

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Farmington Board of Zoning Appeals was held on Wednesday, August 3, 2016 in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 1976.

Chairperson Bertin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Aren, Bertin, Craft, Crutcher, Gallagher

ABSENT: None

A quorum of Commissioners were present.

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Craft, to approve the agenda as presented Motion carried, all ayes.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2016

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Craft, to approve the minutes of June 1, 2016.
Motion carried, all ayes.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

The minutes of the June 13, 2016 and July 11, 2016 Planning Commission Meetings were received and filed.

APPEAL OF: **Mark Carpenter**
 33606 Hillcrest Drive
 Farmington, MI 48336

1. Request for variance to Sec. 35-73, Lot and Yard Requirements, to “convert an existing side-loading attached garage into useable space and to construct a new 26’ wide by 38’ deep front-loading attached garage, which would reduce the rear yard setback to 17’. An 8’ variance is requested (25’ – 17’ = 8).

Director Christiansen introduced this agenda item and turned it over to the Chairman.

Chairman Bertin invited the Petitioner to the podium.

Mark Carpenter, 33606 Hillcrest Drive, stated that he is requesting the variance to add working space to his existing garage and to construct a new

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garage in its place. He indicated that he moved to Farmington from Novi where he had a 30 x 50 pole barn that allowed him to work on his car and other projects. He stated he would like to utilize the existing garage for his tools so he could work on his cars and would put a space heater in it in order to work in there in the wintertime as well. He said he spent a year and a half working on a design for the new structure to go with the house and came up with the one presented to the Board. He stated he would like to put the new garage in the back of the current house and would include a two-car garage with a window at the top to allow for light to come in. He indicated he plans to put a car hoist in the garage as well

Bertin questioned the Petitioner why he didn't just connect the existing garage to the rear portion of the house and he responded that the front roof goes across in the back and there's a "T" that comes out and he experiences a collection of water coming off the roof at that location. He also indicated that originally he was trying to find a cost effective way to connect all the way down and couldn't without tearing off existing roof.

Bertin inquired what would be behind the building and the Petitioner stated nothing, that he wasn't planning on remodeling, just moving his tools into the garage to use as a work room. He stated he wants to keep the garage door where it is and may decide after winter if changes need to made.

Linda Carpenter, his wife, shared with the Board that her husband likes to tinker with his antique car and that currently they don't have room in their garage to park either of their cars.

Bertin asked if the small building on the back part of the yard was his and the Petitioner responded it belongs to the neighbor.

Aren inquired if the neighbor has expressed any negativity or anything about the project and the Petitioner responded that he had spoken to the wife when they put a new fence in the back and she didn't seem concerned about it.

Bertin stated they had received one letter from Alice Benson, 33618 Hillcrest, who voiced an approval for the variance.

Christiansen indicated that no objections were sent in from the properties that were notified of the request.

Gallagher stated that when looking at the survey, he could see the garage on the home survey and wondered why it would not be possible to move the entire structure eight feet away from the setback which would meet the requirement and not need a variance.

Christiansen responded that the Petitioner had looked at that possibility but wanted to keep the front building line of the house in symmetry and not project out. He said in looking at the survey it reflects the property has a unique circumstance in that the lot line comes at a 90 degree angle. He indicated he has seen a lot of these projects recently where the homeowner wants to

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convert to usable space so they are repurposing and creating an expansion of living space as the Petitioner is by converting his garage but that overall his objective was to keep the appearance and front building line in sync.

Further discussion was held concerning color choices for the garage and front of the home.

Aren commended the Petitioner for taking into account the visual aspect of the home from the front. She also stated that she was happy they chose to move to Farmington from Novi where the houses are much larger and that this alternative would help accommodate his need for more space.

Bertin questioned where Alice Benson's home at 33618 Hillcrest was compared to the Petitioner's and Linda Carpenter responded that she is three houses away.

Crutcher inquired about the front yard setback and Christiansen responded that the front property line is further away.

Christiansen also stated that the Petitioner's intention was to keep the front building line of the house in line with the existing building line to keep the character of the neighborhood intact.

Gallagher inquired if the sole purpose for keeping the garage in its space was esthetically so as to keep in line with the character of the neighborhood and Christiansen responded that the Petitioner also did not want it to project out.

Gallagher responded that he had seen homes that have those projections and doesn't think that eight feet is that big of a projection.

Christiansen indicated that functionality and the appearance of the neighborhood played a big role in the request and also the unique circumstance created from the lot shape.

Bertin stated that the unusual configuration of the lot was a key factor in the request for variance.

Further discussion was held on other possibilities for the Petitioner to plan the footprint that would not require a variance.

The setbacks of the front and rear yard were discussed and Christiansen indicated there was no requirement for a variance at the time the home was constructed.

MOTION by Craft, seconded by Aren, to move to approve the request for variance from Mark Carpenter, 33606 Hillcrest Drive, to convert an existing side-loading attached garage into usable space and to construct a new 26' wide by 38' deep front-loading attached garage, which would reduce the rear yard setback to 17', thereby requiring an 8' variance for the following reasons and findings of fact:

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- 1) That the Petitioner has a unique circumstance on his property due to the shape of his lot;
- 2) That the variance is not self-created;
- 3) That there was one letter of support and no letters objecting to the request from neighboring properties
- 4) That it does not adversely affect the neighborhood.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Aren, Bertin, Craft, Crutcher

NAYS: Gallagher

Motion carried.

Bertin wished the Petitioner good luck with his project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Gallagher, supported by Crutcher, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

John D. Koncsol, Building Inspector