

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals was held on
Thursday, September 14, 2017
At 7:30 P.M. in City Council Chambers, City Hall, Alexandria, Virginia.

The proceedings of the meeting were recorded; records of each case are on the web at alexandriava.gov/dockets and on file in the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Members Present: Laurence Altenburg, Chair
Mark Yoo, Vice Chair
Daniel Poretz
Timothy Ramsey
Jonathan Buono
Walter Marlowe
Lee Perna

Staff Present: Mary Christesen, Planning & Zoning
Anh Vu, Planning & Zoning

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

1. The Board of Zoning Appeals hearing was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Chairman Altenburg. All members were present.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. BZA Case # 2017-0024
433 S. Lee Street
Public hearing and consideration of a request for a special exception to construct a one-story addition within the required rear yard; zone RM/Townhouse.
Applicant: David & Elizabeth Jochum, represented by Robert Bentley Adams & Associates.

Speakers:

Scot McBroom, architect, Robert Bentley Adams & Associates, presented the case and answered questions from the Board on behalf of the applicants.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTIONS: On a motion by Mr. Yoo, seconded by Mr. Perna, the Board voted to approve the special exception request subject to all applicable codes, ordinances, and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason:

The Board agreed with the staff analysis.

Discussion:

Mr. Yoo commented that the proposed project is a modest and reasonable expansion to the existing dwelling and would be in favor of supporting the request. Mr. Perna expressed concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed addition to the adjacent dwelling's window (205 Wilkes Street); however, the concern was alleviated since the applicant has proposed to maintain the existing height of the existing shed.

3. BZA Case #2017-0027
198 Uhler Terrace
Public hearing and consideration of a request for a special exception to construct a covered open front porch in the required front yard; zoned R-8/Single-family. Applicant: David & Catherine Bohn.

Speakers:

Catherine Bohn, property owner, presented the case and answered questions from the Board.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Buono, the Board voted to approve the special exception request subject to all applicable codes, ordinances, and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason:

The Board agreed with the staff analysis.

4. BZA Case # 2017-0029

926 N Lindsay Place

Public hearing and consideration of a variance to construct an attached garage with the vehicle opening facing the front yard; zone R-12/Single-family. Applicant: David & Amy Hawkins

Speakers:

David and Amy Hawkins, property owners, presented the case and answered questions from the Board.

Steve Baker, neighbor (934 North Lindsay Place) spoke in support of the requested variance.

John Geraghty, neighbor (929 North Lindsay Place) spoke in support of the requested variance.

Ronald George, neighbor (918 North Lindsay Place) spoke in support of the requested variance.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Buono, seconded by Mr. Yoo, the Board voted to deny the variance request per city staff's recommendation. The motion carried on a vote of 5-2. Mr. Perna and Mr. Marlowe dissented.

Reason:

The Board agreed with the staff analysis.

Discussion:

Mr. Buono commented that although the variance request for the construction of the attached two-car garage appears to be a reasonable request and received support from neighbors, the request does not meet the Zoning Ordinance variance standards and criteria or the Code of Virginia. Mr. Perna asked staff regarding the necessity of a retaining wall and drainage impact should the driveway is to be located to the side of the property. Staff commented that the submitted application did not contain a specific proposal with a retaining wall for the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services to provide drainage comments. Mr. Perna expressed concerns should the applicant construct a complying attached garage that would require a retaining wall and that would cause negative drainage and impact neighbors. Mr. Yoo also expressed concerns regarding the retaining wall on the shared property lines and how it might cause

negative drainage and might not be aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Perna commented that the subject property is surrounded by many dwellings with front loaded garages; hence when looking within the context of the neighborhood, the proposed project appears to be a reasonable deviation. Mr. Yoo agreed with Mr. Perna and commented that at least ninety percent of the dwellings in the neighborhood feature front loaded garages. Both Mr. Buono and Mr. Yoo commented that the construction of a detached garage on subject lot appears to be feasible. Mr. Altenburg commented that the existing site condition is not unique to the subject property and that it appears that the property owners did not fully explore and consider other alternatives. Mr. Perna commented that the topography could be the unique situation that warrants a variance. It was suggested that the hardship is self-imposed.

5. BZA Case # 2017-0030

703 Little Street

Public hearing and consideration of a request for a special exception to construct a second story addition in the required side yard; zone R2-5/ Single and two-family. Applicant: Garrison Sean Kineke & Allison Yarger, represented by MOSS Construction Inc.

Speakers:

Allison Yeager, property owner, presented the case and answered questions from the Board.

Chris Hall, general contractor, Moss Construction, Inc. answered questions from the Board.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Yoo, seconded by Mr. Buono, the Board voted to approve the special exception request subject to all applicable codes, ordinances, and without accepting staff's recommendation to demolish the accessory structure in the northeast rear yard. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Discussion:

The Board asked several questions about the necessity to remove the large shed in the rear corner of the property to comply with floor area ratio. Staff agreed to work with work with the property owners to ensure the proposed project complies with floor area ratio.

OTHER BUSINESS

6. No other business was discussed.

MINUTES

7. Consideration of the minutes from the July 13, 2017 Board of Zoning Appeals hearing

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION: By unanimous consent, the Board of Zoning Appeals voted to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2017 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

8. The Board of Zoning Appeals hearing was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.