

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** catherine horne [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 5:16 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman; Sara Hutson  
**Subject:** Forward to CC

Good day. I am in full support of the CRCC(??) recommendation regarding building height. I trust their work and judgement and believe this will stop the abuses and excessive heights.

That said, I am disturbed by former Council Member Wendy Hundley's and Ryan Clinton's misleading newsletters and emails regarding height.

I live on a flat lot and have a home that does not exceed 35ft and cannot for the life of me understand why everyone is upset about the proposed changes. A sloped lot gains an additional 10 ft of height for a house- seen or unseen from the street depending on lot location. I don't have this option because I am on a flat lot. I think that specific difference between a sloped lot and flat lot has been ignored. We dont all have that option so those who have a sloped lot have more options than the majority of lots do.

I would ask the City to work to put together a one page explanation of the changes in layman's terms with diagrams. In addition it might be in the cities best interest to meet with local realtors and builders to explain the info. There is so much misinformation and crazy scare tactics about not being able to build and most restrictive city which is clearly not the case. Rollingwood has liberal building codes and none of this is negatively impacting your value. A less desirable lots value may be more negatively impacted by market conditions because people aren't willing to pay extremes for the neighborhood- that may be the issue that building code changes cannot fix.

Again I fully support the work of the Committee and I hope that the City Council will support their efforts and time spent on this issue.

Thank you!

Catherine Horne

Sent from my iPhone

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Danielle Hasso [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 4:48 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Opposition to parallel plane proposal

Hi Ashley,

Can you please forward my input to the council and planning and zoning committee regarding tonight's discussion of the parallel plane proposal?

I am against the parallel plane proposal.

I believe it puts an unnecessary and unfair burden on sloped properties and decreases the value of those lots after families have already purchased them. Sloped lots are already trickier and more costly to build on and applying the same parallel plane rules to flat and sloped lots negatively and unfairly impacts owners of sloped lots. This is not an equitable solution.

The other issue I foresee is enforcement. Since the measurements would be different at each centimeter. This leaves room for some properties (likely sloped lots) to be overly scrutinized, delaying build time and costing money, while others (flat lots) would likely breeze through. When any lot's building height compliance is called into question it will likely cost the city and homeowner a lot of time, money, energy, and frustration.

Here are some alternate proposals I've read that I would be much more in favor of:

(1) have a different maximum roof height for flat-roofed homes than for sloped-roof homes. This is a common practice in other cities.

(2) eliminate 4-story homes - restrict homes to 3 stories

(3) require wall "articulation"

(4) encourage natural barriers between homes, especially those with large elevation changes between them

Impose the same regulations on all lots so it's equitable.

Thanks for your time!

Warmly,  
Danielle Hasso

Sent from my iPhone

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Dave [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 10:51 AM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Fwd: Urgently Request Your Support for Building Height Recommendation

Ashley

Not sure if this got to anyone else. Please add it to CRCRC emails and/or otherwise distribute appropriately. More may be coming.

Best  
Dave

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** "Kathy Borth" <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** "Dave" <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 10:43:11 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Urgently Request Your Support for Building Height Recommendation

I support the parallel plane provision as written in the revised building codes.  
Our city has become a hodge podge of white, flat roof boxes which enable maximum height. And are visually unappealing to most.

I wonder also about the height ladders which our fire fighters use: are they adequate to 35'?

Kathy Borth  
[REDACTED]

On Sep 4, 2024, at 9:20 AM, Dave <[REDACTED]> wrote:

BQ\_BEGIN

Dear Fellow Rollingwood Citizen,

This note urgently requests your written support for the Comprehensive Residential Code Review Committee (CRCRC) building height recommendation that reigns-in future new-builds that overwhelm the lots on which that they are built, reduces the privacy issues that massive new-builds create and promotes neighborhood aesthetic harmony without affecting property values.

Some time ago you expressed to Rollingwood City Council, Planning & Zoning or some other Rollingwood government entity your concern about the size and in particular the height of homes that are presently being built in Rollingwood. Your input and the input of others caused City Council to create the CRCRC whose charge is to review the current building codes for fitness. A CRCRC survey gathered public opinion from over 270 residents representing 218 or roughly half of the households in Rollingwood. On the issue of building height, the CRCRC found that the majority responses were in favor of keeping the current 35-foot limit, but that steps need to be taken to prevent it from being exceeded.

Under the current code, a building is allowed up to an additional 10 feet of height if the elevation difference across a lot's buildable area exceeds 10 feet. If the elevation difference is 7 feet, then an additional 7 feet of height is allowed; and so on. In recent years, a few developers "gamed" the system to create slope that wasn't originally there resulting in "outlier" homes whose height and mass exceed the limit of what should have been reasonably built and thereby robbing the neighborhood of privacy and aesthetic harmony.

The certified architects on the CRCRC looked at the building codes of many cities across the country whose slope considerations are similar to Rollingwood's. They found that a number of municipalities restrict building heights to a set maximum by using a measurement method that follows the natural slope rather than "gaming" it. The method, called "parallel plane", is what CRCRC recommends.

There are a few vocal opponents to the CRCRC recommendation. They make the case that restricting to 35 feet is unfair to sloped lots and so they recommend other methods that average lot slope to provide additional height above 35 feet. The CRCRC view is that 35 feet is a generous height that is greater than the allowable of any other nearby municipality, including Austin, Westlake Hills or Lakeway. Designing a home using parallel plane is not difficult even for those lots that are severely sloped and will help spare neighborhoods of the privacy and the building disharmony issues that they have recently experienced when an overwhelmingly oversized house is built next door.

I ask that you urgently email your support for the CRCRC parallel plane recommendation to the mayor and one or more of our City Council members. Find email addresses below. Please also copy Ashley Wayman, the City Administrator.

Mayor Gavin Massingill [ <mailto:gmassingill@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [gmassingill@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:gmassingill@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

Council Members Brook Brown [ <mailto:bbrown@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [bbrown@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:bbrown@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

Kevin Glasheen [ <mailto:kglasheen@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [kglasheen@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:kglasheen@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

Sara Hutson [ <mailto:shutson@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [shutson@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:shutson@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

Phil McDuffee [ <mailto:pmcduffee@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [pmcduffee@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:pmcduffee@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

Alec Robinson [ <mailto:arobinson@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [arobinson@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:arobinson@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

City Administrator Ashley Wayman [ <mailto:awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov> | [awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov) ]

There is a joint meeting of City Council, P&Z and CRCRC scheduled for this evening 9/4/24 at 6:00pm where the issue of building height measurement will be discussed. You are invited to stop by and hear the arguments for and against the CRCRC proposal. No official action will be taken until a formal public hearing has been held.

The CRCRC and I appreciate your help with this. We've been working hard on this issue for well over a year and are excited to see our recommendation come to fruition but we need your voice. Feel free to share this note with your neighbors.

Sincerely,

Dave Bench

CRCRC Chair

BQ\_END

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Maria Abernathy <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 1:58 PM  
**To:** Gavin Massingill; Sara Hutson; Brook Brown; Kevin Glasheen; Phil McDuffee; Alec Robinson; Ashley Wayman  
**Cc:** DC Bench  
**Subject:** In support of the CRCRC

Although I cannot attend the joint Council/P&Z/CRCRC meeting tonight, I want to register my great appreciation for the work done by CRCRC members regarding a building height ordinance, enforcement recommendations, and a stronger tree canopy ordinance.

Every one of the CRCRC members is a highly educated and busy professional, and they most generously donated months of their personal time to improve our shared space in this small city. I commend them for surveying every citizen who wished to comment, for analyzing the desires expressed, and for formulating proposed ordinances to protect the natural beauty and the privacy which so many of us value here. I doubt that any of the CRCRC members will benefit financially from these new ordinances. I hope that we will examine the motives of those who disparage their work.

Thank you to all involved in these efforts - CRCRC, City Council, and P&Z.

Maria Abernathy  
Rollingwood resident since 1979

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Michael Connors <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 1:28 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Cc:** Connors, Megan (US - Austin)  
**Subject:** Rollingwood meeting tonight - my opposition

Hi -

I am the owner of 2514 Timberline Drive and wanted to oppose what has been referred to as the "parallel plane" method of measuring building height.

We have one of the most sloped lots in Rollingwood and if that method were to be used on our house, our house would not be built / designed to meet our needs.

We believe we have designed a house that is aesthetically pleasing, meets the current code outlined by Rollingwood, and others should do the same under the current code.

My point is:

Let's hold people to the current code and/or adjust the code ever so slightly so that we balance the needs of Rollingwood residents and not put us in a position of extreme rules/codes.

Let's rely on research and analysis as other cities have had these same conversations for years - let's use research and analysis to guide us and not the opinion of just a few.

I cannot make this meeting tonight and hope that my email/point is heard.

Thanks.  
Mike



## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** robert turner <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 12:05 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Proposed RW Building Restrictions -- Meeting Tonight

Hi Ashely -

Would you be so kind as to forward my comments to the Council and P&Z

I am **IN FAVOR** of altering our height ordinance to reign in the worst case scenarios.

I am **NOT IN FAVOR** of the parallel plan method..... and would suggest that we adopt a single fixed point that the majority of cities in America use.

We should adopt with something that is tried and true, is both simply to calculate and enforce and is equitably applied to ALL lots thru out the city.

All the best..... Bob

=====

Robert Turner  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Ronald Hasso <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 11:16 AM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** CRCRC Height Limit Proposal

Hi Ashley,

Please forward my email to Council and P&Z.

I am strongly against the CRCRC's  
Parallel Plane height-limit proposal.

The Parallel Plane method of height determination is extremely unfair to those in our city with sloped lots and far too restrictive in general.

This proposal is not in the best interests of our city and our residents.

Thank you,

Ronald Hasso

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Terri McCabe <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 11:48 AM  
**To:** Phil McDuffee; Ashley Wayman; Kevin Glasheen  
**Cc:** Philip Ellis  
**Subject:** Restrict Rollingwood Building heights

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

I (we) vote restricted building heights. Parallel plane. Stop allowing builders to game the system. Respect the neighbors and aesthetics by following the intentional restrictions.

Best,

Terri McCabe  
4704 Timberline  
[REDACTED]

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Virginia Bettis <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 10:44 AM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Fwd: Height ordinance discussion

Hi Ashley, this is Virginia Bettis.

I'm out of the country, but I did receive an email about this and would like to ask if you would please forward this to the council and to P&Z.

I appreciate your help. Thank you

We have not changed our position on this because it is not in our best interest for where we live. Thank you very much.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Virginia Bettis <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Tue, Jul 16, 2024 at 8:03 PM  
**Subject:** Height ordinance discussion  
**To:** Gavin Massingill <[gmassingill@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:gmassingill@rollingwoodtx.gov)>, <[arobinson@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:arobinson@rollingwoodtx.gov)>, <[bbrown@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:bbrown@rollingwoodtx.gov)>, <[kglasheen@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:kglasheen@rollingwoodtx.gov)>, <[pmcduffee@rollingwoodtx.com](mailto:pmcduffee@rollingwoodtx.com)>, <[shutson@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:shutson@rollingwoodtx.gov)>

Hi everyone,

This is Jim and Virginia Bettis on Timberline Drive. We have lived in Rollingwood since 1985.

We love it here, we are retired, and inevitably our home will be sold at some point in the future.

- Because our home is on a significant slope, it will be negatively impacted by the "parallel plane" proposal because it reduces the buildable volume of sloped lots, although it has no effect on flat lots.

- Reducing the buildable volume will reduce our homesite's value at time of sale.

- The unspecified "Special exception" Language may ultimately help someone escape the problems with the parallel plane proposal, but the fact that it has no guidelines makes this application very unpredictable.

No one can know when looking at our lot, whether they will or won't be granted a special exception.

Why would a future potential buyer take on the headache of not knowing if they can build a great flat home on our lot if they can buy a flat lot and build one there instead?

These are Our concerns.

Thank you,

*Virginia and Jim Bettis*

4712 Timberline Dr, Rollingwood, TX 78746

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Jesse Butler <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 5, 2024 12:42 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Building Restrictions on Parallel Plane Proposal

Hello. Ashley,

We would like to give input on tonight's meeting regarding building height restrictions. We agree with the recommendations made by Ryan Clinton regarding not using parallel plane guidelines. We believe that it is important to have equity between construction guidelines for both flat and sloped lots.

We appreciate your service to Rollingwood.

Regards,

Diane and Jess Butler  
4822 Rollingwood Drive

## Ashley Wayman

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**From:** Danielle Hasso <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 6, 2024 8:49 AM  
**To:** Alex Robinette  
**Cc:** Ashley Wayman  
**Subject:** Re: Opposition to parallel plane proposal

Hi Alex,

I want to thank you again for your time, research, and dedication to trying to find a solution that works for most. It's really apparent from hearing you talk and from your replies that you truly have thought through the nuances. I appreciate you taking the time to reply to me so thoroughly as I know you've probably received a number of comments. I'm sorry that you and the CRCRC have gotten so much animosity and I greatly appreciate you all volunteering for these roles. You didn't create these problems, you've just volunteered to try to help solve and prevent them. I think that's important for people to remember.

As I mentioned in my communication with you, it's not my home I'm concerned for. I was concerned specifically for friends and neighbors with tricky lots (ie Ryan Clinton). We used to live at 4814 Timberline Dr and there's a few other lots as you come down that steep hill that I was thinking about.

This idea that the building could be higher in the middle sounds like a nice compromise. I also think it's worth considering a height adjustment for slope. Or, the idea of the fixed point with a parallel plane cap. I'm not the expert nor have I put in the amount of time, energy, and effort that you all have. I would support something that sort of gives a little back to some houses with major slopes.

I listened to the part of the meeting last night that spoke to building heights in it's entirety. I think the objective, guaranteed, special exceptions are another great way to ensure some of the trickier lots are being considered. I know it would be tricky to make the whole code revolve around a few specific properties. As is the same with the ones that are trying to be sort of prevented in the future like with Park Hills.

I wanted to also echo Brook's sentiment that for the lay-person the survey was a bit confusing. As you mentioned, Alex the problems and solutions are more complex than a simple question on a survey. So I appreciate your consideration of the responses but I'm not even sure what I said or if I'd still agree with myself today.

Thanks for explaining your thoughts on the natural barriers and the wall articulation. Having heard them, I agree with not having it in there. If people were in support I wonder if it could be something more like Asheville did where it's not a requirement but something you could do to be allowed to build a few extra feet. As I was thinking through the natural barriers I was reminded that at our old house our screen trees died 2 years in a row in the freezes. The third time we planted the trees have survived, but each winter they struggle and sometimes have to be cut down to a certain point to grow back.

Thank you again for your time.

Warmly,  
Danielle Hasso

P.S. I took Ronald off because I did not want to speak for him/these opinions are my own. Ashley, feel free to forward on to the rest of CRCRC, P&Z, and Council.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 5, 2024, at 3:50 PM, Alexandra Robinette <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Ashley,

Can you please forward to Council, P&Z, and CRCRC members.

Thank you!  
Alex

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Hi Danielle and Ronald,

Thank you very much for taking the time to share your thoughts and concerns about current building height measurement recommendations. I can assure you that every effort we have made has been primarily focused on sloped lots and how best to address the concerns.

I first want to mention that if your concerns pertain to your own home and whether or not you could have built it under proposed rules - I've reviewed your plans with Nikki at the city and found that your current design, including how it is sited, would work within the parallel plane concept.

Reference Datum is 650

Max Allowable Ht. is 685 (650 + 35)

The site plan indicates existing grade is 646-648 below the highest point of your roof.

It appears your max ridgeline is actually about 2' lower than max allowed, according to your plans and RW rules, so around 683.

We simply subtract the existing grades below, from the ridgeline above:  $683 - 648 = 35'$

I used 648 because this is an area that will require interpretation (as all contours do) and we want to allow flexibility for ridge lines vs flat roofs:

Common practice has been to use either average grade, or average of major building corners, or the RW hybrid-approach, where a single datum point becomes the reference datum. An increasing number of US cities are starting to consider average ground plane surrounding the home as the reference datum, in particular where there is notable grade change. I've spoken with a number of planners around the country about this trend, with a focus on cities of similar size, topography, economics, and adjacencies to major growing cities.

The City of Westlake Hills uses the same height measurement method we are proposing, without referring to "parallel plane", which seems to cause a lot of confusion and false assumptions. It's fair to conclude that local architects are working in both locations and will be familiar and comfortable with the process. We've also been discussing issues and concerns with RW staff in each of our meetings, as well as one on one for the last 18 months.

Regarding your other bullet points:

- We already have a different set of measurements for roof types, even though the survey did not really support it, we felt as you do, that they should be treated differently.
- We haven't really seen any examples of 4-stories in RW. There is one home with a below-grade garage which might constitute a 4th story, but we are trying a more encompassing approach that would take care of that. That doesn't mean we can't throw it in there, I just think the overall height takes care of what you can realistically build. One thing to consider is that on a steeply sloping lot, you can end up with multiple levels if you chose, and provided they don't exceed the maximum height, you can end up with 4 levels or stories, just not "stacked".
- Wall articulation has been a topic of lengthy discussion and consideration, many examples of code language for this in other cities have been noted in our packets. We tabled it for now, but with sufficient interest we are happy to put it back on our agenda. We try to tread carefully!
- We agree with natural barriers - we've tried to address that with the tree ordinance, and it would be nice to have some protections for the impacts to setbacks overall, like with excessive grading up to the property line that removes all the existing natural barrier. It's also challenging if someone builds up their foundation, and the neighbor sits below, it's hard to screen - and who pays for it? But yes, everyone would like to have a sense of privacy by use of natural barriers.

We are getting very close to finding a solution that pulls together the unique considerations and culture of Rollingwood, without impacting the majority of homeowners and most of what we see built currently. The concept is to make minor changes by trapping out the few builders that have exploited our rules and impacted neighbors. It's not easy!

Please feel free to reach out to me or any other CRCRC member directly if you have questions, concerns or suggestions.

Best,  
Alex



On Sep 5, 2024, at 10:57 AM, Ashley Wayman <awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov> wrote:

**\*The Mayor, Council, CRCRC and P&Z Members are blind copied on this email.**

Hi All,

Please see the email below from Danielle Hasso.

Thanks,  
Ashley

**Ashley Wayman**  
**City Administrator**  
City of Rollingwood  
(512) 327-1838  
[www.rollingwoodtx.gov](http://www.rollingwoodtx.gov)





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**From:** Danielle Hasso <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 4, 2024 4:48 PM  
**To:** Ashley Wayman <[awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov](mailto:awayman@rollingwoodtx.gov)>  
**Subject:** Opposition to parallel plane proposal

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(1) have a different maximum roof height for flat-roofed homes than for sloped-roof homes. This is a common practice in other cities.

(2) eliminate 4-story homes - restrict homes to 3 stories

(3) require wall "articulation"

(4) encourage natural barriers between homes, especially those with large elevation changes between them

Impose the same regulations on all lots so it's equitable.

Thanks for your time!

Warmly,  
Danielle Hasso

Sent from my iPhone