



krakora  
studios

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July 17, 2013  
City of Madison  
Dept of Planning & Community  
&Economic Development and Zoning

To Whom It May Concern,

We are Mike and Heather Krakora and we live at and own 1634 Baker Ave. in Madison. We are writing to inform you of our intent to build an accessory building on our property where we can operate our photography business. We will be applying for a conditional use permit to have our business located in the accessory building and to allow our clients inside. One last part of the conditional use permit is the request to allow 120 sqft. more space than the allowed 800 sqft. foot print. This will allow us to better meet the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements while maintaining important meeting and storage spaces that are critical for us to operate our business.

We are the owners of Krakora Studios, a photography business that we started in 2002. It has taken many forms over the years, from working at home in the beginning to our current studio located on Monroe Street. Monroe St. has been a wonderful location for our business as it has helped us to grow and create a welcoming space for our clients. We are a low volume, high quality small boutique studio where we have photographed primarily weddings as well as high school and family portraits over the years.

Due to the increasing rental rates in Madison we are facing a greater economic burden to maintain our studio location which is essential for our business model. Building a studio on our property will allow us to greatly reduce our overhead expenses while maintaining our low volume, high quality boutique studio. Also we are fearful of the impact that the future planned Monroe Street repaving project, as well as the redevelopment of the service station at the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Street, will have on our business. Our studio is next door to the planned development and the construction noise will create a serious disruption during our hours of operation at a time of the year when we are at our busiest.

Being a low volume business, we meet with clients by appointment only. We will maintain standard work hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. At times we will need an exception to this schedule for an after hours meeting to meet some of our clients schedule restrictions. We plan on limiting this exception to one (1) evening per week. At the most we have two clients a day as well as a UPS and FEDEX truck a couple times a week so we will not have a lot of vehicle traffic. Also the majority of our photography work is conducted off premises so we will have little outside noise to disrupt the neighborhood. We do not require any signage for our business and our intent is to create as little disruption as possible.

We live on an amazing property and we are in love with the land as well as the neighborhood. It is also nice to live next door to Heather's parents at 1626 Baker Ave., as we have a lot of fun with them and our 11 and 8 year old boys love being able to see their grandparents whenever they would like. Having just under an acre of property allows us to have this building built far enough away from our

home as well as other homes to ensure the privacy of everyone. The area is very overgrown as you can see from the included images. Our intent is to professionally landscape the property to increase its visual appeal while preserving as many current non-invasive trees and plants as possible. We will also be conducting a multi-stage planned removal of any invasive species found on the property and working with a certified arborist and registered landscape designer to enact these plans.

We are working with JG Development, Inc. of Blue Mounds, [www.jgdevelopment.com](http://www.jgdevelopment.com), to create our design for the project and to handle the construction of the building. They are a very reputable company with many great completed projects in the Madison community. They have great resources for eco-friendly materials and are presenting ideas to maintain the secluded nature of the property and to help it blend into the surroundings. While the accessory building will be built in a different style than our home, the style it is not out of character for other homes in the Spring Harbor area and it will be built with materials creating a visually appealing building of lasting quality.

Lastly this information is more on a personal note for why this is an important project for us and our family. Last year in September, Heather ruptured two discs in her lower back and was found to also have a tumor in her spine just millimeters below her central nervous system. The tumor was benign, but very rare. She is one of six documented cases in the world. The discs were repaired and the tumor was removed in December and things are much better. However, the nature of this kind of spinal tumor is that there is a chance for reoccurrence anywhere in the spine or brain so she will have to have MRIs to watch for any new tumors for the remaining part of her life.

This has been a life changing experience for our family and has forced us to re-evaluate our business-family-life balance. We have decided to eliminate weddings and to concentrate more on families, high school seniors and dog photography as well as exploring the more fine art side of photography in regards to editorial and lifestyle photography for commercial business applications.

Our dream is to build a studio retreat in the furthest allowable corner of our property. We want to create an escape for our clients as well as have the ability to work at home, but to still keep the business separate enough from our home life. We truly feel that having our studio on Baker Avenue will not only enhance our lives, but also the lives of the families who choose to have us document them. What this last year has taught us is that life is incredibly short. You should do what you love and help remind others what makes everyone's lives so special and unique. If we are able to do that on our property and through our photography, then we are living our lives to the fullest.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mike + Heather Krakora

Owners of 1634 Baker Ave