



**City of Plymouth
Zoning Board of Appeals
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 5, 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: Elliott, Vice Chair Burrows, Members Mike Devine, Mike Pappas, 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 Pappas, to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Burrows offered a motion, seconded by Pappas, to approve the agenda for the December 5, 2024 meeting.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

5. OLD BUSINESS

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

Project architect Scott Wright reviewed the request, and the changes he made to the plan after his previous request.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Board Member Discussion

There was consensus that the rear yard setbacks and proximity to the primary structure were reasonable requests.

Motion

Smith offered a motion, seconded by Burrows, to approve an 11.9-foot rear yard setback variance and a 36-foot variance to allow the building to be placed 39-feet from the primary structure.

Findings of Fact

There is no structure which would meet the setback requirements in the ordinance.

Elliott requested a friendly amendment adding the condition that the setback variances are only applicable to the secondary structure as shown in the submitted drawings and don't apply to the entire property.

Smith and Burrows agreed to the amendment.

Elliott requested two more friendly amendment adding the findings of fact that the proximity of the buildings with respect to each other is less of an issue because it is a small-scale development, and two separate buildings are consistent with the neighborhood.

Smith and Burrows agreed to the amendments.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Z24-20, 615 S. Harvey: Non-use variances for the rear yard setback, addition of a second curb cut, minimum front yard landscape area, lot coverage, and floor area ratio

The applicant described his requests and rationale.

Citizen Comments

Anne Frank, 635 S. Harvey, described the issues she's had in the past from water runoff and concern that a second driveway would exacerbate the problem.

Fred Brunk, owner of 605 S. Harvey, spoke in support of the project and variances.

Board Member Discussion

The group discussed the request and expressed concern that adding a second driveway and second curb cut, along with decreasing the amount of front yard landscaping would result in excessive impervious surfaces.

Motion

Elliott offered a motion, seconded by Burrows, to deny the three variances related to the front yard – constructing a second driveway and second curb cut and a variance of 12.7% for the front landscape area.

Findings of Fact

The property already has six off-street parking spaces and there is no convincing argument that more spaces are needed.

The requested reduction of landscaping is not consistent with neighboring residential properties.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The variances for the rear yard setback of 16.9 feet, lot coverage of .7% and floor area ratio were discussed, and there was a question about whether changing the plan to open patios would fall within the existing ordinances.

Motion

Pappas offered a motion, seconded by Smith, to table the discussion on the rear yard setback, lot coverage, and FAR until the applicant gets more information from the city administration.

There was a roll call vote

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Z 24-21, 391 Joy: Non-use variance for a non-picket fence greater than 48-inches in the front yard setback along Coolidge

Applicant John Kinville described his request to install a 6-foot privacy fence.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments, but board members received two emails in support of the project.

Board Member Discussion

Board members noted the uniqueness of the property and surrounding properties. Bolhuis said the fence would be 100-feet long.

Motion

Smith offered a motion, seconded by Pappas, to allow a 6-foot fence within the front yard setback along Coolidge.

Findings of Fact

The corner lot backing to the unique side of a multi-family structure with unusual sightlines results in an overly restrictive backyard envelope.

Condition

The variance is only granted for the area of the property in the drawing and doesn't extend the full length of Coolidge.

Devine requested a friendly amendment stating there may be some alteration to what is indicated in the plans based on input from the building official for sightlines coming out of the driveway.

Smith and Pappas agreed to the friendly amendment.

There was a roll call vote.

Yes: Elliott, Pappas, Smith

No: Burrows, Devine

MOTION PASSED 3-2

7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no board member comments

8. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

There were no reports or correspondence.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Devine offered a motion, seconded by Burrows, to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

There was a roll call vote.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY