

From: [Anne Fayssoux](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive-proposal for a Lodgehouse
Date: Friday, October 7, 2022 6:24:49 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Decatur, GA network. Please note the sender and maintain caution when opening external links/attachments.

Dear Angela,

Thank you for talking with us today.

As you may know, we are very concerned about the proposal for 620 Pinetree to become a Lodgehouse. We have met and discussed this matter with Talia Bunting. Obviously, we are not experts in the field of property law but these are our issues with the proposed plan.

First, this would be a **permanent** change to our neighborhood. If this permission is granted to Talia and Joe Bunting, 620 Pinetree Drive will be able to be a lodgehouse for whomever owns the property. We see this as very problematic. Talia and Joe Bunting may plan for an "upscale" Bed and Breakfast but perhaps the next owners of 620 Pinetree would not have such an "upscale" vision, and we will be stuck with whatever they chose to do with it. This Lodgehouse is not in keeping with the character of our neighborhood.

Second, it will take almost **a year** for 620 Pinetree to be converted from a 4 bedroom/4bath house to a 9 bedroom/9 bath house if all goes according to schedule. We will be in for another year of construction traffic on top of the past 3+ years of construction traffic that we have already dealt with at 630 Pinetree.

Third, once the house is a lodgehouse, we feel that the proposed owners of the house have underestimated the cars that guests/staff will be bringing to the house. If the house is full, there would be possibly 9 cars or more. With no limit to the number of cars that guests can bring, and the cars of the cleaning staff and delivery people, this could be a nightmare. There will be 6 onsite parking spaces, and the overflow will be on the street in front of our houses. This would be an excessive, burdonon use of the streets in front of Hampton Court.

Fourth, Talia does not have a clear plan for garbage. She thinks that there will be less garbage than a single family home. I find that hard to believe. Will we see rows of Decatur garbage bags in front of the house every Tuesday?

Fifth, Talia proposed that the guests there may be riding bikes but there are no plans for where the bikes will be stored.

Sixth, there doesn't seem to be any plan for regulating when guests arrive at night. We are concerned about people coming in at all hours of the night.

Seventh, Talia has no plans for how to handle guns on the property. It may be a stretch, but I find it scary to think of unknown people with guns in a house across the street from St. Thomas More School. Think of the Las Vegas shooting, Uvalde, Sandy Hook. There are crazy

people in this world.

Eighth, Talia plans to serve alcohol on the property which is within 100 yards of St. Thomas More Catholic School. We could not get a clear answer on whether this would be legal or not. Additionally, we did not hear that Talia had a clear plan for preventing "party house" situations at the Lodgehouse.

Please give these comments to your Planning Board. We expect to be at the Planning meeting on Tuesday, October 11th.

Best Regards,
Anne Fayssoux and Mike Leaf

From: [Barrie Rhodes](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Sunday, October 9, 2022 6:01:58 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Decatur, GA network. Please note the sender and maintain caution when opening external links/attachments.

Angela Threadgill

I am the resident of 649 Pinetree Drive. I am writing in regards to the application to allow a lodging house at 620 Pinetree Drive.

I do not believe the location to be an appropriate site for the City's desire for an upscale lodging facility.

There seems to be references to the property being R 60 in some material and R 85 in other....my history with the parcel is that at one time a single resident owned four parcels (15 245 02 003, 15 245 02 004, 15 245 02 005 and 15 245 02 006). Thru the years and at the request of developers and owners ,620 and 630 Pinetree Drive lots were created from one lot that was subdivided.

Would you clearly state which zoning 620 Pinetree Drive is....

The maximum lot coverage is 40% according to the city code.....what is the current coverage of the existing house, walkways, driveways, etc. . From the plans that have been submitted with the ADA accessible walkway,ADA parking space, five additional parking spaces and circular driveway addition, what will the lot coverage then be?

The circular driveway does not meet code in residential zoning and most concerning is the proximity to the intersection of Pinetree and W. Ponce. It is a very challenging intersection . As of now there are yellow(no parking) strips on the front, side and across Pinetree from 620. The visibility of oncoming traffic in both directions on Ponce makes pulling out of Pinetree difficult and thus the city has designated no parking(also a section is restricted to resident parking only). I find it impossible to believe the code would allow a curb cut and driveway at that proximity to any intersection ,much less that one.

I am amazed at the speed with which this application has been handled and I am disappointed that it is scheduled on a night of a city wide discussion on a missing middle housing ordinance final draft. I believe that it will be challenging for the Pinetree Drive residents to properly be considered and heard on this agenda .

I look forward to your response and consideration of the stated concerns.

Barrie Rhodes

Sent from my iPad

From: leahvaughan@sycamoreconsulting.net
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Sunday, October 9, 2022 5:31:02 PM

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Hi Angela,

I hope you are doing well!

I am writing to voice my support for the proposed boarding house at 620 Pinetree Drive under consideration by the planning commission.

The idea of an upscale bed and breakfast with ADA accessible bedrooms is very appealing to me. My father is confined to a wheelchair and is unable to visit us in our home.

I would also love to have access to extra guest rooms within walking distance.

The plans I've seen look lovely, and I believe the BNB would be an asset to our neighborhood and for the city.

Thanks.

Leah Vaughan
623 Pinetree Drive
Decatur, GA 30030

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Mike Easterwood](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Sunday, October 9, 2022 3:12:53 PM

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My wife and I live at 625 Pinetree Drive in Hampton Court, across the street from the proposed Lodgehouse. We want to register our opposition to the Conditional Lodgehouse use for 620 Pinetree Dr. We believe the use is OUT OF CHARACTER for a residential street. The use will generate much more traffic and require more parking than a single family residence. It will generate more trips, and to add parking will require a drive too close to the intersection of Pinetree and West Ponce. This intersection has limited site distance along West Ponce especially in front of the 620 Parcel. The on-street parking makes it difficult to exit Pinetree when turning East.

Finally, Pinetree Drive has a shortage of on-street parking making it difficult for existing residents. If there is a shortage before the conditional use, it is only exacerbated by allowing an INN that will compete with current residents. I frankly believe the applicant will cause issues by attempting to allow events such as weddings or parties even though the Zoning does NOT allow this. In fact, she laid out weddings as a use in a letter she provided to the Hampton Court President.

If the City chooses to approve this conditional use, I request that specific requirement be imposed to emphasize No EVENTS are allowed! Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Mike and Debbie Easterwood

From: [Pearl Amelia Mchaney](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Cc: [Thomas L Mchaney](#); [Anne Fayssoux](#); [Mike Kandrach](#); [Peggy Spencer](#); [Moe Miller](#); [jacbarr535@yahoo.com](#); [Chris Carroll](#); [Ed Phillips](#); [Phil & Nina Lamson](#); [Kim Finnegan](#); [Karla Finnegan](#); [David Weitnauer](#); [ireneduhaime@gmail.com](#); [Jill Thompson](#); [mhkline@bellsouth.net](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive Lodgehouse proposal
Date: Saturday, October 8, 2022 9:48:30 AM

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Dear Angela,

Tom and I live at 805 Pinetree drive. We have lived here since 2000 when we moved from a rented house on Clairemont where we had lived for 15 years. Our three children, now adults, all attended the City of Decatur Schools.

We are opposed to the plan for 620 Pinetree to be a Lodgehouse for all of the reasons that our neighbor Anne Fayssoux has pointed out and that I have copied and pasted below. While several neighbors cite a welcome desire for lodging for their families, I do not imagine such a choice would be affordable to me and to many others.

Additionally, the traffic at the corner of Ponce de Leon and Pinetree has always been problematic and not only when St. Thomas More school carpool and services (masses, weddings, funerals) patrons park there. The previous owners of the house had to cut their rose bushes and deconstruct their flourishing bee hive from the property in response to complaints. The neighborhood rigorously petitioned for a sidewalk years ago.

Another concern is that should 620 become a lodging house, I fear the large house (under reconstruction for 3+ years) and owned by the same family, I think as the seller of 620, would also become a lodging house.

Pinetree Drive is a cohesive, friendly, civic-minded neighborhood with book clubs, block parties, holiday gatherings, greetings from one another as we walk and as we walk our pets.

Decatur now has two hotels that my family has used with no complaints whatsoever and I cannot fathom the need for an upscale lodging house for the well-to-do, especially when we are trying to address middle income families. .

From Anne Fayssoux who was able to meet with Talia Bunting to learn more:

First, this would be a **permanent** change to our neighborhood. If this permission is granted to Talia and Joe Bunting, 620 Pinetree Drive will be able to be a lodgehouse for whomever owns the property. We see this as very problematic. Talia and Joe Bunting may plan for an "upscale" Bed and Breakfast but perhaps the next owners of 620 Pinetree would not have such an "upscale" vision, and we will be stuck with whatever they choose to do with it. This Lodgehouse is not in keeping with the character of our neighborhood.

Second, it will take almost **a year** for 620 Pinetree to be converted from a 4 bedroom/4bath house to a 9 bedroom/9 bath house if all goes according to schedule. We will be in for another

year of construction traffic on top of the past 3+ years of construction traffic that we have already dealt with at 630 Pinetree.

(Case-in-point, during this past week there was some trash on the street for two days in front of 630 including two used condoms. Pearl)

Third, once the house is a lodgehouse, we feel that the proposed owners of the house have underestimated the cars that guests/staff will be bringing to the house. If the house is full, there would be possibly 9 cars or more. With no limit to the number of cars that guests can bring, and the cars of the cleaning staff and delivery people, this could be a nightmare. There will be 6 onsite parking spaces, and the overflow will be on the street in front of our houses. This would be an excessive burden on use of the streets in front of Hampton Court.

Fourth, Talia does not have a clear plan for garbage. She thinks that there will be less garbage than a single family home. I find that hard to believe. Will we see rows of Decatur garbage bags in front of the house every Tuesday?

Fifth, Talia proposed that the guests there may be riding bikes but there are no plans for where the bikes will be stored.

(As bike friendly as Decatur has made an effort to be, Ponce is NOT a safe place for riding a bike; a few years past, a car exiting Water Street struck a biker; getting to the bike lanes is hazardous.-- Pearl)

Sixth, there doesn't seem to be any plan for regulating when guests arrive at night. We are concerned about people coming in at all hours of the night.

Seventh, Talia has no plans for how to handle guns on the property. It may be a stretch, but I find it scary to think of unknown people with guns in a house across the street from St. Thomas More School.

Think of the Las Vegas shooting, Uvalde, Sandy Hook. There are crazy people in this world.

Eighth, Talia plans to serve alcohol on the property which is within 100 yards of St. Thomas More Catholic School. We could not get a clear answer on whether this would be legal or not.

Additionally, we did not hear that Talia had a clear plan for preventing "party house" situations at the Lodgehouse.

And from Mike and Ann Leaf, 627 Pinetree:

Thanks for the information on the Queen Bee Inn. My wife and I live at 627 Pinetree Drive. We can understand that people would want a nice place for family and friends to stay in the City of Decatur but any business must comply with all appropriate Local and State codes.

I spent a little time looking into the zoning for 620 Pinetree Drive. A Lodginghouse is permitted under R85 zoning conditionally if there is a public hearing and approval by the City Commission. That seems to be what you are now doing. There are several other conditions under 6.5.7 Overnight Lodging that apply, and I copied

the sections below.

There are several Zoning Code issues with 620 Pinetree becoming a Lodgehouse:

First, the zoning doesn't allow for wedding parties, just overnight lodging.

You say that the City only requires on site parking spaces for 4 cars according to your brochure. Where does that information come from?

Your brochure also says there will be 5 to 6 parking spaces plus an ADA spot. It seems more reasonable that 8 or 9 on site parking spaces will be needed when the Lodgehouse is full with 8 different guests plus the resident manager. Moreover, you plan to have one space as an ADA space. The ADA code would require it to be a van parking space which would need to be 16' wide. Where is there room for a 16' wide accessible parking space on the property? The general standards defined below require that the house meet all codes including ADA.

From the outside of the house, the routes of travel into the house don't appear to be ADA compliant as required by the Department of Justice and the Georgia Building Codes. On the inside, I am not sure if there will be an ADA accessible bedroom on the first floor, and if not, there will need to be an elevator or lift to a second floor ADA accessible bedroom.

The interior rendering shows rows of alcohol bottles at the nice bar area, and the brochure says there will be wedding events (which appear to be prohibited by the City Zoning Code). Nonetheless, if alcohol is to be served, there would need to be an Alcohol Licence which can not be issued to a business that is within 100 yards of a school which 620 Pinetree is. St Thomas More Catholic School is just across the street.

Beside Code issues, I wonder how you are going to handle the garbage. Will you have some form of dumpster or will rows of City of Decatur garbage bags be outside the House every Tuesday?

We want to be aware of all of the issues that a Lodgehouse permit approval may bring as this would become a permanent change to our neighborhood.

Thank you, Angela, for receiving our input regarding the zoning issue for 620 Pinetree Drive.

Sincerely,
Pearl and Tom McHaney, 805 Pinetree Drive

Pearl McHaney
Kenneth M. England Professor of Southern Literature, *Emerita*
Georgia State University, Atlanta
Editor, *Eudora Welty Review* <https://sites.baylor.edu/ewreview/>
Editor with a Preface, *The Eye That Is Language: A Transatlantic View of Eudora Welty*
by Danièle Pitavy-Souques

From: [Jeff Vaughan](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: Feedback on 620 Pinetree Proposal
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 8:57:48 AM

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Angela,

I am a resident of Hampton Court condominiums across the street from 620 Pinetree. I'm writing in support of the proposal for a bed and breakfast at 620 Pinetree. I think this would be a good addition to the city and provide additional options for lodging in Decatur.

I've lived in Decatur since 1975, graduated from City Schools of Decatur, raised a family here, and enjoyed all of the many opportunities and changes in Decatur throughout the years. One of the hallmarks of Decatur is that we keep trying to make things better and increase opportunities for residents, businesses, and institutions here.

Some of our neighbors are vocally against this proposal, it would seem out of a fear of change. Change is good and one of the constants in life. Change has certainly been a hallmark of Decatur over the past 47 years that I have lived here.

I hope the Planning Board will approve this proposed use of this beautiful property.

Thank you for all you do to keep Decatur great.

Jeff Vaughan
623 Pinetree Dr.
Decatur, GA 30030

From: [Marceil Joyner](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: Zoning of 620 Pinetree Dr.
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 9:07:54 AM

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John and I would like you to know that we oppose changing 620 from residential to lodging house. There are numerous reasons that have been mentioned to you by others. We concur on the majority of them. We live at 631 and would be impacted by the traffic, parking and noise of a Lodging House. If the City of Decatur want a Lodging House of this type, it should be downtown and not in a residential neighborhood.

We have lived on Pinetree for more than 50 years and feel that we have a lot vested in this community and only want the best for the neighborhood.

Thank you,
John and Marceil Joyner

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bob Espy](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: Lodgehouse Proposal for 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 9:48:42 AM

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Ms. Threadgill,

I am writing this email on behalf of my uncle, Harry Stillwell, who is 85 and has been a resident at 603 Pinetree Drive for over 40 years. Harry's mother served as Principal at both Oakhurst and Westchester schools where he also attended. He grew up on Erie Ave and has always considered Decatur his home. Throughout his lifetime, he has witnessed many changes in Decatur. Recently, we both have learned that there is a proposal to rezone and allow a bed & breakfast "resort" at 620 Pinetree Drive, directly across the street from Harry's front door. The discussion centers around turning this 4 bedroom house into a 9 bedroom bed & breakfast. Please do not allow this to happen. This type of facility has no place on Pinetree which is one of the nicest and prettiest neighborhoods in Decatur. The street itself is already congested with workers, trucks and equipment due to the construction at 630 Pinetree Drive (for over 3 years). In addition, we have carpool pick up and church services for St Thomas Moore that line up/park on Pinetree and Ponce de Leon.

In addition, there are other concerns regarding this type of business operating in a residential area.

-[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->There is no telling how long it will take to convert this home to 9 bedrooms/9bathrooms adding additional workers and equipment.

-[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->Where will the guests park? There is only a 2 car garage and a very short steep driveway. The street is too narrow to park on both sides. Even if the lot is redesigned (lot is only .50 acre) to allow for 6 guest parking spaces, what happens if the lodge is at full capacity? Do they park on the street? Does this mean that you will also approve curb cuts on Ponce de Leon and Pinetree? If Pinetree residents have visitors, the parking for them is already very limited. Working staff to service the guests plus deliveries must also be accommodated.

-[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->What about trash pickup? Apparently, the proposal is very vague as to how much trash will be generated much less how and where it would be staged and picked up. Doesn't this type of business with an eating establishment require a dumpster? Clearly, right now, there is no place for a dumpster to be placed on site and serviced. The potential new owners think there will be less trash than a single family living in 4 bedrooms. REALLY????

-[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->From what we understand, there is no plan or proposal for regulating the time of arrival or departure whether for check in/check out or for any other purpose.

-[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->We understand that they are planning to serve alcohol on the premises. Has anyone even checked into the rules and regulations for this type of activity. In DeKalb County the regulation is that you cannot serve alcohol within 1,000 feet of a school/church. Are the regulations the same in the City of Decatur?

-[if !supportLists]-->6. <!--[endif]-->Apparently, there is no plan for preventing this house to become a "party" house.

-[if !supportLists]-->7. <!--[endif]-->If the house becomes a bed & breakfast and is not successful, what happens? Is the next owner going to be allowed to run this as nothing more than a transient boarding

house facility?

City growth can be good but it can also be detrimental. Of course, you want people to feel welcome in Decatur but let's not lose site of the neighborhood feeling that makes Decatur unique. There are hotels in the center of Decatur who gladly open their doors to visitors with ample parking and there seems to be plenty of availability. No one can argue that having a 9 bedroom bed & breakfast is going to increase the property values around it, when in fact it will most certainly decrease those values. Many of the people who live on Pinetree and Ponce de Leon have lived there for many years and their homes are their safe havens. Please take a moment and reflect upon what makes Decatur a special place to live and work . This proposal is wrong for the neighborhood, wrong for the City of Decatur and should be denied.

Thank you,

Robert W Espy III

From: [Bob Espy](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: Addendum to Earlier Email re 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:22:29 AM

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Ms. Threadgill,

I did think of a couple of more issues that should be considered as part of this proposal -

If a dumpster is allowed, then it needs to be on the Ponce de Leon side of the house otherwise the dumpster will directly impact the value of Hampton Court's property.

As to the serving of alcohol, it is my understanding that the establishment must have food receipts in excess of 51%. Is this not true for a bed & breakfast?

If food is served, even if it is only breakfast, where are they going to put the grease trap?

DeKalb County has a Mandate from the EPA on sewage disposal and the time it can be released. Has the County signed off on this project? With the increase of "residential clients" and their waste, there will be an increase in sewage release.

