
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – *Approved April 10, 2025***BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS****Thursday, March 13, 2025, 6:30 P.M.****600 W. Maple Street, Lansing MI**

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 & M. Jackson

Absent: H. Lowry & M. Rice

Staff: S. Stachowiak & A. Fedewa

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

It was moved by Ms. Jefferson, seconded by Mr. Jackson to grant excused absences for Mr. Lowry and Mr. Rice. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Ms. Stachowiak announced that Mr. Leaming has resigned from the Board.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Iannuzzi, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to approve the agenda as printed. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

III. PUBLIC COMMENT - None**IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION****A. BZA-4094.25, 405 Cherry Street, Variances to the building height limitation and placement of a garage**

Ms. Stachowiak presented the staff report for the variance requests to permit a 16' tall accessory garage in the front yard at 405 Cherry Street. Section 1250.04.01 (a)(7) restricts the height of garages/accessory structures to 15 feet and section 1250.04.01 (a)(6) requires them to be located in a side or rear yard. Ms. Stachowiak recommended approval of the variances based on a finding that they are in compliance with the applicable practical difficulty/unnecessary hardship and the impact criteria listed in Sections 1274.06 (c) and 1274.06 (e) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the proposed garage will be an improvement to the site which is currently a surface parking lot with no landscaping to soften its appearance. She said that it is good planning practice to locate buildings along road frontages with parking in the rear so that the buildings become the dominant features of the streetscape. Ms. Stachowiak said that this creates a more human scale that fosters a pedestrian friendly environment. She also said that the proposed garage will be of

similar design as the office building with the overhead doors and access drives thereto located on the back wall.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the additional height being requested in this case is only one foot and since the garage will be of very similar design as the office building on the site, it will not be contrary to the intent and purpose of the ordinance. She said that since the majority of the site is considered front yard, there is no reasonable location where a garage could be constructed in compliance with the ordinance, thus creating a practical difficulty for the applicant that is unique to the subject property and warrants relief from the ordinance standard restricting the placement of garages to side and rear yards.

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Steve Roffi, Fusco, Shaffer & Pappas, Inc. spoke in favor of the request on behalf of the applicant, the Lansing Housing Commission. He stated that in addition to the issues that Ms. Stachowiak mentioned, the majority of the site is located in the 100-year floodplain which further restricts where a garage could be placed on the property.

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

In response to a question from Mr. Jackson, Ms. Stachowiak stated that the parcel where the garage will be located must be combined with the parcel that contains the office building. She said that this is a simple administrative process through her office.

Mr. Berryman questioned whether the garage would obstruct vision for motorists exiting driveways on the site and turning at the street intersection to the south.

Ms. Stachowiak stated that the proposed building location is outside of the corner clearance area and will not obstruct vision for motorists in the area. ;

Mr. Fryling made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to approve BZA 4094.25 25 for variances to Sections 1250.04.01 (a)(6) & (7), and 1250.04.01 (a)(7) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a 16 foot high, accessory building (garage) in the front yard at 405 Cherry Street in the location shown on the site plan contained in the meeting packet, on a finding that the requests comply with the variance evaluation criteria listed in Sections 1274.06 (c) & (e) of the Ordinance. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

B. BZA-4095.25, 1891 W. Miller Road and adjoining vacant parcel, Variances to the building height limitation, allowable building materials and to permit mechanical equipment in the front yard.

Ms. Stachowiak gave a brief overview of the variance requests and stated that the Board must hold the public hearing as the notices were sent out and there is a member of the public present that wishes to speak. She requested, on behalf of the applicants, that the Board table the request following the hearing, so that they can have additional time to address the concerns raised in the staff report.

Stacy Lynch, 6101 Scotmar Drive, spoke in opposition to the variances. She stated that the building will be out of character for the area and will diminish the view from her

home which is located directly across the street.

Mr. Iannuzzi made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to table BZA-4095.25 until the next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

V. OLD BUSINESS – None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, January 9, 2025

Mr. Iannuzzi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to approve the January 9, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT AT 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator