Board of Zoning Appeals – Variance Support Statement

I am writing in support of the homeowners' request for a variance allowing the placement of a fence one foot from the alley property line, atop their existing concrete retaining wall, instead of the required three feet.

The property in question is a corner lot, bordered by both Main Street and 22nd Street, with a concrete retaining wall running along the alley and front sidewalk. The proposed fence will be a high-quality decking-style railing, structurally strong and designed to be at least 80% see-through—well above the 50% transparency standard required by ordinance. This design will preserve clear visibility for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists using the alley.

The alternative—placing the fence two feet inside the retaining wall—would significantly reduce the functionality of the only backyard space available to the homeowners. Given the home's location on a corner lot, this fenced area is the sole secure space for their toddler to play without the hazards of nearby high-traffic streets.

The alley serves multiple neighborhood purposes. We and other neighbors park in garages accessed via the alley, and our teenage children regularly ride bikes through it and park vehicles. We have reviewed the fence plans together and are in unanimous agreement that the proposed placement will not impair visibility or create any safety hazards.

The requested variance represents a reasonable and practical solution that balances ordinance intent with the unique conditions of this lot. It will preserve the safe play space for a young child, maintain sight lines for all alley users, and enhance the property's appearance without adverse impact to the neighborhood.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage the Board to approve this variance request.

Respectfully submitted,

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