
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – *Approved 2/11/21*
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
THURSDAY, January 14, 2021, 6:30 P.M.

The meeting was conducted as an online teleconference in compliance with
State of Michigan Executive Order No. 2020-154, to allow for the continued operation of the City
while complying with Executive Order No. 2020-160.

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Marcie Alling at 6:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Present: M. Alling, J. Hovey, J. Leaming, M. Rice, K. Berryman, Chris Iannuzzi, R. Fryling, M. Solak & E. Jefferson

Absent: None

Staff: S. Stachowiak & A. Fedewa

A quorum of at least five members was present, allowing voting action to be taken at the meeting.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Leaming, seconded by Mr. Fryling to approve the agenda as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried 9-0.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

A. BZA-4066.20, Variance to the setback requirement for a ground sign at 516 W. Saginaw Street

Ms. Stachowiak said that this is a request to permit a 6 foot high, 20 square foot ground sign at 516 W. Saginaw Street (Walnut Manor Apartments) that would have a setback of 7 feet from the front property line. Section 1442.12(h)(2)(B)(2) of the City of Lansing Sign Ordinance requires a 20 foot front yard setback for ground signs in multiple family residential zoning districts. A variance of 13 feet to the setback requirement for a ground sign is therefore, being requested. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the staff recommendation is to approve the variance based on a finding that the request complies with all of the applicable criteria of Sections 1244.06 (c) and 1244.06 (e) of the Zoning Ordinance, as described in the staff report for this request.

Ms. Stachowiak said that there is no location on the site where the sign could be located in compliance with the 20 foot setback where it would be visible to eastbound traffic. She said that the site was constructed several decades before the applicant took possession of the property and thus, the applicant had no control over the layout of the site and could not plan for a location that would accommodate a sign in compliance with current sign ordinance requirements. She also said that the site is unique in that it is zoned residential but is located on a major thoroughfare where most of the properties are zoned commercial. Ms. Stachowiak stated if the subject property was zoned commercial, the proposed setback would be adequate to comply with the ordinance requirement for the dimensions of the proposed sign.

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Kevin Carney, Rohde Construction Company, Inc., contractor for the rehabilitation project at 516 W. Saginaw, spoke on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Carney said that the sign will be angled to provide adequate exposure to eastbound traffic on Saginaw Street. He also said that a wall sign would not be sufficient to identify the building because it would be obscured by a tree during the growing season.

Seeing no one wishing to speak, Ms. Alling closed the public hearing.

Mr. Berryman asked about the existing sign on the site.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that it is just a temporary sign identifying the entities/agencies that participated in rehabilitation project. She said that it will be removed when the new sign is erected.

Mr. Rice stated that he is supportive of the variance. He said that the site is unique in that there is not adequate room on the lot to accommodate a sign in compliance with the setback requirement. He said that it is also unique by being subject to a greater setback than the most other properties along W. Saginaw because of its residential zoning.

Mr. Leaming agreed with Mr. Rice that the layout of the site presents a practical difficulty for the applicant with regard to installation of a sign in compliance with the 20 foot setback requirement.

Mr. Hovey made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to approve BZA 4066.20 for a variance of 13 feet to the setback requirement to permit a 6 foot high, 20 square foot ground sign at 516 W. Saginaw Street that would have a setback of 7 feet from the front property line, on a finding that the variance is consistent with the practical difficulty criteria of Section 1244.06 (c) and the impact criteria of Section 1244.06 (e), as described in the staff report for this application. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (9-0).

V. OLD BUSINESS - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS – None

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, September 10, 2020

Mr. Rice made a motion, seconded by Mr. Leaming to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2020 meeting. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (9-0).

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ADJOURNMENT AT 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator