

Zoning Variance Request – 50 S Main St Suite 104
Case DEV-0103-2025
Formal Concern Submitted by Pure Barre Naperville

This notice serves in response to the zoning variance request under Section 6-7D-4, which would permit Barry's to operate on the first floor of the B4 zoning district at 50 S Main St, Suite 104—immediately adjacent to Evereve. Unlike Pure Barre, a locally owned franchise, Barry's is part of a larger corporate-owned chain. Barry's offers classes on the hour, similar to Pure Barre, and accommodates 20 to 50 participants per session, depending on studio size.

It is important to note that membership pricing at Barry's is projected to be approximately 65% higher than existing locally owned fitness studios downtown, including Pure Barre, Shyft Pilates, and Just Be Yoga. I will address the implications of this disparity in a subsequent discussion.

Our primary concerns as residents, business owners, employees, and visitors to downtown Naperville are:

- **Increased Congestion and Traffic:** With both studios conducting classes on the hour, we anticipate a significant rise in traffic volume on and around Main Street. This will exacerbate the ongoing parking challenges that impact our daily lives.
- **Parking Challenges:** The surge in class sessions will likely strain parking availability, affecting members, residents, nearby businesses, shoppers, and diners alike, ultimately diminishing the downtown experience.

In this notice, I will outline:

- The contributions of Pure Barre to our community
- Our concerns regarding the long-term viability of Barry's
- The parking issues affecting all stakeholders in downtown Naperville
- Feedback gathered from interested parties, highlighting the impact of this change on our community

Based on these considerations, I respectfully request that the zoning variance be denied to preserve the accessibility, safety, and overall quality of the downtown Naperville experience.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Kristy Gagovski at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Kristy Gagovski
Owner/Operator, Pure Barre Naperville

Pure Barre: Our History and Brand

Pure Barre has been an integral part of downtown Naperville's fitness community since 2014, when the original owner received a zoning variance to establish the studio on the first floor at 130 W Jefferson. I, along with my husband and son, have been residents of Naperville since 2012. In 2017, I purchased the studio and subsequently relocated it to the second floor. The move was initially driven by cost and a plan to move DryBar into our space; however, as the business rapidly expanded, we quickly outgrew the space. Following a second phase of construction, we increased our studio capacity, which temporarily met our needs.

Like many small businesses, we faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and had to adapt swiftly. Our previous landlord, Steve Rubin, was immensely supportive during this period and proposed utilizing both the parking lot and vacated Hanna Andersson space to host classes. This arrangement was vital in supporting the well-being of our staff and members, as the community yearned for social connection beyond the online livestream classes we offered daily. As we approached the conclusion of our five-year lease, it became clear that a move back to a first-floor location was necessary to accommodate our expanding retail and studio operations.

In April 2022, we relocated to 50 S Main St, Suite 112, with the intention of establishing a long-term presence in downtown Naperville. Since 2017, we have cultivated strong partnerships within the community. We have collaborated with several local businesses, including Blue Sushi Sake Grill, Adagio Tea, Amber Waves, Rowan, Kendra Scott, and Face Foundrie, supporting their events and marketing their services to our members. Additionally, we partner with North Central College annually to offer outdoor fitness classes on site and have served as the Total Body Sponsor at THRIVEFest in Naperville for the past two years. We have sponsored two downtown sculptures to date. We also sponsor the Elmwood Elementary School Fun Run annually and raise funds for local charities such as the Silver Lining Foundation, which provides free breast health testing through a network of community, advocacy, and healthcare organizations.

Our Fitness Offerings

Pure Barre offers a low-impact, high-intensity workout suitable for all fitness levels. In the original pre-read submitted by the petitioner Pure Barre was described as focusing on endurance, flexibility, and balance—with Barry's focusing on full-body conditioning, strength, and cardio. I have invested significant time and resources into building our brand within the Naperville community so I would like to clarify the nature of our offerings.

Pure Barre offers four primary class formats:

- Traditional Barre: Small movements targeting full-body toning and conditioning.



- Empower: Endurance, high-intensity interval training (HIIT), and cardio.
- Define: Functional strength training utilizing heavier weights.
- Align: Focused on strength, stretching, and balance.

Our classes incorporate equipment such as resistance bands, stability/resistance balls, hand weights, platforms for cardio, and sliders for Pilates-inspired floor exercises.

Demographic and Market Positioning

While it was previously suggested that Pure Barre primarily caters to an older demographic, our experience demonstrates that our membership base is diverse in age. Due to our low-impact format, members can enjoy the benefits of Pure Barre throughout their lives. Those who have experienced our classes understand that they are challenging, engaging, and adaptable across ages and fitness levels. The availability of four distinct class formats, with multiple sessions daily and over 50 classes weekly, allows us to meet the varied needs of our community effectively.

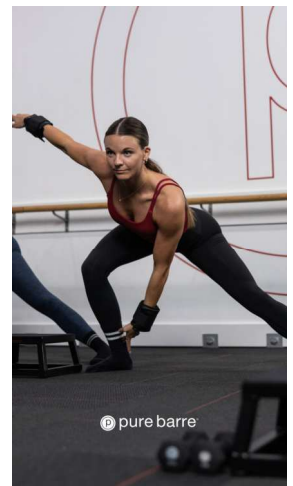
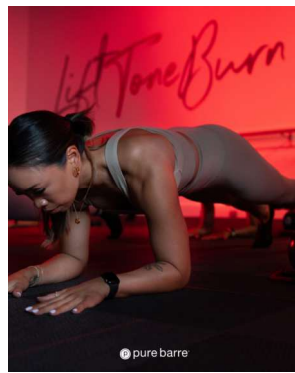
Comparison with Barry's

Although Barry's and Pure Barre differ in equipment and class structure—Barry's offering treadmills, whereas Pure Barre does not—the core elements of strength training and high-intensity cardio/HIIT are present in both brands. I have previously expressed my concerns regarding the similarities in class formats to Gregory Goldberg, Vice President and Senior Director of Leasing at Kite Realty, Katie Wood, Executive Director of Downtown Naperville, and Sara Kosinski of Naperville Planning. I have included images below that illustrate the competitive overlap between what Barry's offers and our offerings at Pure Barre.

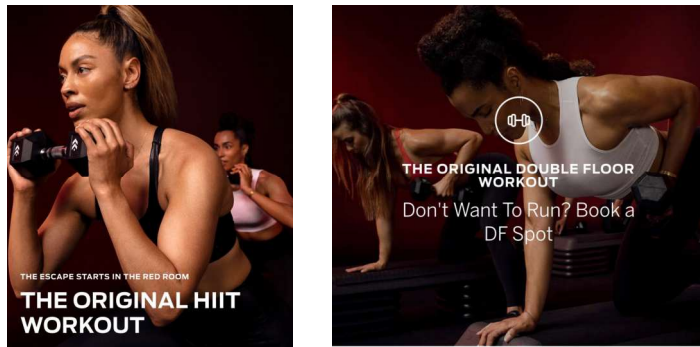
Pure Barre Define (functional strength training) and Empower (cardio/HIIT)

* We use a ballet barre for balance and as a tool for 20-30% of each class on average

* Each class format has different lighting schemes



Barry's marketing images showing similar exercises using heavier weights



Long-Term Sustainability Concerns for Downtown Naperville

The primary reason cited for membership cancellations at Pure Barre is cost. Notably, Bally's is projected to have membership rates approximately 65% higher than those of existing locally owned fitness studios in downtown Naperville, including Pure Barre, Shyft Pilates, and Just Be Yoga. This data stems from both national pricing benchmarks and local studio comparisons within Illinois. While Naperville has attracted larger corporations such as Apple and Ramsay's Kitchen, it is important to recognize that residents tend to be discerning and cost-conscious consumers who highly value quality and affordability.

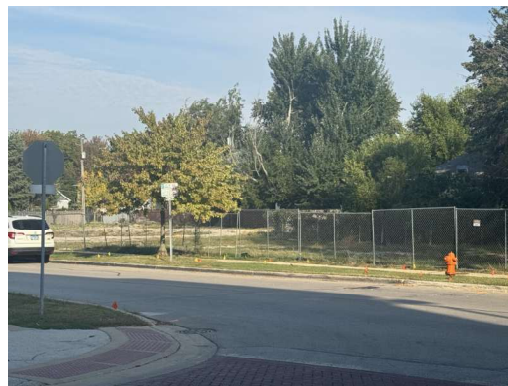
The elevated membership prices at Bally's not only place their offerings out of reach for many local families but also raise concerns about the long-term viability of such a business model within an already competitive market. In contrast, locally owned studios have fostered loyal memberships through accessible pricing, strong community relationships, and customized offerings tailored to the unique needs of Naperville residents. Approving a zoning variance for a high-priced, potentially less sustainable business could risk creating turnover in a key downtown location—potentially leaving behind another vacant storefront if the business struggles to attract enough paying members.

Downtown Naperville has experienced notable business turnover over the past ten years. While I cherish my location, it is significantly more expensive compared to surrounding areas with better parking facilities. I opted to remain in downtown because of its proximity to my home—a location where my husband and I frequently walk our dogs—and because my family's daily life revolves around this vibrant area. My son plays soccer at Central High School, and I had envisioned 50 S Main St as Pure Barre's permanent home, given its convenience and community focus.

It is disheartening to witness the closure of smaller, locally owned businesses. I sincerely hope that downtown Naperville and its landlords will consider maintaining a balanced mix of large and local businesses to preserve the area's diverse commercial landscape. While I understand the challenges Kite Realty faces in filling vacant spaces, introducing another fitness studio with similar group classes scheduled hourly would be disruptive to Pure Barre's operations. More critically, this could exacerbate existing congestion and parking issues in the downtown area. I

believe that these spaces could be better utilized for retail purposes or seasonal markets. Businesses such as Evereve, Anthropologie, and Lululemon—thriving retail establishments—are located nearby and contribute positively to the retail environment on the same block.

Lastly, I would appreciate clarity regarding the future plans for the lot across the street on Main Street, as well as the vacant lot on Franklin Avenue. Through conversations with employees in downtown Naperville including Lush, Evereve and Anthropologie, it's clear that there are existing parking challenges negatively affecting our business operations. I remain hopeful that downtown Naperville will continue to thoughtfully evolve, prioritizing the needs of current businesses and residents, while also considering future development to ensure a vibrant and sustainable community.



Parking Challenges in Downtown Naperville

As residents, business owners, employees, and visitors of downtown Naperville, our foremost concern is the increasing congestion and its impact on the community. Specific areas of concern include:

- S Main Street between W Franklin and Jefferson Avenue
- W Benton Street between S Webster Street and Washington Street
- W Van Buren Avenue between S Webster Street and Washington Street

This heightened congestion is expected to extend and affect surrounding streets such as Mill Street and Washington Street. To put this into perspective, Pure Barre, located just two doors down, conducts classes every hour starting as early as 5:45 a.m., with up to 25 participants per session. The addition of another fitness facility is projected to increase traffic volume per hour from approximately 25 to as many as 45-55 clients, not including staff. Such an increase would substantially amplify traffic flow during peak times, particularly after 9 a.m., when shops are preparing to open and visitor traffic begins to rise.

While a parking garage exists above the proposed site, it does not sufficiently address the anticipated surge in parking demand. During peak morning and evening class hours, parking will be heavily contested, creating competition with downtown employees, shoppers, and diners. The additional vehicle ingress and egress associated with increased traffic entering and exiting the garage could exacerbate existing backups at busy intersections. Furthermore, the coordinated arrival and departure of large groups of clients every hour will likely cause pedestrian congestion on sidewalks and crosswalks, posing safety risks and undermining the welcoming atmosphere that makes downtown Naperville attractive to residents and visitors alike.

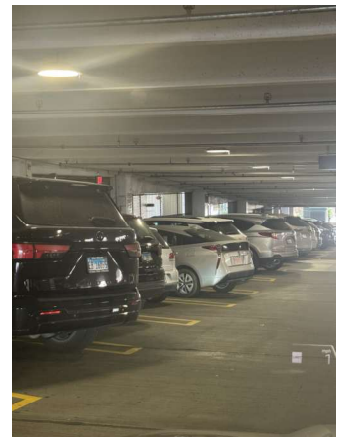
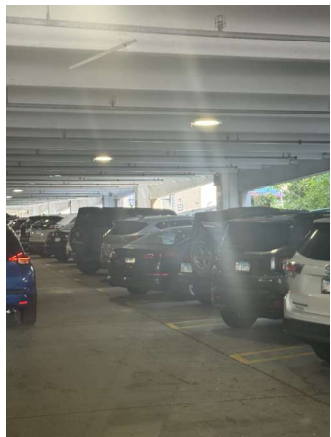
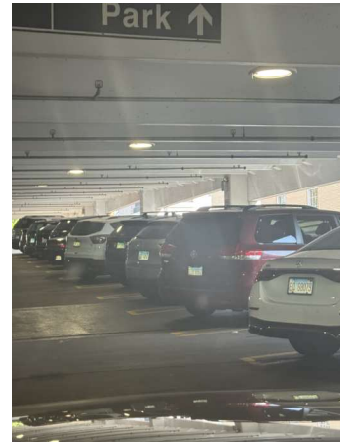
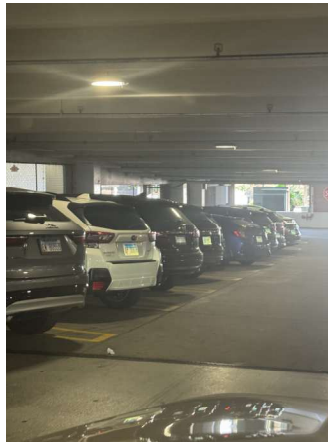
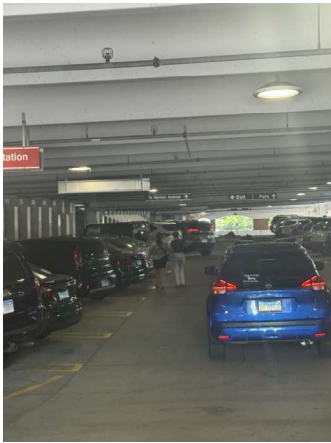
Many fitness studios do not permit late entry, which can cause frustration among members who may need to circle parking garages and arrive late, only to be turned away. This situation can negatively impact the customer experience and potentially harm overall business operations.

Please see the attached photos illustrating typical traffic patterns during peak class times for further context.

Friday, September 19th at 10:45am - Main Street surrounding neighborhood and outdoor parking lot at Van Buren are completely full. Pure Barre class is in session, businesses are open and shoppers are active.



Friday, September 19th at 11:00am - In the Van Buren parking garage the first and second floors are near capacity, with only 29 parking spots available on Level 2. Downtown is filling up with lunchtime patrons.



Saturday, September 20th at 8:30am



Data from City of Naperville website



Feedback from the Naperville Community

Upon learning of the hearing notice just two doors down, our members expressed concerns about how the proposed fitness facility might impact their experience in downtown Naperville. In response, we reached out to residents, business owners, employees, and visitors to gather their perspectives on this issue. As a result, numerous community members have reviewed our concerns and signed our petition in support of maintaining the current character and vibrancy of downtown. As of September 24th at 3:00pm 161 individuals have signed the petition. Here is a summary of the top five themes, complete data has been sent to the planning commission along with this document.

1. **Increased Traffic Congestion:** Many respondents expressed concerns that another fitness studio would exacerbate existing traffic congestion, particularly during peak class times.
2. **Inadequate Parking:** Numerous comments highlighted the already limited parking availability in downtown Naperville and how the new studio would make it even more difficult for residents, shoppers, and employees to find parking.
3. **Negative Impact on Local Businesses:** A significant theme was the concern that a new fitness studio would negatively impact existing local businesses, particularly Pure Barre, potentially leading to financial strain or closure.
4. **Unnecessary Congestion of Similar Services:** Some respondents felt that there was no need for two similar fitness studios so close to each other, suggesting that it would create unnecessary competition and congestion of services.

5. **Support for Pure Barre:** Several comments explicitly stated support for Pure Barre and its contributions to the community, emphasizing the desire to protect a valued local business.

While I sincerely appreciate the community's support, I remain pragmatic: if Barry's or a similar high-priced fitness center moves into this space and compromises the experience that draws residents and visitors to downtown Naperville, those members will have alternative fitness options available to them throughout the city.

In closing, I urge the city council to consider the broader impact of approving a zoning variance for a business that may not be sustainable in our community. Downtown Naperville's strength lies in its diverse mix of locally owned businesses and vibrant community atmosphere. Its success depends on thoughtful planning that prioritizes long-term sustainability and the needs of residents. I sincerely hope that you will support initiatives that preserve the unique character, accessibility, and safety of our beloved downtown—qualities that make Naperville truly special.