

CITY OF DECORAH
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Minutes of August 4, 2014

Chair John Moeller called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and called roll. Present: John Moeller, Sue Sander, Steve Johnson and Janelle Pavlovec. Absent: Jon Christy.
Also in attendance: Chad Bird

Moeller asked for consideration of the minutes of the July 7, 2014 meeting.

**Johnson moved and Pavlovec seconded approval of the minutes as presented.
Roll call vote: Unanimously approved.**

The first item on the agenda was a request from Mary and John Wendling for 705 River Street requesting permission to construct a front step / porch attached roof structure contrary to R-3 Zoning requirements.

Mr. Wendling explained that he was proposing to cover a set of front step recently built on their property. He discussed the situation with his newer front steps and noted that they are allowed under zoning code as an uncovered structure.

Bird noted the property owner would like to reconstruct the front porch and provide for a roof structure contrary to the zoning code, he noted that as such, a variance is requested because the construction would expand the principal structure.

Moeller closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

There was discussion by the Board that there is a true hardship in this case due to the lot size and location.

**Sander moved and Johnson seconded a motion to approve the application for a front-yard variance.
Roll call vote: Unanimously approved.**

The second item on the agenda was a request from Carl Svenson for 702 Winneshiek Avenue requesting permission to construct a front / porch attached roof structure contrary to R-3 Zoning requirements.

Bird noted that this proposed project is similar to the one just heard by the Board. Mr. Svenson was present and provided information on his proposed step and roofing construction.

He has constructed the lower and uncovered portion of the steps. He now wishes to construct the roof portion and is requesting a setback of 18 feet from the required 25 feet.

Moeller closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

**Johnson moved and Sander seconded a motion to approve the request for a variance for the front-yard to 18'.
Roll call vote: Unanimously approved.**

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The third item on the agenda was a request from Brenda Burke for 720 Main Street requesting permission to construct a solar panel in the side-yard of property contrary to the R-3 Zoning requirements.

Ms. Burke is proposing to install two ground mounted solar panels in her yard. The zoning code provides that solar panels must be installed in rear-yards or mounted on the principal structure.

Ms. Burke stated she does not have adequate room in her rear-yard so is requesting a variance to allow them in the side-yard per the plans provided.

The Board asked about the height of the panels at 193" (16') and Bird noted that the maximum height for accessory structures is 12 feet. There was considerable discussion about the panels may be adjusted.

Moeller closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

In discussion, Bird noted that sustainable practices and zoning was a tenant mentioned in the updated Comprehensive Plan.

**Johnson moved and Pavlovec seconded a motion to approve the request for a variance for solar panels mounted in the side-yard and for a height of 16'.
Roll call vote: Unanimously approved.**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,



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