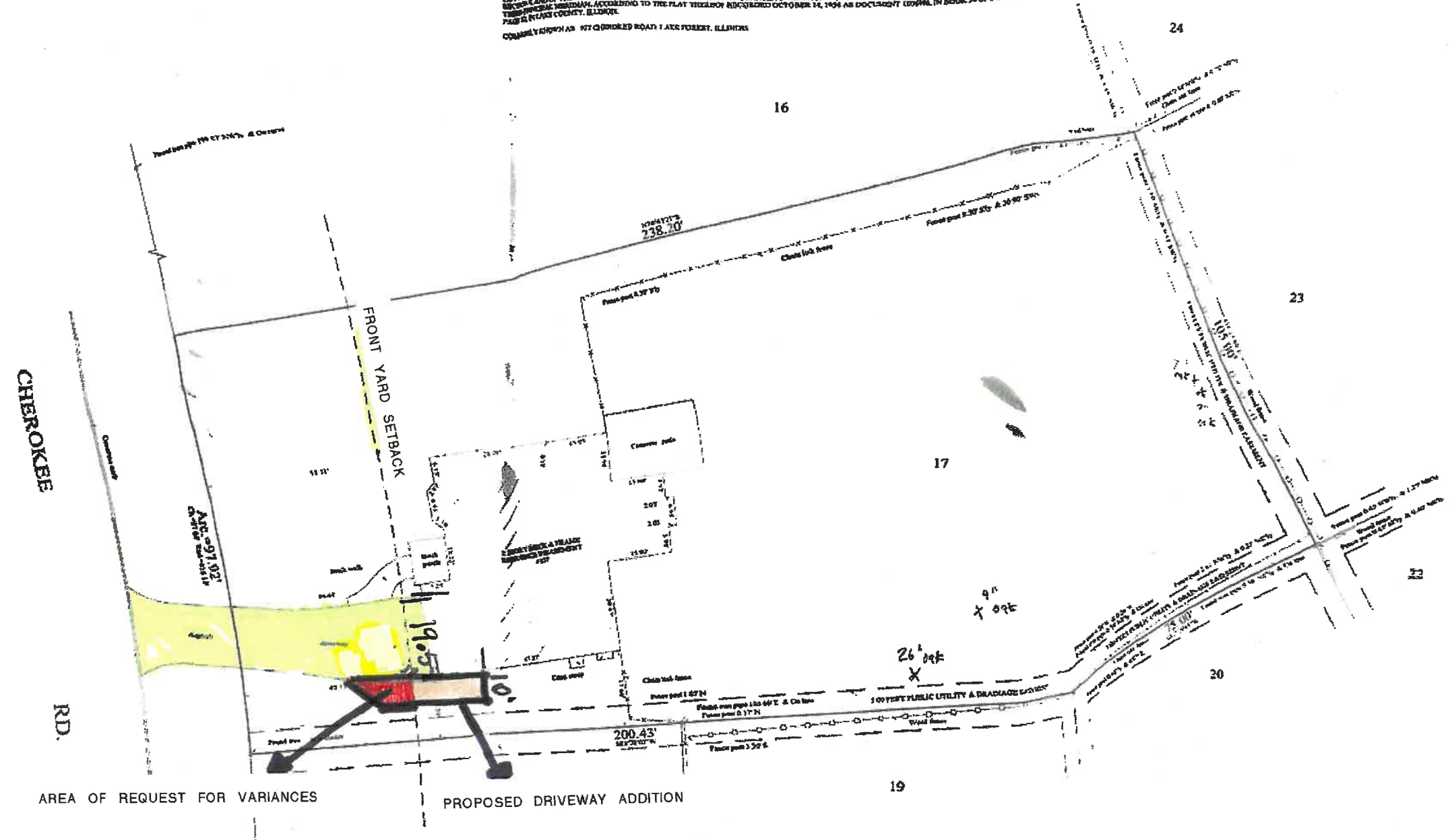


Jack A. Zlotek
 PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR No. 3186
 License Expiration: November 30, 2020.



A. P. SURVEYING COMPANY, PC.
 LICENSE No. 184-003309
 PROFESSIONAL DESIGN FIRM - LAND SURVEYING CORPORATION
PLAT OF SURVEY
 OF

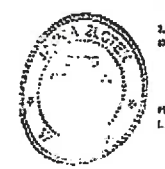
LOT 17-18, TRIMBLE'S CASE UNIT NO. 5, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 16 AND THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 17, TOWNSHIP 43 NORTH, RANGE 12 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREON RECORDED OCTOBER 14, 1994 AS DOCUMENT 100986 IN BOOK 34 OF PLATS, PAGE 15, FULTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS.
 CORNER 17/18/19 AS 177 CHOCOLATE ROAD, LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS



Existing Driveway Width (measured at the 40 foot front yard setback): 19.5 feet
 Proposed Driveway Width: 29.5 feet

MINIMUM DATUM OR BENCHMARKS WERE NOT SET AT THE CLIENT REQUEST UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED HEREON, THE BEARING, BASIS, ELEVATION DATUM AND COORDINATE DATA, IF USED, IS ASSUMED TO BE THE 1983 NATIONAL DATUM. THE FIELD COMMITMENT NO. 1119-19771 WAS FURNISHED FOR THIS SURVEY. IRRADIATION ART NOT TO BE ASSUMED FROM SCALING.
 Order No. 19-2428
 Scale 1 inch = 10 feet
 Date: MARCH 5, 2019
 Ordered by: ZUCKER & BOYER, LTD.
 ATTORNEYS AT LAW

THIS PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONFORMS TO THE CURRENT PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ETHICS OF THE SURVEYING AND MAPPING INDUSTRY. THE SURVEYOR HAS CONDUCTED A VISUAL INSPECTION OF THE PROPERTY AND HAS FOUND NO OBVIOUS DISCREPANCIES. THE SURVEYOR HAS CONDUCTED A VISUAL INSPECTION OF THE PROPERTY AND HAS FOUND NO OBVIOUS DISCREPANCIES. THE SURVEYOR HAS CONDUCTED A VISUAL INSPECTION OF THE PROPERTY AND HAS FOUND NO OBVIOUS DISCREPANCIES.



We, A. P. SURVEYING COMPANY, PC, do hereby certify that we have surveyed the above described property and that, to the best of our knowledge, the plat hereon drawn is an accurate representation of said survey.
 [Signature]
 APR 15 2019 10:00 AM
 License 184-003309, November 12, 2010