

From: Joann Minko <joannjmm@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 18, 2023 9:00 AM
To: Zoning <zoning@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Concerns over 4809 hillview terrace plan

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As we look more into the proposed addition, we ask that the setback decision be paused until the safety and security of the proposed retaining wall next to our property can be determined by an engineering assessment. A change in retaining wall locations will impact the garage structure and location.

The proposed wall is to go from 4 feet at street level up to garage height at top, with our property sloping down into the retaining wall. An engineered retaining wall will take up feet of space that is not accounted for in the plans and is vital to safety of the overall plan. We do not give permission for any part of the retaining wall nor its backfill, deadman poles.... to be within or under our property.



Our 5 year old measuring the 4 foot retaining wall at the plot line and sidewalk

Concerns:

1. Per City of Madison: 'Driveways may be lined by fences or plantings that you cannot see through. Within 10 feet of the intersection of any driveway with any street-side lot line, fences or plantings cannot be more than 2 1/2 feet above curb level.'
Retaining walls follow same rules as fences

Having a 4 foot and taller retaining wall along the driveway creates a serious safety hazard for the neighborhood. Drivers coming out of the driveway would have trouble seeing people, especially those with young kids and dogs. The average kid reaches 4 feet around age 7. There are at least 13 kids under the age of 10 within a block of the proposed driveway plus our sidewalk frequently is used by people walking with kids and/or dogs. People walking along the sidewalk would be unable to see someone backing out of the proposed driveway until the car nearly reached the sidewalk. The steepness of the sidewalk would make it even more dangerous for little kids using balance bikes out on a walk with their families or parents using strollers as it would take longer for them to stop. As well, this would cause us to be out of compliance with Madison driveway viability and liable to fines and such for at least 5 feet along the street, under the current plan.

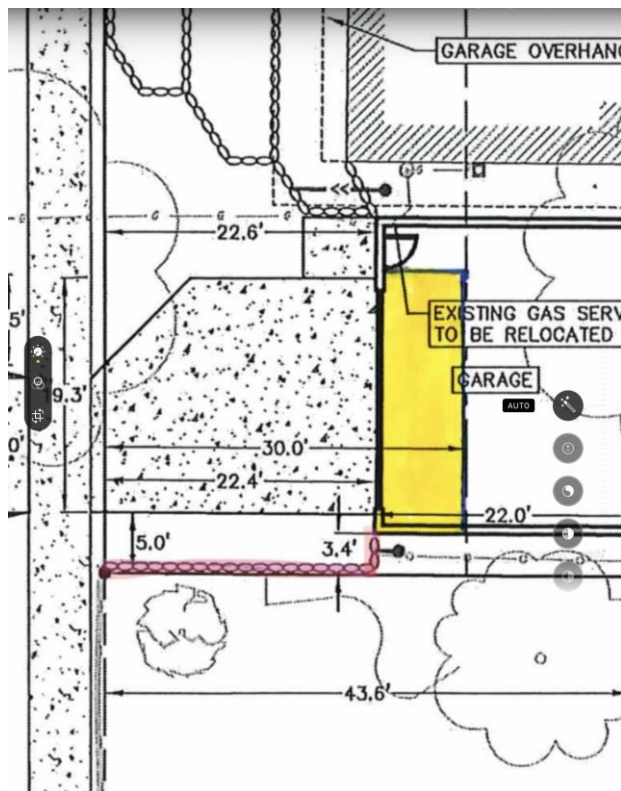
2. We have significant concerns about having an 8-12foot drop off on the side of our property. We have 3 little kids at home, who all enjoy playing in the front yard with neighborhood kids as well as gardening. Falling from such a height, onto concrete, would cause serious injury or death. The answer is also not as simple as a fence for the reasons of code and liability. A terrace system could work but a retaining wall engineer would need to make than determination.
2. We are concerned about the long term integrity of the retaining wall, especially given the history of the existing retaining walls on this property and those of neighboring properties needing to be rebuilt again and again. Neighbors who have lived here for decades are also concerned based on how much work they've seen on existing walls. Any shift or failure of a retaining wall so close to our property would impact our property. Again, we do not give permission for any part of the retaining wall nor its supports nor its backfill to be in nor on our property.

We ask that the safety and structural integrity of the retaining wall be taken into account.

Thank you,
JoAnn Minko
Paul Minko
505 Edward

Location of proposed retaining wall that we are concerned with in red. It is 4 feet at the sidewalk and goes up to the height of the garage.

Car pictured in proposal couldn't see a child walking by retaining wall. Retaining wall parallel with plot line is minimum 4 feet, much higher than the 2.5 feet maximum within 10 feet, needed for safety as determined by the city of Madison.

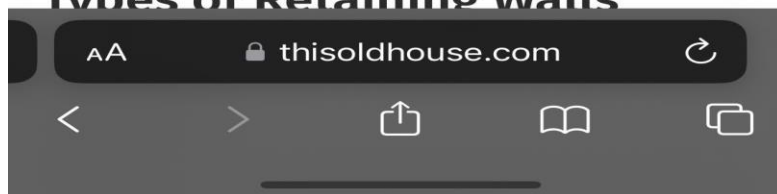


example of engineered retaining wall at 8 feet:



A timber wall made of 8-foot-long 6×6-inch pressure-treated beams needs tiebacks and deadmen spiked in place every 4 feet. Landscape fabric keeps the gravel from clogging with silt, while 4-inch PVC pipe drains most water. | Illustration by Trevor Johnston/Paul Perrault

Types of Retaining Walls



Here an 8 foot retaining wall would need 8 feet of setback for support