



City of Plymouth
Zoning Board of Appeals
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 7, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.

City of Plymouth
201 S. Main
Plymouth, Michigan 48170-1637

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joe Elliott called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Elliott, Vice Chair Burrows, Members Mike Devine, Robert Mengel, Mike Pappas

Excused: Member Rebecca Smith

Also present: Planning and Community Development Director Greta Bolhuis

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

Elliott abstained.

MOTION PASSED

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to approve the agenda for the October 3, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

5. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Z 24-17, 240 N. Mill: Non-use variances to construct a guest house within the required side and rear yard setbacks, with a distance between buildings less than 70 feet, and with one less off-street parking space.

Project architect Scott Wright reviewed the request, stating that the design was developed in a way that would save a tree and maintain as much green space as possible.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Board Member Discussion

The group discussed the request and there was consensus that four variance requests signaled that too much was being asked for this site. A scaled-down approach was suggested.

Motion

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to postpone the request until the next meeting, providing the applicant with the opportunity to revise the site plan.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Devine asked for a motion allowing him to be recused from the next two agenda items because he was working professionally on both projects.

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to recuse Devine from items Z24-18 and Z24-19.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Z 24-18, 885 Starkweather: Non-use variance to install a wall sign on a property with an existing ground sign.

Owner Don Soenen addressed the board and stated that he would like to put a wall sign on the Davis St. side of the building. The ordinance would allow another ground sign, but he felt a wall sign would bring less attention to the residential street entrance.

Elliott informed the applicant that approval would require 3 of 4 board members to vote yes, and that he could delay his request until five members were present, which would require 3 of 5 to vote yes. The applicant agreed to move forward.

Citizen Comments

Patrick Kehoe, 418 Blunk, spoke in support of the variance.

Board Member Comments

The group discussed the request and agreed that a wall sign would be preferable to a ground sign on Davis.

Motion

Mengel offered a motion, seconded by Burrows, to approve Z24-18.

Findings of Fact

The two signs are largely out of view of one another.

The property has two distinct means of access which are not adjacent.

A ground sign would be more intrusive to the neighborhood than what is proposed.

The group discussed adding a condition that would limit the variance to this project.

Mengel offered an amendment to his motion with the following condition. Burrows agreed to the amendment.

Condition

The variance is conditional on there being continuous means of access between the two properties.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

c. Z 24-19, 405 Blunk: Non-use variance to construct a detached garage that exceeds lot coverage

Elliott disclosed that the property is directly behind his home and asked whether he should be recused. The group agreed he could be impartial.

Applicant Joe Phillips described his request, noting that the property owner was not able to use both sides of the garage due to the way it sits on the lot and the city-owned alley at the rear of the property. He said the request would increase the lot coverage by 1%.

Board Discussion

There was a discussion about having the alley vacated, which would not require a variance. The process of alley vacation was reviewed. The small lot coverage increase was mentioned as a positive when considering approving the request.

Citizen Comments

Patrick Kehoe, 418 Blunk St., spoke in support of the variance.

Motion

Elliott offered a motion, seconded by Burrows, to approve a .7% lot coverage variance to allow for the construction of a new detached garage.

Findings of Fact

The requested variance is very minor.

A vacated alley is treated differently for corner lots vs. interior lots, which makes lot coverage appear to be higher for this property.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no board member comments.

8. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Bolhuis said the new solid waste card was published and that all residents are to respond with the type of receptacle they wish to have.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Mengel, to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY