

Resident tired of Ace's bright lights

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Darien, IL -

Jim Devitt lives in Darien, but the bright lights shining on his house every night are in Woodridge.

Devitt lives on the far western edge of Darien, his house backed up against a retail development near Woodward Avenue and 87th Street. His problem is the Ace Hardware store going up behind his house, which stays lit up every night.

"The first time they turned them on, I walked outside, and it was unbelievable," Devitt recalled. "I could have hosted a baseball game in my backyard."

Darien Alderwoman Sylvia McIvor e-mailed Woodridge officials last week and noted that, while the development has a contentious history, residents can still be accommodated.

"While it's too late to stop the development, it's not too late to make this less intrusive on the residents living adjacent to this property," McIvor said.

McIvor, who represents Ward Six, wants Woodridge to require the lights be turned off when businesses close, with only lights kept on that are furthest from the residential neighborhood. McIvor also wants larger shields installed on the lights.

"We're asking Woodridge to treat our Darien residents like they would treat their own," McIvor said.

Woodridge Mayor William Murphy said McIvor's e-mail had circulated among village officials who have been working on the problem this week. Murphy said he was told a "continuous awning" will be installed on the east side of the Ace parking lot as a cover for the lights.

"It was a legitimate concern, and it was simply a matter that the lights were energized before the awning was put on," Murphy said. "And we're going to go out and check the lighting levels to verify that they're within the code."

Devitt said the awning just covers lights on the side of the Ace building and will not block out the parking lot lights, which are more of a problem.

Murphy agreed the awning does not impact the parking lot lights. He said the village will make sure the lights are in compliance with village code, but he sees no further action.

Devitt, who has lived in his house for eight years, said there may be only one course of action left for him. He said he e-mailed the Woodridge Village Board last week threatening a lawsuit.

"I would rather I get some cooperation from the village of Woodridge rather than just them doing as little as possible with no real concern for the neighborhood," Devitt said. "But then why would they be concerned? I live in Darien."