



City of Plymouth
Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes
201 S. Main Street Plymouth, MI 48170
Thursday, September 6, 2018, 7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Giummo called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
The Board said the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Ed Krol, Jim Burrows, Mike Gowen, Joe Elliott, Kara Giummo
ABSENT: Mike Devine

Also present was Assistant Community Development Director Greta Bolhuis.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Comm. Krol and seconded by Comm. Elliott for approval of the August 2, 2018 meeting minutes.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Comm. Burrows and seconded by Comm. Elliott for approval of the agenda as amended to move Commissioner Comments to item #8 and shift previous agenda items accordingly.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

5. OLD BUSINESS

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A) Z18-14, 850 Arthur, Non-Use Variance, Exceed rear yard lot coverage, Zoned RM-1, Multi-Family Residential

Chair Giummo read the administrative review from the city.

Brian and Dorothy Wolcott, owners presented their case. Mr. Wolcott explained they want to keep the existing accessory structure because it is the storage space and would be their shelter in case of weather issues, due to its construction out of cinder blocks. He explained the sentimental value of the structure to their family. He said the proposed detached garage won't alter the neighborhood as their area is industrial in nature. Mrs. Wolcott explained that they don't have a basement; their house is on a crawl space so they need the existing structure for storage.

Citizen Comments

Kevin O'Keefe, 1455 Penniman, spoke in favor of the project.

Board Discussion

Comm. Elliott felt like the ordinance requirements were in place for a reason and that in the 35 foot setback, there was a lot of building, as proposed. He believed there are options, such as a 1½ car garage, or to move the 2 car garage out of the 35 foot rear yard setback.

Chair Giummo agreed with Comm. Elliott's comments and also felt like there were other options. Comm. Gowen asked why the existing structure couldn't be used as a garage or expanded. The applicants stated that it was too small and was sunk into the ground. Comm. Gowen suggested other options that would use the existing structure. Comm. Burrows asked about possible modification of the existing structure. Comm. Krol stated the yard is currently maxed out. He felt mixed on the size and saw storage in the attic as a solution. Comm. Elliott asked about the utilities and if or how that might impact the construction of a garage. It was confirmed that the applicants could ask DTE for a waiver or to have the pole moved. Comm. Krol asked about the alley access to the proposed garage. He stated he would have second thoughts about keeping the block building. Comm. Gowen felt like there were options besides the 12% variance. Comm. Krol asked about compliance with setbacks for both accessory buildings. It was confirmed that the proposal was in compliance with required setbacks.

A motion was made by Comm. Elliott, supported by Comm. Gowen, to approve the variance request Z18-14, 850 Arthur as submitted. The variance is to construct a detached garage which would require the rear lot coverage to be 47%. The finding of fact is that there is no practical difficulty.
MOTION DENIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B) Z18-15, 1482 Sheridan, Non-Use Variance, Lot split to create two parcels, Zoned R-1, Single Family Residential

Chair Giummo read the administrative review from the city.

Mike and Mary Gladchun, real estate agents presented their case. Mr. Gladchun stated that of the 2,000 homes in the City about 48% are on 50 foot wide lots or less. He explained that Sheridan has a high concentration of 50 foot wide lots and that 73% were 50 feet wide or less. He explained that the current home was expanded onto both lots. Mr. Gladchun stated that the resulting lots would be approximately 9,200 square feet per lot, which he felt made up for the non-compliant width. He explained that the intent is to develop the neighborhood consistent with how it was originally platted and that two new homes would blend in with the street. He presented the board a letter of support from the neighbor to the west. Mrs. Gladchun explained that the best use of the property is to replace it with two new homes.

Citizen Comments

Jason Knopoka, 325 Parkview, opposed the variance request.
Kevin O'Keefe, 1455 Penniman, spoke in favor of the variance request.

Board Discussion

The board discussed the potential split and what that would do for the marketing of the property. Comm. Krol argued against increased value. He said the City has a history of wanting larger lots. He didn't see a hardship. The board discussed what could be built on the property if it were to stay a 100 foot wide lot or if it were built as two 50 foot wide parcels. Comm. Gowen felt that there was a hardship and it impacted the whole neighborhood if they don't split the parcel. Comm. Elliott disagreed and said that the Planning Commission and City Commission made changes to housing density over the past few years and he failed to see a hardship. Comm. Burrows stated the City doesn't want 50 foot wide lots and he didn't see a hardship.

A motion was made by Comm. Elliott, supported by Comm. Burrows, to approve the variance request Z18-15, 1482 Sheridan as submitted. The variance is to split a 100 foot wide parcel into two 50 foot wide parcels. The finding of fact is that there is no practical difficulty.
MOTION DENIED.

7. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Comm. Krol asked about floor area ratio requirements and the Mixed Use district. It was confirmed that there are floor area ratio requirements included in the MU district.

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The board discussed that they cannot make decisions based on income or financial reasons.

Chair Giummo stated she wants to stay away from ongoing conversations with the applicant.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Comm. Krol, supported by Comm. Elliott to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 PM.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY