

Village of Orland Park
14700 S Ravinia Ave.
Orland Park, IL 60462

February 3, 2025

Re: Variance Request for 14725 Holly Court
Homeowners: Marie and Tony Gudauskas

Dear Committee and Board Members,

My husband and I have lived in our house on Holly Court for 24 years. We met Marie and Tony Gudauskas a few years ago while out walking our dog and we became friends.

The loss of their home to fire was devastating. They lost everything.

To help Tony, Marie, and their dog Lyric, everyone in the neighborhood readily contributed to a collection for money. One neighbor set up a Go Fund Me page for them.

The current code creates yet another emotional hardship and undue suffering for Marie and Tony. We are wholeheartedly in support of the variance for side set back being granted. We feel the variance should be approved to allow them to rebuild on the home's original slab. We ask that the committee and board also support the variance.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Lori Mandenberg and Craig Mandenberg. Lori's signature is in cursive, and Craig's is in a mix of cursive and block letters.

Lori and Craig Mandenberg
10055 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL 60462

Celeste Kucharski
14731 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL 60462

February 21, 2025

RE: Variance application for 14725 Holly Court, Orland Park, IL

To whom it may concern:

My name is Celeste Kucharski. My husband (who passed in November of 2024) and I have lived at 14731 Holly Court, Orland Park since the home was built in 1968. We helped design the home, raised our two children in the home and, since my husband's passing, I continue to reside in the home.

Tony and Marie Gudauskas were, and are, our neighbors - literally our next door neighbors. We've known them for years and count ourselves lucky to have them next door. They have been so kind, so helpful from the time they moved in - they are truly ideal neighbors. I am, therefore, truly upset at what transpired in February of 2024.

My husband and I were awoken, on February 20, 2024 by the Orland Park Police Department pounding on our door. We were told that we had to leave our home immediately due to the fire at the Gudauskas' home. With the help of the Orland Park Police Department, we made it outside safely and watched in horror as our neighbors' and friends' home burned essentially to the ground. Our own home suffered damage as a result of the heat from the fire, but we were lucky to have minimal damage. I can only imagine their horror at the loss of their home, their memories, their possessions. And, I can tell you that I have keenly felt the loss of our neighbors in the year since.

Unfortunately a year has passed and the Gudauskas family are no closer to getting their home back. Everyday that I and the neighborhood pass a bare concrete foundation and the yard filling with weeds, we are reminded of the fear and loss of that night. Due to the changes in the building codes and ordinances, the Gudauskas family has been unable to rebuild their home and return to the lives they knew before the fire. Denying them the opportunity to rebuild, using the same footprint as their original home, has placed financial hardship on them and has continued to remind this neighborhood and us, as neighbors, of the fire that changed the Gudauskas family's lives forever.

I am in favor of allowing a variance to the building codes and ordinances in this instance, and ask that the Village of Orland Park allow for one. A variance would pose no harm to this neighborhood and, in fact, would benefit the neighborhood and its residents. I am asking that the Village of Orland Park allow the Gudauskas family to rebuild their home, using the original footprint. I am asking that the Village of Orland Park allow the Gudauskas family to return to some normalcy. I am asking that the Village of Orland Park allow this neighborhood, one which is one of the longest-standing neighborhoods in the Village, to return to its original design and use. We, I, want the neighborhood back, the one my husband and I moved into back in 1968.

Thank you for your consideration:

Celeste M. Kucharski

January 31, 2025

To: The Village of Orland Park,

My name is Marnie Loy. I live at 14717 Holly Court in Orland Park, IL. Next door to the Gudauskas family.

I have lived in my home for 12 ½ years. My home was built in 1956.

I am in support of the variance of the Gudauskas home that is next door to mine. I do not see it posing any harm to the neighborhood.

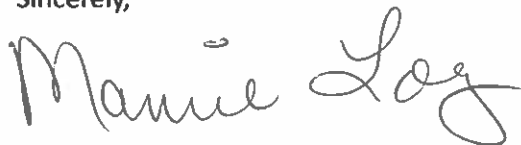
The fire that took place February of 2024 was unlike anything I have ever seen or experienced. I feel guilty mentioning the trauma my daughter and I experienced, compared to Marie and Tony, being woken up at 3:00 in the morning to fireman and police officers banging on our door. Running through our house trying to get our cats and take them with us. Crying and frantic. Standing outside in the cold watching the neighbor's house burn. What Marie and Tony went through and continue to go through, their devastation is unimaginable, and going through these additional challenges with the village to rebuild seem entirely unfair and unjust.

Marie and Tony have been great neighbors. Always there when I needed them, whether to borrow something or ask for their help. It has been strange and a sad reminder looking at an empty lot for so long now.

I think it is important to rebuild on the lot as it is right now. Although non-conforming, it follows that of the other houses on the block. As well as helps our block hold its original character and appeal.

We all just want things back to normal and a big part of that is having Tony and Marie back in their home, on their block, where they belong. I ask that the Village of Orland Park committee and board support the variance of the location of Tony and Marie Gudauskas home to be built, so they can put this tragedy behind them and start living in their home again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marnie Loy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Sincerely," text.

Marnie Loy

**Brian and Debra Biggs
14724 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL 60462**

January 28, 2025

Village of Orland Park
14700 S. Ravinia Ave.
Orland Park, IL 60462

Re: Tony & Marie Gudauskas
14725 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter is regarding Tony and Marie Gudauskas whose property was destroyed in a devastating fire last February. They have endured a hardship that no one should ever have to suffer, and I know they are anxious to rebuild and resume a "normal" life.

We have been neighbors with Tony and Marie since we moved in across the street (14724 Holly Ct) in 1999. They are wonderful people, great neighbors and we are very excited for them to rebuild their home and return to the neighborhood. Therefore, we have no objections whatsoever to the variance they are requesting from the Village. Since most of the homes in our neighborhood were built in the late 1960's and early 1970's, not only would it be appropriate for only the front portion of the house to have brick, it is the norm on these older homes. Also, their property is well spaced between the other neighbors' homes and granting the variance would maintain the character of our neighborhood.

I can't even begin to imagine how hard it would be to lose your home to fire, let alone not being allowed to rebuild it in a timely manner and be displaced for well over a year.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Kind regards,


Brian K. Biggs


Debra Biggs

February 22, 2025

Dear Orland Park Village Board and Committee Members:

We are Roy and Renee Crews. We have been Orland Park residents for 10 years, board members of the Orland Park Area Chamber of Commerce, and Renee served a term as Chamber President in 2018. We support Orland Park through and through. We have resided at 14716 Holly Court for over 6 years. Our home was built in 1967.

We are in support of the set-back variance for reasons we will outline below.

There are many unique home styles on our street. Understandably, times have changed, but the fact remains that if any one of us on our block had to rebuild, we would likely be up against this same issue.

Sadly, we lost our condo in Orland Park to a fire in a neighboring unit 8 years ago. When we saw Tony and Marie's home being consumed by the fire on February 20, 2024, it resurfaced many horrible memories for our family. What is amazing about our little block is that we all came together. It was freezing cold and 3:30 in the morning, but time stood still as we rallied to help our neighbors. This was second nature to do as Tony and Marie Gudauskas have been amazing neighbors. My daughter misses her visits with Lyric the dog and her chats with Marie. We miss our neighbors. They are thoughtful people who maintain their property and genuinely care about others in the neighborhood.

Regarding the side yard set-back, we do not believe it would alter the aesthetic of our locality as their home and several other homes on our block are also non-conforming for the side yard-setback.

Allowing this variance would not only return our neighborhood to its original character and charm, but it would also eliminate a big hazard for children in the area as we are right around the block from two schools. Having an open lot is not a good combination with curious kids and could result in serious injury if this is not resolved soon.

Again, we support the variance and request the committee and board do the same. Let's bring our neighbors home!

Sincerely,

Roy + Renee Crews

Arlene Wlazlo
14804 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL 60462

RE:Variance Application for 14725 Holly Court

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Arlene Wlazlo, I have been married for 23 years. My husband is Alex and I have 3 beautiful children Luke (22), Lillian (17), and Aiden (11). We have been living in Orland Park for over 12 years and we have been living on Holly Court for 8 of those years.

One day when I was out playing with my children we got to meet Marie and Tony. We hit it off quickly and we have been good friends since. Marie and Tony were the first family we met when we moved to Holly Court and it has been a privilege and honor getting to know the Gudauskas.

So on February 20th 2024 around 3:10am I heard a huge "boom" (explosion) and I woke up my husband and ran to the window. Tony and Marie's house was engulfed in flames. I have never seen such horror in my life. I ran outside to see where Marie and Tony were.(Thank the Lord they got out ok.) But I heard screaming from Marie "MY HOUSE!!" I asked where Tony and Lyric were and she said they got out but "I couldn't save my pet turtle Pete or my 2 cats." She was devastated!! We watched this happen and just couldn't shake that this wasn't a movie it was in fact REAL!

When things died down a neighbor and I decided to put together a GoFund Me account to help our friends. They received a lot of donations from all over but just isn't enough and will never be enough.

Now a year later Tony and Marie's vacant lot stands only. Tony and Marie live a nightmare losing their home and live it every single day that their rebuilding process gets delayed. They want to rebuild their home on the same foundation that their original home stood on for 57 years. With the Village of Orland Park having new building codes and ordinance, it should only apply with new builds with new foundations, not original foundations.

I, and the neighbors on Holly Court are eager to have our neighborhood back to normal. Tony and Marie deserve to be back into their home on Holly Court with the rest of us. I ask the Village of Orland Park to accept the variance of their location. Tony and Marie are wonderful people. Lets have them home again where they are the happiest!

Arlene Wlazlo

Jeff Adduci
14825 Holly Ct
Orland Park, IL, 60462
2/21/2025

Re: Variance Application for 14725 Holly Ct

Hello, my name is Jeff Adduci, I grew up in Palos Heights and have been a resident of Orland Park since mid-2018 in a home built in 1971. I'd like to express my strong support in favor of the variance for Marie and Tony's house rebuild at 14725 Holly Ct.

Kaitlyn (my fiancée) and I met Marie while we were both walking our dogs around the neighborhood. Over the next year Marie and Lyric, the Gudauskas' family dog, would stop by our house almost daily to chat and have our dogs play together. What started as friendly conversation between neighbors grew into a valued friendship and close neighborly bond.

Early in the morning of February 20th, 2024, Kaitlyn and I were awoken by our dog who seemed to be panicking which was very out of character for him. After we heard a loud "boom" we opened our window to see flames surging from a house just a few hundred feet away. As we were abruptly woken up, we were not aware of which house was on fire, but Kaitlyn immediately called Marie to warn her of the danger. It was at that moment we realized it was Marie and Tony's house which was on fire. It took hours to put out the blaze and the Gudauskas' home was unrecognizable. Neighbors across the street had helped by giving them a warm place to stay immediately after the incident, but there is only so much a neighbor can do in the face of such devastation. In the proceeding days, donations of money were made by friends and neighbors to help support them as physical donations could not be stored anywhere. In an instant, their lives were turned upside down.

Now, a year later, there stands a bare concrete foundation among a row of homes built 50+ years ago that have stood the test of time. Over the course of those 50 years, new ordinances and building codes have been passed which are currently affecting the Gudauskas' efforts to rebuild their home; a home which would sit atop the exact same footing that it was built on 57 years ago. By denying the family the opportunity to rebuild their home where it stood without issue for 57 years, the Village or Orland Park is placing an undue financial burden on a set of longtime residents whose only wish is to regain the stability that a home brings; the stability they had prior to February 20th, 2024.

I, and the other neighbors of Holly Court, am eager to have the Gudauskas family back on the block and have a home rebuilt on our street. By approving this variance to build a home upon the same footprint it stood before, the Village or Orland Park would not only be restoring Marie and Tony's loss but would be restoring one of the longest-standing neighborhoods in Orland to its original design.



Jeff Adduci

708-712-6165

Lynnette Kucharski
14705 Holly Court
Orland Park, IL 60462

February 21, 2025

RE: Variance application for 14725 Holly Court, Orland Park, IL

To the Village of Orland Park:

My name is Lynnette Kucharski. I currently live at the above address, and have since buying my home in 2021. Before that, I lived for the first 24 years of my life at 14731 Holly Court, Orland Park. This is my hometown and this is the block I grew up on.

Tony and Marie Gudauskas are my parents' next door neighbors. They are now my neighbors too. I count them as dear friends, friends I got to know while visiting my parents, and it's a friendship that was solidified when I moved back to the block. They are a part of the heart of this neighborhood, and since they have been displaced by the fire that took their home, they have been sorely missed.

I was awoken the morning of 2.20.24 by my Mother. She had walked down the block to tell me about the fire at the Gudauskas home. I followed her back toward her and my father's home and was overwhelmed by the site. I watched in horror as my friends' home burned and felt helpless - there was nothing I could do to help, except lend support and give a hug. And I have felt helpless every day since then, as I've watched Marie and Tony struggle to get their home rebuilt. Their absence has left a hole quite literally, in the middle of the neighborhood.

Sadly a year has passed and Tony and Marie are STILL struggling to get their home back. Because of changes in building codes and ordinances in the 50 plus years since their home was built, the neighborhood suffers the blight of a bare concrete foundation and burned vegetation. You can smell the char of the fire during the warmer months, reminding all of us again of the devastation of that night. Tony and Marie Gudauskas have been unable to rebuild their home and their lives remain in flux. Continuing to deny Tony and Marie the opportunity to rebuild, using the same footprint as their original home, places undue financial hardship on them, and continues to effect the psyche of the neighborhood. Not to mention, the impact on property values in the neighborhood.

I am asking that the Village of Orland Park allow a variance in favor of the Gudauskas family in this case. A variance poses no harm to this neighborhood. Allowing the Gudauskas family to rebuild, in fact, is a tangible benefit to the neighborhood by literally filling a hole that has existed here since February of 2024. Tony and Marie should be allowed to rebuild, using the original foundation and footprint of their home. Only by doing that, can this neighborhood be restored to it's original look and its original use. This is my hometown and this is the block I grew up on...and I am asking that the Village of Orland Park give that back to us.

Thank you for your time:

Lynnette Kucharski
773-416-4662