

**Letter to Riverwoods Village Board by Margie Kaul  
Read by Betty Dlouhy at the  
November 24, 2009 Village Board Meeting**

I'm sorry I can't be there in person to speak to you.

I object to the fence ordinance as written on many levels.

I'd like to start by addressing the purposes of the ordinance and its application to deer fences.

The first purpose is "to improve safety and welfare by regulating visibility". This does not apply to deer fences, which are 100% see-through.

Number 2 is "to allow adequate screening for privacy". This doesn't apply to deer fencing because they are 100% transparent and not used for privacy purposes.

Number 3 - "to prevent blight, monotony and blocking of view corridors". Deer fencing certainly does not block view corridors because the eye may not even notice it since one can see right through it. Blight is one reason for which deer fences are erected. And deer fences prevent monotony by allowing various levels of vegetation to grow, such as perennials, shrubs and canopy trees.

Number 4 - "to prevent channeling of wildlife in smaller areas". This does apply to deer fences. But such a small area is presently deer fenced that it's hard for me to see that this is reason enough to justify such a restrictive ordinance. If channels need to be created, that can be accomplished without resorting to an overly restrictive and complicated ordinance.

Number 5 - "to prevent against obstruction of storm water runoff". I agree entirely with this goal. Any kind of fence blocking the flow of water through the creeks should go.

Number 6 - "to preserve the character of the neighborhoods". I really believe this is a matter of taste, and legislating personal preference is a terrible idea. After years of trying to restore and protect my woodlands, I think this top picture of my sideyard is a perfect example of the character of my neighborhood as I see it. The bottom picture

shows the fence on Sue Auerbach's property and how the wildflowers have flourished within the fence, while the neighbor's unfenced property shows an almost decimated understory.

If this ordinance regarding sideyard setbacks is enacted, these wildflowers will be history and 15 years of preservation will be gone in one year. There is no provision in the ordinance for exceptions for people who have restored woodlands.

I believe that deer fencing or woodland protection fencing can fit into these stated purposes. Thus, my question is: what would be accomplished with this proposed ordinance with regard to deer fences?

I also object to the 6-foot limitation on deer fences. Neither a 6-foot nor an 8-foot fence will have an effect on the stated purposes of the proposed ordinance: it won't affect channeling, visibility, or character of the community. However, the difference between a 6-foot and an 8-foot fence is that the 6-foot fence won't work.

On a personal note, I feel targeted by this proposed fence ordinance. I've worked hard to put my 2 acres back to the way it looked when we moved out here 22 years ago. Only about 10% of my property is protected by a deer fence. However, in complying with the proposed setbacks, much of what I've done to restore the woodlands would be destroyed and that breaks my heart. I've also put in hundreds of hours working in the Village Garden, and what will be lost there also breaks my heart. It's not just the trillium, it's all the other native plants that will be lost. It is very hard not to take this personally. And I do.

This proposed ordinance is not appropriate for a village with lots of such different sizes and shapes or for a village that does not cull deer. I don't want to kill your deer. Please don't kill my plants.

Thank you for listening.