

July 8, 2026

Dear Members of the Dane County Zoning & Land Regulation Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration of our Conditional Use Permit application for our property at 4437 Ridge Road.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the June 23 public hearing and would like to provide a few additional facts and photographs that we hope will assist the Committee as you deliberate.

As discussed during the hearing, the proposed accessory building itself has already been reviewed through the building permit process and found to comply with the applicable zoning requirements. The Conditional Use Permit application before the Committee concerns the proposed use of the building.

We also appreciate that the Town of Cottage Grove carefully reviewed this application, heard testimony from both supporters and opponents, and ultimately voted to approve the Conditional Use Permit.

Since the public hearing, we have voluntarily completed additional improvements to further address neighboring concerns regarding privacy and visual screening. Specifically, we have installed approximately **360 feet of privacy fencing** and planted approximately **500 feet of privacy trees** along the majority of our shared property lines. These improvements were completed entirely at our own expense because we genuinely want to be respectful neighbors and minimize any perceived impacts of this project.

The attached photographs provide additional context regarding the existing conditions surrounding our property and document the improvements completed since the public hearing.

Several photographs show the neighboring accessory building to the east, which was constructed a year or two ago that was shown at the public meeting. Because that property sits at a significantly higher elevation than ours, the building is a prominent feature from our front door, driveway, and portions of our property despite the existing berm and privacy fence. We include these photographs simply to provide context regarding the existing character of the area and the relationship between the neighboring properties.

Additional photographs – Exhibit C-F to demonstrate that our home and proposed building site have very limited visibility from Ridge Road and neighboring properties. We have also included Exhibit D illustrating the significant distance between the proposed building location and the neighboring property to the south.

We would also like to clarify the intended use of the proposed accessory building.

The building is intended to serve as an accessory use to our family residence. It will provide indoor storage for personal vehicles, boats, trailers, maintenance materials, a private home office, a bathroom, and recreational space for our four children. The project will improve the appearance of our property by moving items that are currently stored outdoors into an enclosed building.

Although we own and manage rental properties, renovation and maintenance work is performed at those properties—not at our residence. Most materials are delivered directly to the project sites, and we continue to lease warehouse space in Oregon, for larger inventory and supplies. The proposed building is not intended to serve as a commercial warehouse, contractor's yard, or business headquarters. Because much of the building will be occupied by vehicle storage, family recreation space, a bathroom, and office space, only limited room will remain for storage of smaller maintenance items such as appliances, flooring, plumbing fixtures, and similar supplies.

During the public hearing, concerns were raised regarding equipment located on our property. Like many rural property owners, we personally own equipment used to maintain our property and complete landscaping, grading, tree clearing, snow removal, and other improvement projects ourselves rather than hiring contractors. Our Bobcat and dump trailer are used for these residential purposes and do not change the residential character of our property.

We would also like to clarify that our full-time employee does not report to our residence. For approximately the past 2 years, he has reported directly to renovation projects in Jefferson County rather than our home. Likewise, the proposed building is not intended to generate customer traffic or employee parking associated with a commercial business.

Throughout this process, we have made every reasonable effort to respond to concerns raised by neighboring property owners. In addition to the fencing and landscaping improvements completed since the hearing, we continue to maintain the shared driveway at **our own expense**. We have consistently invested in improving our property while seeking practical solutions that preserve privacy, maintain compatibility with neighboring properties, and minimize potential impacts.

We recognize that neighboring property owners may have differing opinions regarding this application, and we respect those opinions. We respectfully ask the Committee to evaluate this application based on the applicable Conditional Use Permit standards, the evidence in the record, and the significant voluntary measures we have undertaken to address neighboring concerns.

We hope the Committee finds that the improvements completed since the public hearing demonstrate our continued commitment to being good neighbors while responsibly using and improving our property.

Thank you again for your time, your service to Dane County, and your thoughtful consideration of our application.

Respectfully,

Peter & Rachel Miller

Exhibit A: Existing accessory building on neighboring property to the east (view from our front door) shown at Public Meeting



Exhibit B: Existing accessory building on neighboring property to the east (view from our front porch) taken this week showing newly installed privacy fencing.



Exhibit C: View from Ridge Rd coming from North shown at public meeting (Corn blocking view to get updated picture)



Exhibit D: View from Ridge Road & Strawberry toward our property shown at Public meeting prior to fence install, also shows distance & view from neighboring property owner's residence to the south (currently corn is blocking fence/current view to get updated picture)



Exhibit E: Existing accessory building (view from driveway) -Shown at public meeting



Exhibit F: View of Existing Accessory Building from East shown at public meeting



Exhibit G: Newly installed privacy fencing on East property line



Exhibit H: Newly installed privacy fencing to the East



Exhibit I: Newly installed privacy fencing to the South



Exhibit J: Newly installed privacy fencing to the South looking towards West