Thank you again,

Robert W Espy III

From: [Mike Leaf](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree Drive Lodgehouse
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 9:51:30 AM

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Hi Angela,

I am voicing a concern for parking at the proposed lodge house at 620 Pinetree Drive. The zoning allows for 4 parking spaces for 8 bedrooms and one full time manager at lodge houses. The proposal plans call for 6 spaces which I don't believe is adequate. Also, the plan shows a circular drive exiting on to Pinetree Drive, dangerously close to the intersection with West Ponce de Leon Avenue. This area is already congested with church and school traffic and parking.

I request the planning board deny this application.

Thank you,

Michael Leaf, Architect
627 Pinetree Drive

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Ken Thomas](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: about the 620 Pinetree Dr. Lodging application
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:49:41 AM

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Ms. Threadgill
City of Decatur
October 10, 2022

I just wanted to say as a condo owner nearby, I think this is a bad idea due to the increase in parking where parking is already hampered. I do not see that the location has any room for their proposed parking or the other things they have proposed.

While it may seem like a good idea to those who are not living right next door as our condo is, we are going to be impacted. I will not be in town to attend the Oct 11 meeting but some of my condo neighbors will in order to bring up some good points about the situation.

The people proposing this Lodging are in the business of promoting mutli-occupant use of properties. And they even put a trailer in their own back yard and tried to rent that out, til someone put a stop to it. I hope someone has mentioned that to you and the city.

Ken Thomas

Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.
619 Pinetree Dr.
Decatur, GA 30030
e-mail: ktomjr@aol.com
Land Line/Home Phone 404-377-4943

From: [Susan R Mobley](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: 620 Pinetree. Potential B&B
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 10:20:36 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Decatur, GA network. Please note the sender and maintain caution when opening external links/attachments.

Ms. Threadgill,

I'm contacting you in regards to the potential Rose Hill Bed and Breakfast at 620 Pinetree Drive in Decatur. It is my understanding the window for community comments to the Planning Board closes today at 4pm. Please excuse my late email; however we are out of town and I just discovered this opportunity to share my thoughts.

My husband and I live in The Hampton Court community directly across from 620 Pinetree Dr. We feel this Bed and Breakfast will be an excellent addition to our neighborhood. I do not know the Bunting family personally; however the internet provides extensive information and all my research found positive business history for both Buntings. We also have faith in the county making sure all codes are followed. Talia has replied immediately to my texts with satisfactory answers to parking concerns. We wanted to be assured that our Hampton Court complex parking was not to be used for the guests or visitors of the Bed and Breakfast. I believe having an upscale B & B in our immediate area will also bring much value to our properties and to downtown Decatur. The current hotels in the square leave much to be desired according to our out of town guests. The rooms have been very noisy in all hours of the night due to celebrations of other guests. We have stayed in many B & B's in our travels and prefer the uniqueness and intimacy of this type of lodging. B & B's bring a level of luxury to an area as well which we are excited to bring to our lovely Decatur area. Loud partying is not a complaint we have ever had during our stays in B&B's, in fact, just the opposite. There is a respectful air of courtesy among guests.

What many neighbors are not aware of is the past residence of 620 Pinetree had a constant flow of teenagers coming and going at all hours of the night and much partaking of drugs! The neighbors who have fears of unruly partying NEVER even knew this was going on! An upscale B&B will not tolerate those activities where as a private residence you never know who will move in and worse it could easily be an Air BnB which will not have any city codes or restrictions to adhere to! Thank you for your time and I have confidence your decision will be well thought through for what will be best for our community.

Best, Susie Mobley

Sent from my iPhone



SAINT THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH

636 West Ponce de Leon Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030-2951
tel 404 378-4588 fax 404 378.0506
stmgaparish.org

October 10, 2022

Ms. Angela Threadgill
Director of Planning and Economic Development
City of Decatur, Georgia

RE: 620 Pinetree Drive

Dear Ms. Threadgill:

I recently learned that a request has been made to the City of Decatur to allow a lodginghouse at 620 Pinetree Drive. I write as the Pastor of St. Thomas More Catholic Church, which is located directly across the street from the property. I wish to express three serious concerns that are in opposition to granting the request.

- 1) **Not fitting with the character of the surrounding area.** The property is located in a residential area with a church and school across the street and another church down the street. As far as I am aware, there are no other bed and breakfasts or other commercial establishments in this section of the city. A commercial lodging establishment would not fit with the character of this location.
- 2) **Not truly a lodginghouse.** I am concerned that the vision of the owners for this property does not fit within the limited use permitted by the city's code for lodginghouses. For example, promotional material provided by the owners imagines the property serving as a wedding venue.
- 3) **Proximity to a school.** My understanding is that the owners intend to serve alcohol on the property. The property is located across the street from St. Thomas More Catholic School. I believe that the city code does not allow commercial establishments within 100 yards of a school to serve alcohol.

Thank you for consideration of these points in your care for the integrity of our city.

Sincerely,

Fr. Robert M. Hussey, S.J.
Pastor

From: [Patricia Wynegar](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Cc: [Walt Drake](#)
Subject: Proposed Lodginghouse at 620 Pinetree Drive
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 1:25:37 PM

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The proposed “lodginghouse” at 620 Pinetree Drive is in effect, a **commercial business in a residential neighborhood**. It would change the traffic and on-street parking situation of the neighborhood. The site is directly across W. Ponce de Leon Avenue from St. Thomas More School, which already provides significant parking challenges during the day on W. Ponce de Leon Avenue, both from the school’s staff/parents/activities and during scheduled church/mass services. That leaves Pinetree Drive as the main parking location for “lodginghouse” guests. Although the proposal reportedly includes plans for a few onsite parking spots, guests and service vehicles will undoubtedly use Pinetree Drive for overflow. The residences (Hampton Court Condominiums) directly across Pinetree from the proposed site have very small front yards; cars parked on Pinetree would basically be at their front doors and living room windows.

Pinetree Drive is a busy residential street, which is used by pedestrians/neighbors yet has no sidewalks; it is also used as a cut-through for traffic between Scott Boulevard and W. Ponce de Leon Avenue for access into and out of downtown Decatur. Thus Pinetree Drive is already a heavily used artery in Decatur, with pedestrians sharing the road with vehicle traffic. As well, the sidewalk at the intersection of W. Ponce de Leon Avenue and Pinetree Drive is heavily used by pedestrians, including school children; there is no street light or crosswalk at Pinetree Drive, and I’m concerned that additional cars turning onto W. Ponce de Leon from Pinetree (and vice versa) could increase the potential threat to pedestrians.

This proposal could potentially harm current property owners on Pinetree Drive, with increased traffic, parking issues, and noise (guests, parties, receptions, service workers, cars), as well as property devaluation.

Many neighborhood concerns remain unaddressed, and further research and discussion is needed before consideration of this precedent-setting change.

Sincerely,
Tricia Wynegar Drake
617 Pinetree Drive

From: [Irene Duhaime](#)
To: [Angela Threadgill](#)
Subject: Proposal for Use of 620 Pinetree Drive as a Lodginghouse
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 12:40:34 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the Decatur, GA network. Please note the sender and maintain caution when opening external links/attachments.

To Angela Threadgill and the City of Decatur Planning Commission:

We are the residents of 644 Pinetree Drive, where we have lived for more than 20 years. We are writing to express our concerns about the proposed use of 620 Pinetree Drive as a lodginghouse.

We share the concerns that many neighbors have expressed, including immediate proximity to an elementary school; the prospective owner's intent to serve and allow alcohol across the street from that elementary school and to allow rentals by groups such as weddings (stated in her response to neighbors' questions); the property's inability to provide parking for the number of cars it will bring to Pinetree Drive (including guests in the 8 bedrooms, the resident manager, deliveries, etc.), let alone the parking of bicycles, garbage and recycling, etc.; the property's location on an already difficult and dangerous intersection with poor visibility from Pinetree for left turns onto Ponce de Leon, many cars doing daily drop-offs and pickups of children for the elementary school, and traffic into and out of downtown Decatur. These issues will have a significant negative effect on a residential neighborhood in Decatur.

Other questions include:

- The potential buyer's intention to have a "very upscale, high-end bed and breakfast notwithstanding, what is the full-range of what would be allowed under approval of 620 Pinetree's use as a "lodginghouse" if it turns out that the market will not bear room prices high enough to support the high investment of the property's purchase price plus the investment required to renovate the home's inside from 4 bedrooms/4 ½ baths to 9 bedrooms/9 ½ baths and to renovate the home's outside to provide additional parking (even inadequate) and meet ADA requirements?
- Although this potential buyer may intend "high-end," what about the next buyer if this property is approved now as a "lodginghouse"?
- If this property is approved as a lodginghouse, what does the precedent mean for the treatment of applications from other nearby homes? Will they too be approved despite proximity to an elementary school and other code issues?
- Concerns have been raised about the property's use as a "party house" (and the potential buyers heightened that concern with their statement of intended rentals to weddings). This is inconsistent with the Pinetree Drive residential neighborhood, raising the question of what City of Decatur regulations would address this concern and how would those regulations be enforced?

Many of the above-mentioned concerns and additional questions also stem from the proposal's seeming non-compliance with City regulations and ordinances. We urge you not to waive those regulations in order to approve this proposal. We understand that the City would like to have an upscale lodginghouse developed in the City, but we do not believe that this location or this particular property are appropriate for approval as a lodginghouse for the many reasons cited above, and others we have not detailed here but likely raised by other neighbors as well.

We also think it extremely unfortunate that this issue which will affect the Pinetree Drive neighborhood so significantly is being considered so quickly by the City of Decatur, and at the same time as the city-wide issue being discussed on October 11.

We are unable to attend the October 11 hearing, and want to convey our questions and concerns to you. We appreciate your consideration.

Thank you,

Irene and Walt Duhaime

644 Pinetree Drive

October 10, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I have concerns regarding the "Request for Conditional Use Permit for a Lodginghouse at 620 Pinetree Drive".

My main concern is PARKING. The Hampton Court Condominiums will be the most affected. Hampton Court (1974) is a Residential Development consisting of 16 homes (601-631 Pinetree Drive) with a very small footprint. The Decatur Fire Department has deemed 8 "suitable" parking spaces within Hampton Court so as not to interfere with any fire or emergency situation. All "resident" parking is asked to be in each garage and "guest/service person" parking should either be in the 8 available parking spaces within the development or on Pinetree Drive in front of the condominiums.

St. Thomas More Catholic Church is situated across the street. When the church is having a Mass, school activity, funeral, wedding, or any other church-related activity, their parking encroaches onto Pinetree Drive, sometimes as far as half-way down Pinetree Drive on both sides of the street. Some parents park on both sides of Pinetree Drive to wait and pick-up their children at dismissal time.

We have been informed that the Lodginghouse will have 4-6 parking spaces with an ADA-compliant space. Having looked at this property, I do not see where 4-6 parking spaces will be situated and have not been provided with any proposals. There is a 2-car garage located on the property. In the past, property set-backs and non-pervious calculations have been measured. In this particular case, have these calculations been made and will they become part of this "Lodginghouse Conditional Use Permit"?

We have heard of weddings being a part of this Lodginghouse. In such an event, parking would be dramatically impacted. Also, with weddings, sometimes comes alcohol. Will the serving of alcohol be allowed under this Conditional Permit?

Pinetree Drive is also a "cut-through street" from Scott Boulevard to Ponce de Leon Avenue. A traffic count could be astounding and 2 "traffic bumps" do not seem to hinder this street from being a "cut through". Cars parked at the end of Pinetree Drive greatly hinder the ability of being able to see oncoming traffic on Ponce de Leon.

I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to voice my concerns concerning this Permit. I also wish to thank you for serving in this Planning Commission capacity in order to keep the City of Decatur the wonderful place in which we live.

Cheryl Darnell
607 Pinetree Drive
Decatur, GA 30030

770-316-9152

815 Pinetree Dr
Decatur GA 30030
October 10 202

TO: Angela Threadgill and the Decatur Planning Commission
FROM: Christine Carroll and Maria Helena Dolan

As homeowners at 815 Pinetree Drive, we object to the proposed use of 620 Pinetree Drive as a lodging house. The proposed use will bring undesirable increases in traffic and on street parking, and may have adverse impacts on tree health, tree canopy, and storm drainage. Finally, the proposed use is not consistent with current private permanent housing on Pinetree Drive and Ponce de Leon Avenue. Economic conditions will support the sale of the property without a change of use.

TRAFFIC and PARKING IMPACT

Pinetree Drive already serves as an informal "overflow" parking lot for St. Thomas More Church. Generally four to eight cars are parked on Pinetree Drive during times when the church has services or school events. The applicants plan for 6 parking spaces, one occupied by the resident manager. They hope but cannot guarantee that some guests will arrive without cars. There is also no actual limitation on the number of cars each party can have; a couple occupying one bedroom could arrive separately, in two cars. The top number of the traffic generated could be 16 cars for guests, plus vehicles arriving with deliveries, cleaners, and cooks.

Pinetree Drive has no sidewalks. Vehicle ingress and egress to the lodging house as proposed will involve interactions with pedestrians as well as other cars. The street is used as a "cut through" between Ponce de Leon Avenue and Scott Boulevard by travelers, as well as by those living on Pinetree.

With this amount of traffic, plus the overflow we already experience, the cars parked on the street may stretch down Pinetree Drive very far from Ponce de Leon. This constitutes "an excessive and burdensome use of existing streets."

The plan to add parking on the lot necessitates additional impermeable surface. This property already has a great deal of impermeable surfaces: the home itself, a wide driveway, swimming pool in the rear, brick fence around the perimeter, and a wide concrete staircase from the front porch to Ponce de Leon Avenue. It is hard to see how more paving can be added without exceeding the allowed impermeable surface for this lot.

Furthermore, the addition of the circular driveway makes it likely that storm drainage from the parking lot will flow down the new driveway to the street below, bypassing the designated lot drainage area which is in the lawn at the corner of Pinetree and Ponce de Leon Ave.

TREE COVERAGE

Two healthy looking landscape trees are currently on the Pinetree side of the home, adjacent to the proposed onsite parking. It seems likely they may be adversely affected by the paving plans, or perhaps the new owner already plans to remove them. What plans are in place for replacing that tree canopy?

CONSISTENCY

The ordinance states that the proposal must be evaluated for "suitability" and "consistency." Clearly, the project is not "consistent" with all of the other uses on Pinetree Drive, now completely private long term residences. 620 Pinetree Drive is bordered exclusively for private homes on both sides and the rear. To our eyes, the proposed use is inconsistent and unsuitable.

CHANGING CONDITIONS

The current applicants are Decatur residents, and indeed live nearby. However, like all businesses, this one will in the future be sold to return a profit to its owners and investors. At that point, the owner is equally likely to be an out of state or foreign company. This will make it particularly difficult for the neighbors and the city to influence its business practices.

The proposed sale will be a windfall to the current owner. However, the property could undoubtedly find a buyer while maintaining its present use as a private home. The area is not depressed or undesirable to owner occupants or tenants. There is no indication that a change of use is necessary in order for the owner to sell the home, and it has been on the market only a month or two.

To: Decatur Planning Committee
From: Bill and Carol Rappold, 605 Pinetree Dr.
Re: Effects of rezoning 620 Pinetree Drive on a Decatur neighborhood

The people asking for rezoning of 620 Pinetree Dr. are suggesting this house will be an upscale bed and breakfast. This is playing games with the people in our neighborhood who will have to live with it's encroachment on their lives. There is a possibility that a simple bed and breakfast would offer few intrusions into our lives. A simple bed and breakfast is not the offering here. The current house will be irrevocably changed from a 4 to a 9 bedroom house. The grounds will be altered to accommodate more cars. The venue plans to host "mico" parties. **Essentially, we are getting a hotel.** And the hotel is being assembled on a very small lot. Wouldn't it stand to reason that there would be attendant difficulties?

1. **Party venue-** The Queen Bee will be in business to make money. Parties will be booked, to this end as often as possible. Will parties spill out into the yard, and perhaps into the street? It is one thing to monitor the behavior of some couples; it is quite another to monitor the behavior of many people, especially if they are drinking, and especially if you don't want to anger them. If there are disturbances, it's a real detriment to the well-being of the neighborhood people. **Isn't this, after all, a party venue you're considering for placement in a residential neighborhood?**

2. **Connecting** - People who bought homes on Pinetree were happy to get homes in Decatur, and happy to live in such an thriving community. Living in a community is more than good schools and nice restaurants. It's a connectedness that makes you feel part of something bigger- part of a social link which plays into your sense of well-being. You feel more relaxed where you live. It brings some joy to your life. However, living in a residential community that is invaded by a commercial enterprise can certainly mess up that well-being. Really, shouldn't people be entitled to peace and quiet and contentment in their own home?

3. **Safety-** We know our neighbors on Pinetree. Even if we don't know all their names, we see them out walking dogs or taking strolls. They're familiar faces. There will not be familiar faces at 620 if this rezoning goes through. Ten years ago the issue of safety wouldn't have entered my mind in Decatur, but times have changed. It's important to know your neighbor. Wouldn't you agree?

3. **Showcase disaster-** The Queen Bee will be magnificent in its appearance. It will be a showcase for the city. It will be a showcase for city officials. It will host for an elite population. But it will be a disaster for all residents near it. The Queen Bee, it would seem, wishes to emulate some other fine Georgia homes that have become elegant inns, but can it? The land that this property sits on is minuscule even compared to other large Decatur houses. There is no 'backyard' to turn into a parking lot. Where will the garbage go? One can envision seeing something like a parking lot on Pinetree Dr. and a line of trash cans and bags at the curb. That doesn't sound like a neighborhood. And what if the Queen Bee fails? (Not an usual question considering the times in which we live.) Don't you think the community would be in dire straits?

4. **Financial effects-** The provisions of zoning ordinances are developed to prevent the haphazard development of land, and to promote the general welfare. If a property use violates zoning ordinances, or appears to violate them in the eyes of prospective buyers, property values are diminished. For most of the citizens who live on Pinetree Drive, their homes constitute their largest asset. Is this to be risked?

5. **Neighborhood Aesthetics-** Pinetree Drive is an attractive street. The 620 project will have 9 rooms on a small lot. The house currently has 2 parking places. The plans revealed thus far add 4 more parking places. This would mean a spill-over of 3 cars just for guests. If you add cleaners, caterers and "mirco" party guests, where will the excess cars go? Are the additional parking spaces screened from the public? What is the impervious land ratio on the property?

I have worked on the committees that provided input for Decatur's next 10 year plan. I have heard many times of Decatur's wishes to build bike lanes, to build sidewalks, to decrease traffic and to include more affordable housing. All of this was to make Decatur a better place to live. Bed and breakfasts can fit into this plan. Quiet ones can be anywhere. More luxurious ones need large lots, like some homes on Sycamore, perhaps. But how does a rich hotel on a small plot in a residential community fit those plans?