

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals was held on
Monday, January 13, 2020
At 7:00 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
www.alexandriava.gov/dockets and on file in the Department of Planning & Zoning.

Members Present: Laurence Altenburg, Chair
Mark Yoo, Vice Chair
Lee Perna, Secretary
Erich Chan
Quynn Nguyen
Daniel Poretz
Timothy Ramsey

Absent Members:

Staff Present: Mary Christesen, Department of Planning & Zoning
Sam Shelby, Department of Planning & Zoning

CALL TO ORDER

1. Mr. Altenburg called the January 13, 2020 Board of Zoning Appeals to order at 7:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

2. BZA #2019-00015

2215 Russell Road

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a special exception to construct a one-story addition in the required front yard. If the request is granted, the Board of Zoning Appeals will be granting a special exception from section 12-102(A) of the zoning ordinance - relating to the physical enlargement of a non-complying structure; zoned: R-5/Single-Family.

Applicant: Laura Campbell, architect.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION, JANUARY 14, 2020: On a motion to approve by Mr. Yoo, seconded by Mr. Perna, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved the special exception subject to all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Board agreed with staff analysis that the application met the criteria for a special exception.

Speakers:

Laura Campbell, architect representing the applicants, presented the case.

3. BZA #2019-00016

310 Commerce Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a variance to allow access for parking from the street rather than an alley or interior court; zoned: CD/ Commercial Downtown.

Applicant: Tim Foley, owner.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION, JANUARY 14, 2020: On a motion to deny by Mr. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Poretz, the Board of Zoning Appeals denied the variance. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 1. Mr. Yoo dissented.

Reason to Deny: The Board agreed with staff analysis that the request did not meet the criteria for a variance and was contrary to the purpose of the ordinance.

Dissenting Reason: Mr. Yoo didn't feel the application as submitted contained all the information needed to make a decision on this case and would have preferred the application be deferred.

Speakers:

Tim Foley, property owner, presented the case and answered questions from the Board.

Gail Rothrock, 209 Duke Street, spoke on behalf of the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) and explained how the request did not meet the criteria for a variance and emphasized concerns about preserving open space and suggested the applicant obtain temporary parking permits while work is being done on the house.

Stephen Milone, 907 Prince Street, spoke of behalf of the Old Town Civic Association further explained how the request did not meet the criteria for a variance and was contrary to the purpose of the ordinance. He expressed concern about the reduction of open space that would result from the proposed parking space associated with the curb cut. He also explained that the other curb cuts on the block from the 1970's and 80'S are examples of why the ordinance was amended in 1994 to require access to parking from an interior alley or court.

Thomas Maresh, 342 Commerce Street, spoke in opposition to the request. He described the history and character of Commerce Street and expressed concern regarding the removal of the street tree.

Yvonne Callahan 735 South Lee Street, spoke in opposition to the request. She described the pattern of homes on Commerce Street built prior to the 1970's being built without curb cuts and those built between the 1970's and 1994 being constructed with curb cuts. She suggested the applicant explore alternate parking arrangements including coordination with Shiloh Baptist Church to the rear of the property.

Boyd Walker, 1307 King Street, spoke in opposition to the request. He suggested looking for alternative parking options and emphasized that a curb cut typically removes more than one on-street parking space, which will reduce available parking for all residents and patrons of Commerce Street. He also opposed the removal of the street tree.

OTHER BUSINESS

4. Election of Board Officers for Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION, JANUARY 13, 2020: Mr. Yoo nominated Mr. Altenburg for Chair, Mr. Ramsey nominated Mr. Yoo for Vice Chair and Mr. Yoo nominated Mr. Perna for Secretary. On the motion by Mr. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Perna, the Board of Zoning Appeals voted to approve the slate. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

MINUTES

5. Consideration of the minutes from the September 9, 2019 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ACTION, JANUARY 13, 2020: On the motion by Mr. Perna, seconded by Mr. Yoo, the Board of Zoning Appeals voted to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

ADJOURNMENT

6. The Board of Zoning Appeals hearing was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

DRAFT