



**ADA TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
MINUTES OF THE TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2023, REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. at the Ada Township Hall, 7330 Thornapple River Dr. SE, Ada, Michigan

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Burton at 4:30 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Members present: Burton, Courtade, Nuttall, Smith

Members absent: McNamara

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Hill (summer intern), Said, Suchy

Others Present: 13

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Courtade, supported by Smith, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 6, 2023, REGULAR MEETING**

Moved by Courtade, supported by Nuttall, to approve the June 6, 2023, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – none**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Request for a use variance to permit a change in use from a retail business (Georgie's) to a general office use, 7504 Thornapple River Drive SE, Parcel No. 41-15-34-179-001, Brian Riefepeters for property owner Kenneth D. Ruth**

Applicant, Brian Riefepeters, presented his request for a use variance and said that the building has been operating at a commercial capacity for 40+ years. He said the property is zoned residential but the existing structure is not set up to be utilized for a residence and he shared concern of the structure being torn down and rebuilt. He made note that the building is currently operating as retail use (Georgie's), although his plan is to utilize the building for general office use (which he feels is less intrusive), and he requested the variance allowing him to do so.

Planner/Zoning Administrator Bajdek reiterated that this is a request for a use variance and confirmed the current property is zoned V-R Village Residential and is operating under a use variance for Georgie's Consignment Clothing/retail store. Bajdek said the applicant intends to purchase the property and use for general office use with the appearance of the building to remain unchanged other than new paint color. Bajdek noted that the existing off-street parking area would remain unchanged.

Bajdek said although the proposed use does not conform to the use regulations of the V-R Village Residential zoning district, it would be less intense than the existing retail use. A change in use of the property from a retail use to general office use will not alter or adversely affect the essential character of the surrounding area but will allow for the continued preservation of an existing structure with historical significance.

Bajdek said that approval of the use variance request is recommended by Staff, subject to the following conditions:

1. The use of the property shall be limited to general office use.
2. If the property is sold, any future owners must also conform to this use or apply for a new use variance.
3. Any signage shall be permitted in accordance with the sign requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for the PO Professional Office zoning district; a sign permit application shall be submitted and approved by Planning Department staff prior to its erection.

Burton opened the public hearing at 4:42 p.m.

Jay Rosloniec, 7546 Fase Street, said he supports the use variance request. He likes the idea of office use with less traffic and said it would be a great asset for the building to remain there and not be torn down.

Deb Emery, 7534 Fase Street, said she agrees with everything neighbor Jay just said.

Arlene Wright, 8696 Bailey Drive, said she is also 100% in support of the request.

There was no other public comment and the public hearing was closed at 4:44 p.m.

There was ZBA discussion regarding the use variance for retail vs. general office in the V-R district and parking requirements/capacity.

Moved by Smith, supported by Courtade, to approve the use variance to permit a change in use to general office use at 7504 Thornapple River Drive, subject to the following conditions:

1. The use of the property shall be limited to general office use.
2. If the property is sold, any future owners must also conform to this use or apply for a new use variance.
3. Any signage shall be permitted in accordance with the sign requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for the PO Professional Office zoning district; a sign permit application shall be submitted and approved by Planning Department staff prior to its erection.

Motion carried.

- 2. Request for side yard setback variance to allow for an addition to the existing dwelling, 7242 Thornapple River Drive SE, Parcel No. 41-15-34-103-004, Jeffrey and Amy Draft**

Amy and Jeff Draft, 7242 Thornapple River Drive, Amy explained that they currently have a 3 bedroom house and are looking to expand with an addition off the rear of the house, about 450 sq. ft. and she referred to the plans submitted in the packet. She said the proposed addition will require them to request a variance for the side yard setback and explained further details.

Burton opened the public hearing at 4:52 p.m.

Corine Bogerd, next door neighbor at 7254 Thornapple River Drive, said she and her husband have no objections with the variance request.

Planning Director Said noted a reference to the standards for a variance and explained that because of the placement of the existing garage, you would have a challenge trying to do an addition on the opposite side of the house which creates practical difficulties with the expansion of the home. Said stated that based on the conditions mentioned and the applicable standards for variances, Staff has no objection to the requested variance.

There was brief ZBA discussion about the current required setbacks vs. the request, some of the history of a previous variance for the property, and comments made about the positive neighbor support of the project.

Moved by Courtade, supported by Nuttall, to approve the side yard setback variance as presented.  
Motion carried.

## **VII. CORRESPONDENCE**

Said referenced an email sent earlier to the ZBA members and noted that Staff is intending to put forward a re-write of the zoning ordinance (in the next fiscal year) and would like to assemble a zoning ordinance preparation review committee. He has two members of the Planning Commission for the review committee and asked for one ZBA member to participate. Bruce Courtade agreed to participate on behalf of the ZBA.

Said updated that the Master Plan was approved by the Township Board and he is very pleased with the plan and its process.

Township Manager Suchy provided a few updates:

\*Pedestrian bridge over the Thornapple River connecting Legacy Park with property across the river – Township has submitted a Grant request for \$500,000 from MEDC RAP 2.0. Hope to have additional updates in the fall.

\*The Township is working with Grand River Greenways of Kent County for projects on the Knapp Street pedestrian bridge and the Roselle Pedestrian bridge.

\*The Township hired Dennis Brinks as new Buildings, Facilities, and Grounds Director.

Said acknowledged Harry Hill's (summer intern) attendance and thanked him for his work with the Township.

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT** - none

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Nuttall, supported by Courtade, to adjourn meeting at 5:07 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jacqueline Smith  
Ada Township Clerk

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