

To: East Lansing Planning Commission – Public Hearing Wednesday October 11th, 2023

From: Dr. Barbara Hiranpradist – 667 Stoddard Avenue, East Lansing, MI

Re: Rezoning of 683 Stoddard Avenue – Board of Water and Light Substation

My home located at 667 Stoddard Avenue was purchased 45 years ago when I accepted a faculty position with the East Lansing Public Schools. Since then my family has enjoyed and appreciated living in the Avondale/Bailey subdivision of East Lansing and has observed some of the rezoning decisions firsthand. Some were well-thought-out with regard to the percent of permanent residences and others were not with regard to rental licenses.

The issue that we are discussing this evening falls into the realm of a new rezoning of BWL property from R-2, Medium Density Single-Family Residential to C, Community Facilities. The parcel in question is located at the southwest corner of Stoddard Avenue and Burcham Drive. The BWL has declared this substation obsolete and would like permission to repurpose the building and land.

For 45 years I have shared a common border of 134 feet with the BWL property. My family has enjoyed the spacious well-kept, green space, but at times have been disturbed with the amount of truck noise and humming resulting from BWL activities as well as a lesser amount of activity by the local telephone company which also shares the property. While activity up until now has been tolerable, I am greatly concerned with the new plans for 683 Stoddard Avenue.

Utilizing the BWL land, with additional parcels that extend very close to Cornell Avenue, will include most of the residential block facing Burcham Drive. With a proposed paved parking lot and possible emissions from the training building, the block will take on the appearance of a gasoline station smack in the middle of a residential neighborhood.

In addition, there is a security fence which will be built bordering my residential property. Currently there is an attractive white picket fence separating our parcels of land. Also of concern are the elevated light posts that will serve as security. I am sure that no one in the immediate area would welcome this excessive amount of light beaming in their windows, especially during sleeping hours.

Every day I observe children and MSU students walking to their schools on Stoddard and Burcham, and this is not what they should be seeing in a residential neighborhood. East Lansing has persevered in maintaining beautiful, unique, and walkable areas in its residential neighborhoods. We do not need the appearance of a commercial establishment with a parking lot on our beautiful Burcham Drive. This is totally out of character in a residential neighborhood.

At this time the unpaved BWL driveway under my bedroom window attracts vehicles during the night hours where clandestine events such as drug use, use of fireworks, and other “in-car” activities take place. It was difficult to explain the condoms on OUR lawn to our young daughter!

A paved parking area would invite folks to “party” in this area in addition to leaving cans, bottles, and trash.

In closing, I feel adamant that it would not be advisable or prudent to rezone 683 Stoddard Avenue to serve the commercial purpose of the BWL. We must maintain the Avondale/Bailey neighborhood as it was designed to be - safe, beautiful and peaceful.

Sincerely,

Dr. Barbara Hiranpradist

667 Stoddard Avenue

Rebecca Urdiales

From: Erin Graham <erinagraham@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 6:57 PM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Andrew Marsh
Subject: LWBL 683 Stoddard - Public Comment

Good Evening.

I am Erin Graham, and my partner Andrew Marsh and I are residents who live at 660 Cornell Ave in East Lansing very near the proposed re-zoning application of 683 Stoddard by LWBL.

I am very concerned about a proposal to bring a commercial training site to a quiet neighborhood. I am concerned about noise levels, street traffic, the inclusion of fences, the paving of the parking lot, and other factors that would be a nuisance to the quiet enjoyment of our property.

We moved to this section of the neighborhood because it is quieter and further from downtown. While some noise is anticipated beeping of utility trucks, noise of heavy equipment, and voices of workers are all nuisances that we did not move to.

The neighborhood already has an issue with water runoff and flooding. The paving of a parking lot in this space has the potential to cause flooding and cause water intrusion into structures like sheds, garages, and basements.

Another reason we moved to this community was that it was a neighborhood with no commercial properties nearby. Putting one in the middle of a residential street with a school nearby seems ludicrous.

We have many other concerns about the re-zoning of this property. We understood a substation as a necessary part of living here but to change it to a training center is unnecessary and has the potential to really disrupt the high quality of life in this neighborhood.

Will there be limits for LWBL for an noise or traffic? Will there be hefty enough penalties to actually deter any undesirable behavior? What about the potential run off from the proposed parking lot? Has an environmental study be done?

Would you prefer we submit these comments in person?

Sincerely,
Erin Graham

(P1) TO: Department of Planning, Building
& Development

FROM: Tom Jackson 650 Stoddard Ave
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

RE: Lansing Board of Water and Light
Site Plan and Rezoning Request
FOR A TRAINING FACILITY at 683
Stoddard Ave, E.L.M; 48823

I understand that the Planning
Commission will hold a public hearing
on BWL request on Wednesday,
October 11, 2023 at the Hannah Community
Center. I plan to attend. However,
I wanted to submit some comments
and questions for BWL, and the
Commission.

