
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – *Approved 4/11/2024*
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Thursday, March 14, 2024, 6:30 P.M.
600 W. Maple Street, Lansing, MI 48906

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Marcie Alling at 6:30 p.m.

Present: M. Alling, C. Iannuzzi, J. Leaming, M. Jackson, K. Berryman, E. Jefferson, B. Fryling & H. Lowry

Absent: M. Rice (excused)

Staff: S. Stachowiak

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. Iannuzzi, seconded by Mr. Leaming to approve the agenda with the addition of “Excused Absence” under New Business. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

III. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

A. BZA-4083.24, 3218 S. Cambridge Road- Variances to permit a circular driveway in the front yard.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the staff recommendation is to approve the request for variances to Sections 1254.01.17 (a)(1)(a.) & (b)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit parking in the front yard on a new, second (circular) driveway at 3218 S. Cambridge Road. She stated that these Sections permit one driveway on a single-family residential parcel of land and restricts parking within a front yard to the one permitted driveway.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the requested variances must be evaluated in terms of whether the proposed circular driveway would be consistent with the intent of the ordinance and therefore, denial of the variances would place an unnecessary hardship on the applicant. In other words, a finding that the variances would not set a negative precedent for future requests of a similar nature since it based upon unique circumstances that preserve the intent of the ordinance standards. She referred the Board members to the map in the packet that identifies the location of the properties in the area that currently have a circular driveway in the front yard. Ms. Stachowiak stated

that the neighborhood in which the subject property is located has the largest lot sizes, in general, of any neighborhood in the City of Lansing which is why so many circular driveways have been permitted over the years under old ordinances. She also said that the majority of the homes in the area have much greater setbacks than most other residential areas so the vehicles that are parked in the circular driveways are setback far enough that they do not have any negative impacts on the streetscape. Based upon these circumstances, Ms. Stachowiak stated that approval of the applicant's request will not set a negative precedent for future requests of a similar nature and therefore, denial of the request would create an unnecessary hardship for the applicant.

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Mark Clous, 3218 S. Cambridge Road, spoke in support of his request. He said that the circular driveway is primarily needed to provide safe and convenient parking for his guests and those with mobility issues in particular.

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

Mr. Leaming stated that he is supportive of the requested variances. He pointed out that the on-street parking is located a fair distance from the house and given the curvature of the road in the area, it would be safer for guests to park on an off-street driveway.

Mr. Fryling agreed and pointed out that there is a neighboring property that already has more than one driveway.

Ms. Jefferson and Ms. Alling spoke in support of the request, acknowledging that there are already several circular driveways in the area and that there are unique features of the site involving the vast amount of road frontage that it consumes and the deep setback of the house that warrant relief from the ordinance.

Mr. Iannuzzi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Leaming to approve BZA 4083.24, variances to Sections 1254.01.17 (a)(1)(a.) & (b)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit parking in the front yard on a new, 12-foot wide, second (circular) driveway at 3218 S. Cambridge Road, on a finding that the request complies with the variance evaluation criteria listed in Sections 1274.06 (c) & (e) of the Zoning Ordinance. On a roll call vote, the motion carried (8-0).

V. OLD BUSINESS - None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Excused Absences

Ms. Jefferson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lowry to approve an excused absence for Mr. Rice. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, February 8, 2024

Mr. Leaming made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to approve the February 8, 2024, meeting minutes, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT AT 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator