

**WHY ANCILLAE'S PROPOSED PLANS MAY
REDUCE THE RESIDENTIAL ENJOYMENT OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND
REDUCE OUR PROPERTY VALUES**

Regarding the Existing Request for Zoning Relief At
2025 W. Church Road, Wyncote, PA 19095
By The Ancillae Assumpta Academy "Ancillae"
ZHB-#26-3818

From Your Neighbor:
Diane Schott, 209 Royal Avenue, Wyncote, PA 19095,
Diane.schott@comcast.net
215-704-1607
August 22, 2026

Reach Out to Our Commissioner:

**Commissioner Dwight Pedro Lewis
Cheltenham Commissioner Ward 3
267-405-3550
dlewis@cheltenhampa.gov**

Speak Up at Upcoming Township Meetings:

7:00 pm Monday August 24, 2026:

Ancillae Meeting with Neighbors to Describe its Plans & Engage Public
McCoy Center- second left- stone building on the right

8:00 pm Wednesday September 2, 2026

**Cheltenham Township Building and Zoning Committee
Via Web Conference - Link will be on the Agenda that will be posted on the
Township's Website by the Friday before the meeting date.**

7:30 pm Monday September 14, 2026

**Zoning Hearing Board Meeting
Location: Curtis Hall at Greenwood and Church Roads
SIGN THE APPEARANCE STATEMENT TO ENTER AS A PARTY**

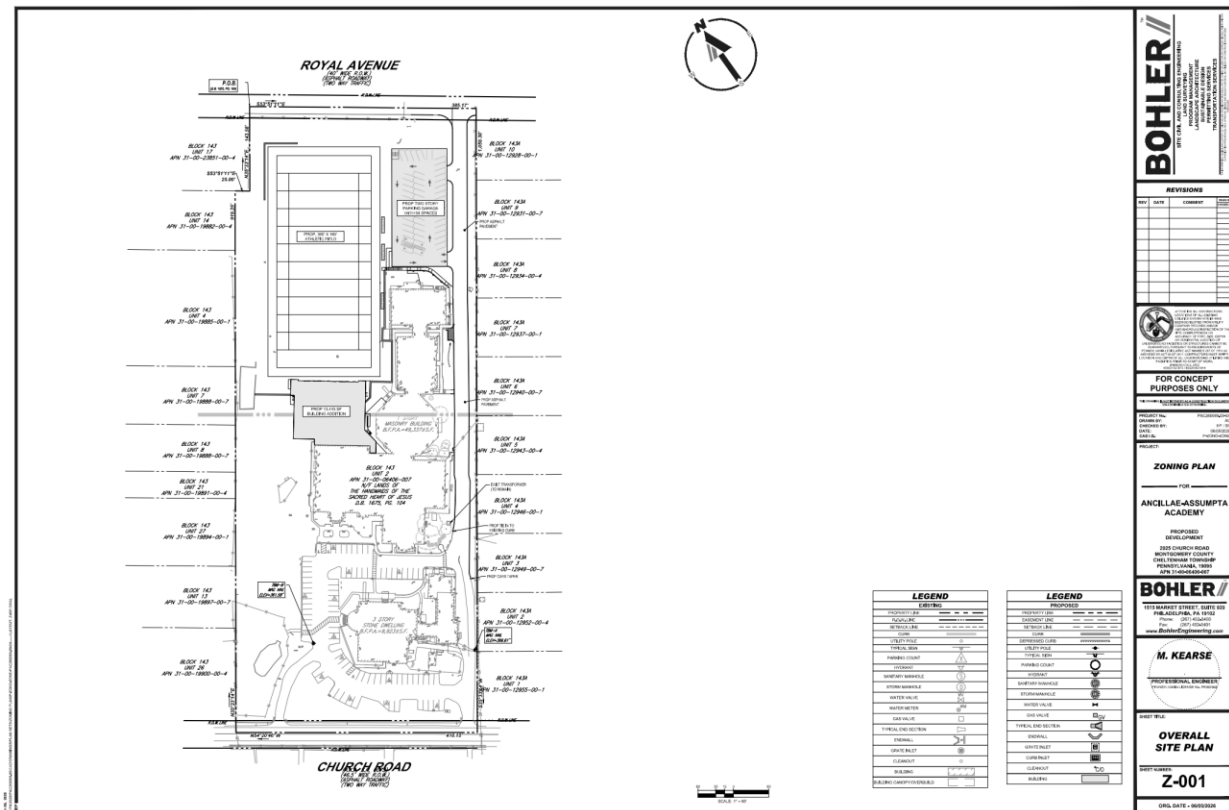
Past Associated Cheltenham Township Meetings:

- July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission Meeting
- August 5, 2026, Cheltenham Township Building and Zoning Committee-
-Resulted in proposing to move the zoning decision to September
- August 10, 2026, Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board-
- Resulted in approving moving the zoning decision to September

Ancillae Seeks The Following at its Residentially Zoned Property:

- Construct an approximately 13,443 square foot gymnasium/athletic facility addition near the rear yards along Mulford Road;
- Construct a new two-story parking garage with 94 parking spaces near Royal Avenue and rear yards along Gribbel Road;
- Construct an expanded new regulation size athletic field near rear yards along Mulford Road and along Royal Avenue;
- Construct related improvements including, but not limited to, widening and changing the path of its existing asphalt driveway along the rear yards along Gribbel Road; and
- Move its existing playground closer to rear yards along Mulford Road.

Ancillae's Overall Site Plan:



Zoning Relief Sought by Ancillae:

1. A variance from Section 295-502.A of the Cheltenham Township Zoning Ordinance (the "Zoning Ordinance") to permit a building coverage of 22.4% whereas a maximum building coverage of 15% is otherwise permitted.
2. A variance from Section 295-502.A of the Zoning Ordinance to permit an impervious surface coverage of 44.3% whereas a maximum impervious surface coverage of 35% is otherwise permitted. The Property is existing nonconforming with an impervious surface coverage of 40.6%.

3. A variance from Section 295-502.A of the Zoning Ordinance to permit the front yard setback from Royal Avenue to be 35 feet to **the proposed retaining wall** whereas a front yard setback of 50 feet is otherwise required.
4. A variance from Section 295-2601.A of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a driveway width of 24 feet whereas a maximum driveway width of 18 feet is otherwise permitted.
5. A determination that the maximum parking requirements of Section 295-2301.D.(6) of the Zoning Ordinance do not apply to parking structures or in the alternative a variance from Section 295-2301.D.(6) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit greater than 120% of the required minimum parking.

Ancillae Campus Plan Web Site: <https://www.ancillae.org/support/campus-plan>

Be aware the picture renderings presented by Ancillae on Ancillae's Website and during meetings are not a part of Ancillae's request for zoning relief.. and can change.

Please speak out and support the following:

I need your help to speak out and support the preservation and restoration of our enjoyment of our residential neighborhood.

1. NO PARKING GARAGE

2. NO ENLARGED SPORTS FIELD

3. MAINTENANCE OF AND NO REMOVAL OF EXISTING TREE SCREENS along the rear of yards of residences along Mulford and Gribbel Roads and along Royal Avenue.

4. SETBACKS consistent with Ancillae's 1999 agreement for the distance from the rear yards of residences along Mulford Road to the then planned music auditorium addition,

to now be applied to:

- the distance from residential properties and
- the distance from Royal Avenue

for the planned construction IF ANY of the

- Two Story Garage
- New 13,443 sq ft gymnasium/athletic facility addition
- Enlarged sports field
- Widened drive
- New/moved playground (currently planned to be closer to the rear yards of residences along Mulford Road)

5. DESIGN CONSISTENT WITH THE RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS Ancillae agreed to in 1999.

In 1999, Ancillae agreed the then new addition

- Will simulate a residential structure,
- Be faced in masonry or stone, and
- Be consistent with the exterior of then existing buildings on the premises.

6. VISUAL, SOUND, AND ODOR (EMISSION) BARRIERS should be installed and maintained along Ancillae's perimeter along the rear yards of residences along Mulford and Gribbel Roads and along Royal Avenue.

7. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PRACTICES should be implemented to alleviate traffic jams that occur throughout our neighborhood as a result of Ancillae's operation including but not limited to:

- **RIGHT TURN ONLY INTO AND EXITING FROM ANCILLAE ALONG CHURCH ROAD** – No left turns!
- **SAFE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ALONG CHURCH ROAD** by professionals trained to manage traffic as agreed to in consult with Cheltenham Township and the Cheltenham Police.

8. SAFE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHIN ANCILLAE'S PROPERTY FOR STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP. Students should not be crossing traffic lanes.

9. AT ANCILLAE, A PROPERTY WIDE STORMWATER SURVEY AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT should be conducted to stop damage to offsite properties caused by stormwater runoff from Ancillae – to include, but not be limited to, eliminating runoff from Ancillae that contributes to the erosion of Royal Avenue. (A design goal not limited by design percentages.)

10. CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE CHELTENHAM TOWNSHIP ZONING HEARING BOARD IN THEIR JUNE 14, 2022, DECISION FOR ARCADIA'S ACQUISITION OF THE FORMER BISHOP MCDEVITT PROPERTY including restrictions on illumination, field use times, amplified sound systems, and signage.

HERE'S WHY:

THE PROPOSED PARKING GARAGE:

The proposed parking garage will face and be close to the rear yards of at least two homes along Gribbel Road and be close to Royal Avenue.

The real need for the proposed parking garage is unclear.

Ancillae has not said it will reduce traffic on Church Road.

Instead, Ancillae seeks the garage to manage overflow parking during large events held on its property such as sports and musicals.

Before Arcadia acquired the former Bishop McDevitt High School property in 2022, Ancillae had an agreement with Bishop McDevitt to use the former Bishop McDevitt parking lot when large events were held at Ancillae.

Why is that large parking lot no longer available to Ancillae?

THE PROPOSED 13,443 SQUARE FOOT GYMNASIUM/ATHLETIC FACILITY ADDITION

The proposed new addition is closer to the rear yards along Mulford Road than existing structures.

Back in 1999, when Ancillae received approval from the Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board to construct a new addition for an auditorium for music because Ancillae found it disruptive to continuously set up and break down areas for music, it had a gym it had been using for both music and the gym.

What happened to that gym and why is it no longer sufficient?

THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A REGULATION SIZE SPORTS FIELD

The proposed new sports field will extend near the rear yards of residences along Mulford Road, near the side yard of a residence along Royal Avenue, and near Royal Avenue.

Use of the existing sports field is loud at times.

Why is a regulation size sports field needed for students that extend up to eighth grade?

NOISE:

Noise from outside play and use of the existing sports field at Ancillae already is loud at times.

The addition of an expanded sports field, the moving of the existing playground to be closer to residences along Mulford Road, the large gym addition, the parking garage addition, and the widened drive will add to the existing noise.

In 1999, in response to concerns raised by neighbors, Ancillae re-designed its then proposed addition to eliminate or block sources of noise that might otherwise be heard at properties that face the addition and made changes to its plans to preserve the quiet enjoyment of the neighborhood.

How will Ancillae eliminate or block sources of noise associated with the current proposed changes to preserve the quiet enjoyment of our neighborhood?

VEHICLE EMISSIONS:

During the July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission meeting, a representative of Ancillae stated that buses park along the drive lane while waiting for students and that the parked buses are a source of traffic jams on Church Road.

Are emissions from parked vehicles/buses already a problem?

The widened drive will provide for a second lane of traffic along its drive.

Increased vehicle emissions will occur along its widened drive and the parking garage.

How will Ancillae prevent emission odors from vehicles on its property from impacting neighboring properties?

VISUAL IMPACT TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

VISUALLY CONFORM WITH RESIDENTIAL LAND USE:

In 1999, in response to concerns raised by neighbors, Ancillae agreed its then planned addition will simulate a residential structure, will be faced in masonry or stone, and will be consistent with the exterior of then existing buildings on its premises.

How will the design of the proposed new addition and the parking garage be consistent with Ancillae's agreement in 1999?

SETBACKS:

In 1999, in response to concerns raised by neighbors, Ancillae increased the distance of the then planned addition from rear property lines along Mulford Road.

Ancillae should do the same for its current planned addition, the garage, the widened road, and the moving of the playground.

VISUAL BARRIER:

A treed barrier exists along the perimeter of Ancillae's property.

Ancillae has stated it plans to remove trees to widen its drive.

The extent, if any, that trees will be removed from other areas is unclear- for example to enlarge its sports field, to build the parking garage, and/or move its playground closer to the rear yards along Mulford Road.

Ancillae should retain and maintain a safe treed visual barrier along the rears of homes along Gribbel and Mulford Roads and along Royal Avenue to preserve the residential enjoyment of our neighborhood.

TRAFFIC

In 1999, Ancillae's traffic engineer testified:

- There would be no effect brought about by the then requested increase of student enrollment to 625 students (from 570 students) on traffic in the immediate area.
- That any increase in traffic generated by increased enrollment would be unrecognizable in the daily variation of traffic.
- There would be no degradation in the level of service at any intersection except for drives from the Academy; and only those vehicles entering or exiting the Academy would experience any decrease in level of service.

In 1999:

- Ancillae exceeded its permitted maximum enrollment of 435 students imposed by the Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board in 1979 at Appeal No. 1843;
- 570 students were enrolled at the school;
- Ancillae sought approval to enroll up to 625 students;
- The Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board approved enrollment of up to 600 students;
- Information in the Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board's 1999 Decision shows that Ancillae agreed to cooperate with Township officials in seeking possible solutions to traffic difficulties throughout the neighborhood;
- A nun at Ancillae directly told my husband that Ancillae would maintain traffic control on Church Road.

Today, in 2026, our neighborhood routinely experiences traffic backups along Church Road and throughout our side streets during the beginning and end of school and summer camp and the beginning and end of events at Ancillae.

Such traffic blocks local residential traffic from turning right or left onto Church Road from side streets that exist between Rices Mill Road and Bickley Road and blocks driveways on our side streets.

During the July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission Meeting, my husband, Jim Schott, asked what happened to Ancillae's agreement to manage traffic.

In early August, my husband and I received a letter from Ancillae dated July 31, 2026, responding to my husband's inquiry.

Ancillae states it did have staff assisting traffic on Church Road and there came a point in time when Ancillae was advised by the police that having Ancillae staff on Church Road was a safety issue, and the police requested Ancillae to discontinue the practice, which Ancillae did. During the July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission Meeting, Ancillae stated its students cross the path of buses to enter Ancillae's building and that its staff manages the safety of its students.

Ancillae plans to add a drive path to the left of the buses that will put students at further risk to be in the path of vehicles.

Has Ancillae considered moving its drive to the other side of its school or considered a different path for the buses, for students to exit the buses directly to the school – instead of requiring students to cross drive paths to enter the school?

During the July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission Meeting, Ancillae stated a widened drive extending from Church Road to Royal Avenue is needed on their property to prevent traffic backups on Church Road in part due to buses parking along their existing drive, while waiting for students.

Has Ancillae considered dedicating an existing parking lot solely to buses, in lieu of widening the drive?

During the August 5, 2026, Cheltenham Township Building and Zoning Committee meeting, it was mentioned that the turning path in front of the school is too sharp for buses.

Has Ancillae considered revising its access along Church Road and its drive path in front of its building along Church Road to allow easier access for buses?

Has Ancillae considered establishing separate drive paths for cars and buses?

Has Ancillae considered and/or promoted right turn only access and departure along Church Road? - as eliminating left turns will improve traffic flow.

Ancillae should work with the Cheltenham Township and the Cheltenham Police to design and implement safe traffic control on their property and at both access ways to Ancillae that exist along Church Road.

STORMWATER

Stormwater runoff from Ancillae's property contributes to damage occurring on Royal Avenue from multiple runoff sources.

An example of stormwater runoff from Ancillae AFTER the end of a summer storm is shown in photographs at the end of this document.

Over the summer, Royal Avenue was reduced to a single lane of traffic for over one month and required extensive road repairs due to damage caused by stormwater runoff from multiple sources, including Ancillae's property.

Royal Avenue is frequently used by emergency vehicles and its use by emergency vehicles appeared to be restricted throughout that time.

While the eroded area was recently fixed and paved over, other portions of Royal Avenue are in the path of stormwater runoff from Ancillae and are decayed.

During the July 27, 2026, Cheltenham Township Planning Commission Meeting, Ancillae stated it will manage 100% of its stormwater runoff from its proposed new construction and only 20% of its existing stormwater runoff.

Ancillae is not required to submit its stormwater management plan to Cheltenham Township for review and approval until after its request for zoning relief is approved.

Ancillae's zoning request includes installing a retaining wall at the northwest (lowest) corner of its property along Royal Avenue, in part to manage runoff.

However, stormwater flows from a much greater extent of Ancillae's property than the extent of the planned new retaining wall.

Ancillae's July 31, 2026, letter to my husband and me states "water landing on the new impervious coverage will be captured through roof drains or inlets and piped to a new, large, underground stormwater management basin. This basin will hold back the stormwater runoff for a period of time and then discharge to the storm system in the street at a slower rate. The net effect should be less stormwater flowing off campus than what leaves the site today."

The above description addresses only new impervious coverage.

Ancillae needs to hire a qualified expert to assess existing runoff conditions and manage a greater extent of existing stormwater runoff than the 20% of the existing it plans to manage.

Ancillae needs to implement runoff controls that fully protect offsite properties including Royal Avenue from experiencing damage from stormwater runoff from Ancillae's property.

Additionally, the proposed revised exit to Royal Avenue will be across from another driveway along Royal Avenue. *How will Ancillae prevent stormwater runoff across Royal Avenue to that driveway?*

Consistency with Applicable Conditions Imposed by the Cheltenham Township Zoning Hearing Board in their June 14, 2022, Decision for Arcadia's Acquisition of the former Bishop McDevitt Property:

Cheltenham Township's Zoning Hearing Board should impose applicable conditions consistent with its June 14, 2022, Decision for Arcadia's acquisition of the former Bishop McDevitt property, including, but not limited to, Condition Numbers 6, 11, 14, and 18 regarding restrictions on illumination, field use times, amplified sound systems, and signage, which are highlighted for emphasis in the excerpt from the Cheltenham Township's June 14, 2022, Decision for Arcadia provided below:

The grant of relief above is specifically conditioned on the Applicant's compliance with the following conditions:

1. For purposes of these conditions, the following terms shall have the following definitions:

a. "Property" shall mean the real property located at 125 Royal Avenue, Wyncote, Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a legal description of which is attached hereto.

b. Property. "Athletic Field" shall mean any current or future athletic fields located on the

c. "Owner" shall mean Arcadia University or any successor as legal owner of the Property.

d. "Parking Lots" shall mean any current or future parking lots located on the Property

2. The Athletic Field may be used only by and for the Owner's educational related ceremonies and functions, including student sports practices, intramural sports practices and games, and student recruiting programs including recruiting camps.

3. No intercollegiate sports games or competitions may be held on the Athletic Field.

4. The Athletic Field shall be completely fenced in, and the fence shall be kept on good repair at all times.

5. The fence surrounding the Athletic Field shall be kept locked at all times when not in use.

6. The Athletic Field shall not be illuminated, whether by permanent light standards or portable lights.

7. The Athletic Field shall only have a natural or grass surface.

8. No permanent spectator seating or stands shall be permitted on the Athletic field.

9. No dormitories or overnight lodging shall be permitted on the Property.

10. The Owner's policies on alcohol, drugs, and smoking will apply to the Property. Additionally, there shall be no alcoholic beverages or other intoxicants allowed on the Athletic Field or Parking Lot.

11. The Athletic Field may be used only between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from November 1 to March 31, and from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. from April 1 to October 31.

12. The Property shall be patrolled by Arcadia's Office of Public Safety or any successor, which can be contacted by any neighborhood resident at any time 24 hours, 7 days a week, at 215-572- 2800.

13. *The Athletic Field and Parking Lots shall not be rented to or used by any person or group that is not part of or related to Owner or its educational programs, mission, or functions, except rental and use by community-based not-for-profit organizations.*

14. *There shall be no amplified sound systems used in connection with the Athletic Field or Parking Lots.*

15. *Notwithstanding Paragraph 14, temporary/portable sound amplifying devices may be used, but only under following conditions:*

- *They may be used for ceremonies and functions sponsored by or affiliated with the Owner and its programs.*
- *They may be used to enhance the clarity of spoken voice and music to attendees of those ceremonies and functions.*
- *The music must be short in duration and limited to those ceremonies and functions.*
- *The speakers from any such amplification system must be directed away from surrounding residential neighborhoods*
- *The volume of any sound coming from the amplification must be in compliance with all Ordinances of Cheltenham Township*

16. *No musical instruments may be played outdoors on the Athletic Field or Parking Lots.*

17. *Notwithstanding Paragraph 16, musical instruments may be played outdoors on the Athletic Field or Parking Lots with temporary/portable amplification, but only if such music comes from string quartets, small ensembles, and the like; the sound therefrom is directed away from surrounding residential neighborhoods; and the sound therefrom is in compliance with all Ordinances of Cheltenham Township.*

18. *No signage on the Property will be animated, blink, scroll, move, or otherwise have changeable text.*

19. *No subdivision or land development, as those terms are defined by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, as may be amended, shall occur on the Property.*

20. *The use of the Property by the Owner shall be in substantial compliance with the evidence and testimony presented by the Owner to the Zoning Hearing Board.*

21. *Prior to using the Property as authorized by this Order, the Owner shall obtain all permits and approvals required by Cheltenham Township for the approved uses.*

Photos Taken AFTER a Storm Ended during the afternoon of August 3, 2026:

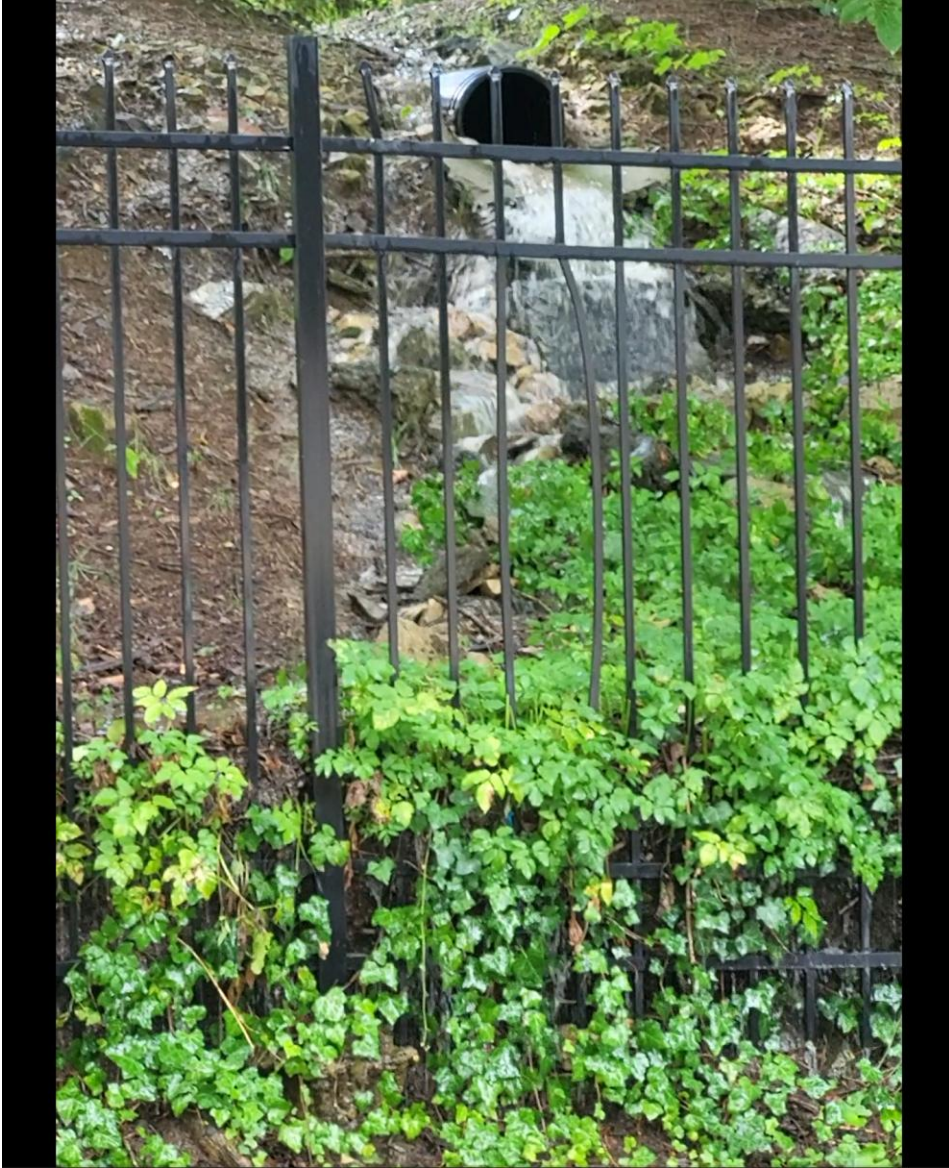
Rear Exit of Ancillae to Royal Avenue:



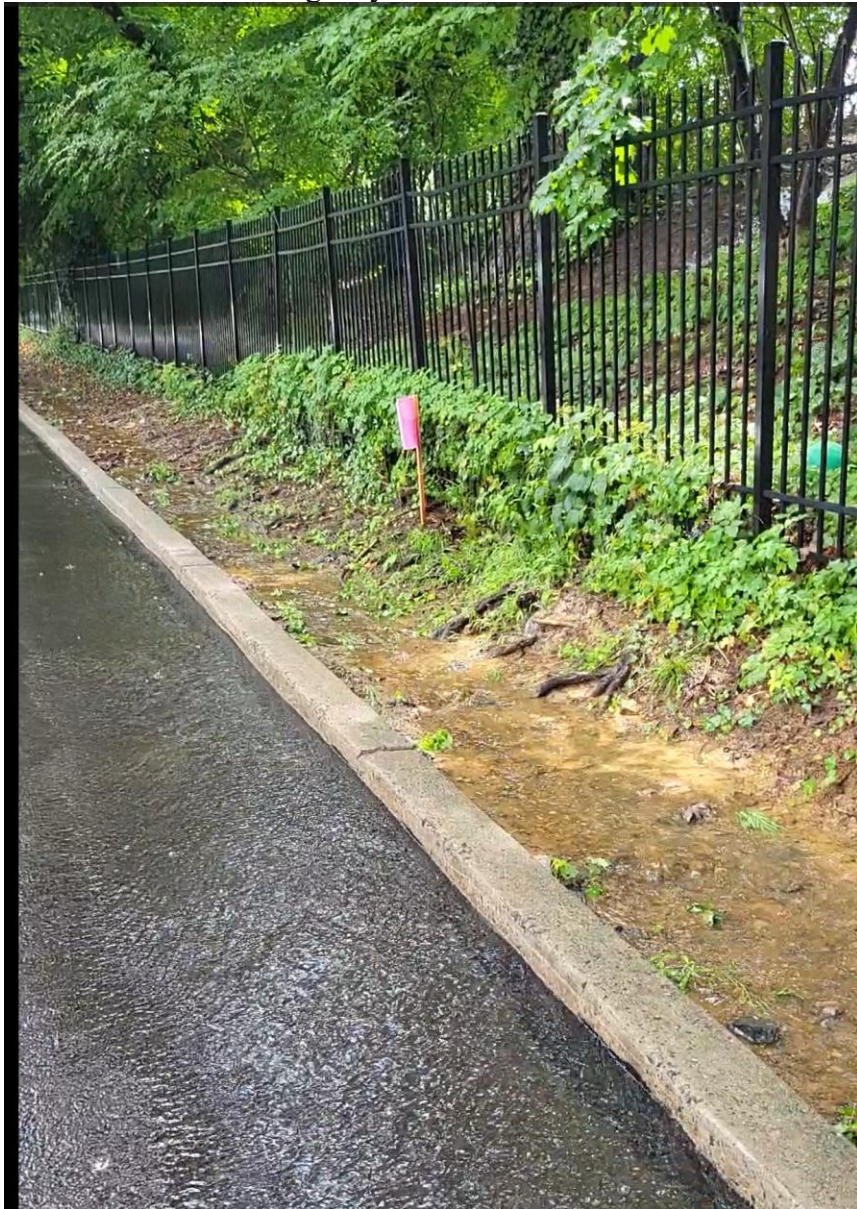
Different areas along Ancillae's property border along Royal Avenue – to the west of Ancillae's rear exit drive:







View of the south side of Royal Avenue along Ancillae Property- with posted zoning notice behind the storm water gulley:



Looking east up Royal Avenue from Bickley Road- Arcadia is on the far left and Ancillae is in the distant right:



Northeast Corner of Bickley Road and Royal Avenue:

