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Director Koncsol stated that the Applicant wants to add a second level to the existing detached garage. He said in looking at the elevation situations of this particular structure, the front part of the garage is approximately 16" higher than the rear of the garage, so we have a sloping grade to the back which adds to what would be perceived as a higher back end of the garage. Within the ordinance they make a reference to averaging those two, so basically taking the 16" height differential, split that into 8", so therefore that added to what Mr. Kreimes shows as being the height of the garage, 15'8", then adding 8" brings that to 17'4" as a total height when measured by zoning allowances to the mid point of the roof. As a flat roof it would be a flat line and the steeper the roof gets it's measured to the midpoint of the roof rather than the peak down as zoning definitions allow for structure height.

This particular situation was forwarded earlier to the Historic Commission and they have offered their acceptance of what it is, they just had a comment about the stairs, not particularly remembering many garages of a detached nature in the City, certainly their nature is the Historic area of the City and I'm not sure I have recollection myself of anything in the Historic District with stairs but cited a couple on Brookdale that have external stairs. There are a number of them in other areas that have an internal stair but that's generally with a bigger garage so they then can orchestrate access to that upper level. A few of them on Brookdale have the external stairs which you can see either from the road and one guy put them on the backside of his garage so you couldn't see it but he has access to it that way. So it's not like there would be no other exterior stair. And from a Zoning standpoint, it's all relative to the structure anyways, whether it's internal, external, it's all a matter of setback and massing for the property and everything else is in line except for the height of this particular structure so that's what brings this to the Board for their consideration and whether we have a practical difficulty in what's involved with the variance and the granting of it based on those facts that the Board will hopefully figure out in discussion.

Chairperson Bertin asked if the external staircases on Brookdale were within the Historic District and Koncsol replied no. Bertin then inquired if this would be the only stair exposed outside of a garage in the Historic District and Koncsol stated to the best of his knowledge that's true.

Chairperson Bertin stated that it looks from the plans to be more than stairs and that the plans show a platform that exceeds just access of the staircase and Koncsol replied that there is a platform at the top of the stairs, 5'8" by 6", more of a mini deck of sorts. Bertin stated that when going up Oakland, the view of the garage is pretty prevalent.

Chairperson Bertin called the Applicant to the podium.

Michael Kreimes, 33705 Grand River Avenue, Farmington, came to the podium.

Chairperson Bertin inquired of the Applicant what the hardship is that requires the granting of this variance.

Kreimes stated that his current home and garage is lacking in storage space.

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Chairperson Bertin inquired of Konscol if that qualifies as a hardship and Konscol stated it's not black and white as such but it could be qualified as a hardship. Konscol stated that a hardship is looked at as something unique to a given property that would not be necessarily the same factor on another property immediately next door or in the vicinity of. He stated adding a second story to a garage and dealing with a height situation isn't necessarily a difficulty other than it's a preference at times due to needing more storage, this is the way to do it. And ultimately other roof designs, Mr. Kreimes and I have had dialogue about the opportunity that maybe using different roof designs to meet the 15' height and get some storage but it wasn't enough to maximize his dollars being spent on the efforts of construction, he was looking to maximize that area by spending those dollars.

Chairperson Bertin stated he noticed that a neighbor has apparently storage in the upper level of his garage, and asked the Applicant if he knows how he accesses that space.

Kreimes stated the access is through a pull down staircase and it's a barn style house and then there's a staircase to the east of his home, the brown home. He indicated that his garage would not have room for a vehicle if an interior staircase was put in with the pull down access. He stated because of his height, it would be difficult for him to access the storage area and that's why the need for the deck on the back of the garage. So if he carries a piece of furniture into it and stand up comfortably and carry what needs to be stored. He indicated he is moving from a larger home and has a place to store his stuff, but is asking to construct this as a means of storage, to build up.

Chairperson Bertin inquired if the Applicant's home has a basement and Kreimes responded yes but that it is already full and he shares the home with his mother. Bertin then asked if there was a need for the bigger deck at the top of the stairs and Kreimes stated that the deck is irrelevant in his request, it can be made smaller, but that what he is asking for is the 2' variance on the height.

Kreimes then stated that a smaller platform is not a problem, that he is looking to use the available property that he has.

Chairperson Bertin opened the floor for questions from the Commissioners.

Crutcher asked for clarification that this is adding an additional story to his existing garage and the Applicant responded yes, a half story, because it's only going to be a 6' interior and indicated he is 6'1" and is requesting the extra 2'.

Crutcher stated that from the drawings he sees a 6 foot and a 7 foot drawing and Kreimes replied yes, using scissor trusses and in talking with Mr. Konscol they were looking at every aspect to get the most height that he could out of what he is constructing.

Crutcher then asked if it went down to a five foot exterior wall, would that help, and Kreimes responded that the extra 8 inches are on sloping property and that is the reason for the request of the height variance, due to the slope of the property and the

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access to the door in the back, it needs to be 6' height or 84 inches to install a door in the back.

Crutcher asked Koncsol if the height is based on the average height of the roof and Koncsol responded in the affirmative.

Crutcher then asked if it was possible to lower the low side of the roof and raise the rear and the Applicant responded he is not able to do that.

Chairperson Bertin asked the Applicant if he would be willing to run the stair straight on through and make the platform smaller and he responded that he would be willing to do that.

Bertin then asked Koncsol if the Commission would be able to include that provision in the variance and Koncsol responded that the Board has that ability to negotiate conditions in the granting of the variance.

Discussion was then held concerning the door and its location.

Chairperson Bertin asked if any letters had been received on this matter and Koncsol stated no verbal or written communication had been received by him.

Aren asked if the Applicant had received any input or feedback from neighbors and Kreimes responded that he has lived in the neighborhood for 50 years and all of the neighbors are excited that he is doing it.

Doc Wingard, 33718 Oakland Street, came to the podium and stated he lives behind the Applicant's house and requested to look at the plans. He indicated as long as the Applicant did a good job on it, he has no objections. He then asked Kreimes how much head height he would have if he walked out of the door into the building and Kreimes responded it should be 7'4".

Chairperson Bertin then brought up the use of scissor trusses in the structure and expressed his doubt that they would work and the Applicant responded he already has plans for those.

Further discussion was held concerning the use of scissor trusses.

Kreimes asked the Board if the deck could be 3'6" so there is an opening for a 36" door.

Crutcher suggested that a 4' x 4' landing would be more in character and stated he is still concerned with the slope and requested a more detailed drawing from the Applicant and suggested that the Applicant could accommodate his needs with a 1'4" variance.

Schiffman stated that the Applicant had stated the need for the height for comfort in utilizing the storage space and indicated he didn't think the 12 inches would make a big difference.

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The Applicant stated that the garage is still going to be lower than everything in the immediate vicinity and provided the Board with the scissor truss plans.

Crutcher then asked if the pitch of the roof is in character with neighboring properties and Koncsol stated there's probably a good mix, nothing identical, but there are mansard, barn style, in that vicinity, a little bit of everything.

Crutcher stated that he could go with a flat roof and not need a variance and the Applicant replied that a flat roof does not fit the character of the neighborhood.

Crutcher indicated with the mix of character in the neighborhood, a flat roof would be a way of getting the height down without needing a variance and the Applicant replied that is not what he wants for the character of his home.

MOTION by Schiffman, seconded by Aren, to approve the variance request of Michael Kreimes, 33705 Grand River, contingent upon the restructuring of the exterior deck to 4 foot by 4 foot.

AYES: Aren, Bertin, Perrot, Schiffman

NAYS: Crutcher.

Motion carried, 4 to 1.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

Director Koncsol then informed the Board that there will be a June Zoning Board meeting as there is a request for a variance.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Aren, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

John D. Koncsol , Building Inspector