
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – *Approved January 9, 2025*
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Thursday, October 10, 2024, 6:30 P.M.
316 N Capitol Ave. Suite C-2, Lansing, MI 48933

I. ROLL CALL

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

Present: M. Alling, K. Berryman, B. Fryling, C. Iannuzzi, E. Jefferson, H. Lowry, M. Rice, M. Jackson (Planning Commission representative)

Absent: J. Leaming (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 Ms. Jefferson, seconded by Mr. Rice to approve the agenda with the addition of “Excused Absences” under New Business. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

III. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

- A. BZA-4090.24, 500 S Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Variances to Sections 1250.04.01 (a)(6), 1250.04.01 (a)(7) and 1250.04.01 (a)(8) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit an accessory garage in the front yard, with a height of 16 feet and 3^{7/8} inches, and constructed with steel siding and roofing.**

Ms. Stachowiak presented the request from the Union Missionary Baptist Church for variances to permit an accessory garage in the front yard at 500 S Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, that would be 16 feet, 3^{7/8} inches in height and constructed of metal siding and roofing materials. She stated that Section 1250.04.01 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance prohibits accessory structures in a front yard, restricts the height to 15 feet, and requires the structure to be constructed of materials that are consistent with the principal building on the property. Ms. Stachowiak recommended approval of the variances with the condition that the property owner plant 1 shrub for every 10 linear feet and 1 tree for every 30 linear feet of frontage along S. M. L. King Jr. Boulevard and W. St. Joseph Street adjacent to the proposed garage location, on a finding that the request complies with the variance evaluation criteria listed in Sections 1274.06 (c) & (e) of the Zoning Ordinance.

The subject property is unique in that it is entirely surrounded by public rights-of-way, bordered to its north, east and west by S MLK Jr. Blvd. and W St. Joseph Street to its

south. Since the entire site from the church building at the north end of the site to the south property line is considered a front yard by zoning ordinance definition, there is no location on the site where an accessory structure could be placed where it would not be located in the front yard.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the subject property is unique in that it is entirely surrounded by public rights-of-way which means that the entire site from the church building at the north end to the south property line is considered a front yard by zoning ordinance definition and thus, there is no location on the site where an accessory structure of any reasonable size could be placed where it would not be located in the front yard. She explained that this presents a practical difficulty for the Church in constructing a storage building that it needs in order to house and secure vehicles and equipment. She also said that the landscaping is intended to soften the view of the structure, and the additional building height (1 foot, 3^{7/8} inches) is minimal and is necessary in order to accommodate commercial grade equipment and vehicles that the Church uses to maintain its property and meet the needs of its operations

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Charles Green, representing Union Missionary Baptist Church, stated that the Church needs space for housing two transport vehicles for their various ministries, lawn care equipment and other items that need to be stored within an enclosed building. He stated that it has become very dangerous to cross the street to get to their site on the east side of S. M. L. King with lawn equipment and that the Church building itself has been hit by motor vehicles four times.

Michael Fulton, FBi Buildings Inc., presented colored renderings of the proposed building showing that the colors were chosen to match the Church building.

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

Ms. Jefferson asked the applicants if they would agree to the condition for landscaping. The applicants answered that they accept the need for landscaping. The applicants asked for permission to postpone the deadline for landscaping until spring 2025. Ms. Stachowiak replied that the Church would be able to delay planting the shrubs and trees until the weather is appropriate in the Spring of 2025.

Mr. Fryling asked for clarification on the requested height of the accessory garage and asked if the Church will relocate all of their equipment out of the building at 601 S MLK Jr. Blvd. Charles Hinton replied that the Church's vans will need the additional height for the overhead doors. Mr. Hinton said that the Church will remove all equipment from 601 S MLK Jr. Blvd., and they will explore selling that property.

Mr. Rice and Ms. Jefferson expressed their support for the variance, conditioned upon the landscaping as recommended by staff. Mr. Lowry stated that he spoke with residents in the area, none of whom are opposed to the variances and thus, he is also supportive of the request.

Mr. Iannuzzi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rice to approve BZA 4090.24, for variances to Sections 1250.04.01 (a)(6), 1250.04.01 (a)(7), and 1250.04.01 (a)(8) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit an accessory garage in the front yard at 500 S. M. L. King Jr. Boulevard that would have a height of 16 feet, 3^{7/8} inches, and would be constructed of steel siding and roofing, with the condition that the property owner plant 1 shrub for every 10 linear feet and 1 tree for every 30 linear feet of frontage along S. M. L. King Jr. Boulevard and W. St. Joseph Street adjacent to the proposed garage location, 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 unanimously (8-0).

V. **OLD BUSINESS** – None

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Excused Absences.

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

VII. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Regular Meeting, September 12, 2024

Mr. Lowry made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to approve the September 12, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

VIII. **PUBLIC COMMENT** - None

IX. **ADJOURNMENT** AT 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator