**ADA TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES**

**SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY JULY 23, 2020, 4:30 P.M.**

A Special Meeting of the Ada Township Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Thursday, July 23, 2020,

at 4:30 p.m. The meeting was held by video/audio-conferencing, in conformance with the Michigan Governor’s Executive Order.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dixon at 4:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Burton, Dixon, Nuttall, Smith

Members absent: McNamara

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Ferro

Public Present: 4

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Smith, supported by Nuttall, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by 4-0 vote, with 1 absent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Moved by Nuttall, supported by Burton, to approve the June 4, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried by 4-0 vote, with 1 absent.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Request for variance from Sec. 78-803, Standards for Private Driveways, to permit a driveway having a grade of 15 percent, instead of the maximum 10 percent, 894 Skyevale Dr. NE, Parcel No. 41-15-21-205-012, Celebrity Builders, LLC, for Andrew Palazzolo and Brittany Pebbles**

Troy DeHoop, Celebrity Builders spoke on behalf of the applicant. Bajdek noted that he had received an email minutes before the meeting from the applicant, Andrew Palazzolo, to request a variance for a driveway grade of 18 percent instead of the original request of 15 percent. Bajdek noted the current variance request for a 15 percent driveway grade was to be considered at today’s Special Meeting. It was pointed out that the public hearing notice specifically identified the variance request as being for a 15 percent driveway grade.

Dixon deferred to Planning Staff for additional comments. Bajdek commented about the late email received for an 18 percent driveway grade. Mr. DeHoop stated reasons for the delayed email request to upgrade to an 18 percent driveway grade. Bajdek stated the variance request being considered today is for a 15 percent driveway grade and cannot consider an 18 percent driveway grade at this time. Board members discussed the possible chance to re-post a variance request for an 18 percent driveway grade or to proceed with discussion on the current request for a 15 percent driveway grade. Dixon stated if applicant wished to pursue an 18 percent driveway grade, then the applicant would need to submit a new variance request and a new meeting date would need to be scheduled.

Dixon presented two (2) options to Celebrity Builders; DeHoop, Vis, and Carr.

1. Proceed with variance request meeting planned for today to consider and act upon the request for a 15 percent driveway grade.
2. Postpone the meeting today and Celebrity Builders and applicants would submit a new request for variance for the 18 percent driveway grade.

Mr. DeHoop agreed to proceed with the request for a 15 percent driveway grade.

Mr. DeHoop presented the application for variance to permit a driveway having a grade of 15 percent. Mr. DeHoop informed the Board of the reasons for the variance request. Mr. DeHoop stated the property owners want to maintain the appearance of their home and a better view of the house with the proposed “straight” driveway. Mr. DeHoop added the 15 percent driveway grade would allow a “straight” driveway entrance and also be able to preserve the cluster of trees along the property. Mr. DeHoop acknowledged the letter from the Ada Fire Chief and the concern for the access challenges for emergency vehicles on the proposed driveway. Mr. DeHoop noted that there is a heated driveway in the site plan and it may defer challenges in the driveway in wet and slippery conditions.

Mr. DeHoop explained the excavation problems of the driveway.

Nuttall asked if the heated driveway would improve access for emergency vehicles. Bajdek stated that Fire Chief, David Murray, said that a heated driveway may or may not improve accessibility for emergency vehicles considering there is no guarantee it will always be operating. Smith expressed concern of safety issues and the need for emergency vehicles to access the home.

Dixon commented that he has looked at the site plans and aesthetically he could see that the straight-shot driveway was most appropriate. Dixon stated that the fire/life safety code should be complied with to protect fire/life safety for the firefighters, the occupants and others providing medical service. Dixon stated he would like to see other solutions be presented to the Board.

Mr. DeHoop stated his goal is to provide the customer with a beautiful home and a desirable driveway.

Dixon noted the importance of a satisfied/happy customer but then again, the Board must abide by the rules that are set before us unless there is an extreme condition for this site.

Mr. DeHoop stated that Celebrity Builders appreciates the gained knowledge they need to pursue other solutions to the driveway grade and thanked the Board for their consideration.

Burton stated that she feels safety is most important and to continue looking at other solutions.

Dixon presented the applicant with options to have the Board vote on the request for variance or resubmit application or postpone variance request for another time. Mr. DeHoop asked the Board to vote on the request for variance for the 15 percent grade driveway.

It was moved by Smith, supported by Nuttall, to deny the request for variance from Sec. 78-803, Standards for Private Driveways, to permit a driveway having a grade of 15 percent, instead of the maximum 10 percent based on a determination that a practical difficulty in complying with the zoning standard does not exist.

Motion passed by 4-0 roll call vote, with 1 absent.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

No additional correspondence was received.

**BOARD MEMBER/STAFF REPORTS**

There were no board member or staff reports.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Nuttall, supported by Burton to adjourn meeting at 5:14 p.m. Motion accepted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jacqueline Smith

Ada Township Clerk

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