

To: Naperville Planning Services Team and Zoning Commission

I would first like to thank the Planning Services Team and Zoning Commission for taking the time to review my application and circumstances. My name is Tony Ducato and I live at 5615 Rosinweed Ln. in Naperville. I have lived in Naperville from my teen years and we have a family owned construction company- Reliable Home Improvements that is also located in Naperville.

Some background to my situation:

Last November, very near Thanksgiving, we had a life altering event that hit our family. My wife and 12 year old son were in the backyard with our two small dogs when a coyote jumped the 4' fence and mauled our Yorkie, Bella. The coyote mauled the dog in front of my wife and son and then jumped the fence back into the brush/forest area where my family heard our dog being eaten by multiple coyotes. To this day there is not a week that goes by that my son does not wake up from nightmares associated with this event. My wife has had to go on medication to help her sleep as she cannot erase the situation from her memory. This has been an extremely trying situation for myself and my family. As I'm sure you are aware, there is a MAJOR coyote problem in some parts of our town. Where I live, the south side in between 111th and 119th near Route 59 they are not only prevalent but not afraid of people. If we would have had any idea this was the case, we would never have moved to this subdivision three years ago. My family moved there because we loved the lot and the fact we had privacy because our lot backs up to no one. It simply backs up to a forest area with no houses behind. As pretty and tranquil as this is, it unfortunately allows for the coyote den that has been living there for the past two years. This den is very aggressive, not easily frightened. They would walk back and forth behind the fence, but we did not know they were able to jump it, and so easily.

Allow me to fast forward to spring of this year. This event made us consider moving but I talked my family into staying in the home and town we love and replacing the fence. So, in the spring I tore down our beautiful fence and put up a 6' wood privacy fence. This was VERY expensive as we have over a ½ acre lot. I was willing to take on this expense and inconvenience for the protection of my family and pets. The problem I am having is the grade behind the fence is raised and is taller than my yard. Along the back side it is about 1' higher and in the back-right corner (if you are standing in my back yard looking to the wooded area) it is about 1 ½' taller. Because of the grade issue, it is effectively making my 6' tall fence 5' or 4 ½' tall, depending on where you stand in the yard. Very recently my son found feces in our back yard that we believe was from a coyote. This was so alarming and scary to us I have trouble articulating it in this letter. My wife immediately broke down in tears and relived the entire incident.

What I think could cure the problem is if we can receive a variance to raise the back area of our fence that goes up to the forest area to 7' and the corner area (which is about 12-14' long) up to 8'. Please understand our yard backs up to nothing but nature. There would not be a person or house that could see the extension if you were gracious enough to give it. No ones views would be impeded in any way whatsoever. I know this is probably not the normal thing that would get approved but I am asking for the board to consider this extension affects no one but our family. Bella was a family member and a Ducato, losing her hurt like losing a person. We are thankful the coyotes did not get our other dog,

Benny as he ran to the house when this all happened. We have since got a new puppy, Molly, to keep Benny company. We would like to not only keep them safe but also my wife and three sons. I am very afraid if a coyote were to get back in (and we think they have) that they would go after my pets and my kids. This situation and now finding what we believe is coyote feces has made our backyard unlivable. I believe if we can get the fence raised to the appropriate height we could cure the problem and go back to a "normal" life.

I would also like to invite any board members out to the house so I can walk the property with them. I know if they see that the fence backs up to no one and inhibits nothing the variance can more easily be granted. Please feel free to call my cell at 630-712-7777 if I can answer any questions anyone might have. Thank you again for taking the time to review our application and circumstances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that tapers off to the right.

Anthony Ducato