The property is currently zoned
R-2. The proposed change is
inconsistent with R-2 use. The
BWL seeks a change to C-Community
Facility. Because this is NOT consistent
with the Master Plan and since a
Rezoning runs with the land.

P2

- (a) Would that mean the BULK could sell the property to ANOTHER FOR C-ZONE use?
- (b) Could the BULK put a school, hospital, elementary ~~or city owned~~ etc on the property?
- (c) Once the BULK decommissioned the substation; ~~was~~ ^{is} used ~~to~~ Reverted ~~to~~ back to R-2 only? (Note, BULK has used the Premise at 683 Stoddard Ave for training [post-decommissioning] according to employees being trained there.)
- (d) Why are only 5 lots sought to be rezoned? Aren't there 6?
- (e) Does the Michigan Bld Code 1103.2.4 include training? What does the BULK Application (Page 6) assert that the "center would also allow for the potential collaboration and training with local revenue agencies"? I thought it was limited to BULK employees.

P3

The applications by BWH are unclear as to the expected use of the facility, the meaning of Normal Business hours, and the maximum daily traffic. Could BWH clarify?

I like the idea that the existing building will be used - leaving the trees and green space pretty much the same.

I wonder if the retrofit of the building will actually comply with the Americans For Disability Act. For example, would a trainee in a wheelchair be able to enter the training center as proposed?

It seems that if I were to request a rezoning at 650 Stoddard to Community C, it would rightly be denied. Yet I am R-2 like BWH.

If my experience with BWH as a neighbor would improve that would be helpful. For example, the leaves from the poppy blow into my yard after I clean my yard and leave at the curb. Not so with BWH. I have complained to no avail.

D4

I AM age 77. Last winter, after a significant snow storm, I was shoveling the city sidewalk. The BOW employees were there with snowblowers. I asked for help, they replied it was against ~~policy~~ Board policy - Oh well!

I will say that I have appreciated their work to keep the lights on!

Sincerely,
Tom Victor Jackson
10-10-2023

Rebecca Urdiales

From: Thomas Schlegel <thansens@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 1:22 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: EL Planning Commission: 683 Stoddard zoning and plan

Ladies and Gentlemen of the East Lansing Planning Commission;

My name is Thomas Schlegel. I am the co-owner, along with my sister, of our late parent's home at 660 Stoddard Ave in the Avondale area of East Lansing. I would like to submit the following comments on the two items on your 13 September 2023 agenda regarding the Lansing Board of Water and Light's proposals for their parcels at 683 Stoddard.

I have a long history with this location as my parents moved me in as an infant in 1951. I remember well when the BoW&L substation was built, in 1965 I believe. There was some concern about whether this was a good addition to the neighborhood but I remember my parents feeling that it would be nice to have the green space and that they hoped that humming from the transformers would not be annoying. My memory of the conversations is that the proposal made clear that this was electrical infrastructure and that there would NOT be a zoning change involved in building the substation. In fact I think most of the neighbors over the years would agree that the BoW&L has been a good neighbor. The green space at the corner of Burcham is pleasant and the humming was only occasionally noticeable, at least from across the street.

The proposal for changing the zoning of this parcel from R-2 to C in itself doesn't seem inappropriate. A training facility used by a few people need not be disruptive though I see it would probably require the C zoning change. It itself this seems a reasonable proposal. However on looking at the details of the site plan proposal that the BoW&L has submitted leaves me seriously questioning whether they are still trying to be part of the neighborhood. If they are not I would suggest you deny or constrain the rezoning.

The site proposal as written does not seem to have been made with any sense of maintaining and supporting the neighborhood's residential character. The plan of putting parking spaces on the lot line of the nearest neighbor is odd, and leads to the need to put up a privacy wall on that lot line. This seems to imply that the BoW&L feel that they best cut themselves off from the neighborhood. Similarly for the parking lot style lighting poles they proposed. So much for the green space at the corner feeling. This lack of concern for a neighborhood feel seems particularly obvious given that there is plenty of other space on the site. The parking might be located on the Burcham side of the building. If a privacy wall was wanted that portion of Burcham already has privacy walls along its north side, the Lantern Hills side. A privacy wall would be IN character. The fact that the BoW&L planners choose to put the disturbance and noise of their parking lot right up against the neighborhood would seem to indicate that they do not see us.

I have one other issue that struck me about the specifics of the training facility. The proposal says that they would be adding two welding hoods in the existing building. I don't have anything against good ventilation, but I am uncertain about what welding would be going on in this electrical apprentice training facility. Volatile heavy metals and the sometimes nasty oils that are used in transformers do come to mind. I would first ask if the BoW&L can assure the community that any emissions would be appropriately controlled. Second I would ask the Planning Commission whether this sort of industrial activity is appropriate to place in a plot of C zoning surrounded by R-2 and R1 residential zoned communities.

I thank you for your attention.

tom

