

City of Decorah
Board of Adjustment
February 5, 2025 at 5:15pm
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Sue Sander, Bill Courtney, Ron Onsager
Members Absent: Dan Bellrichard, Trent Ostby
Others Present: Steve and Brenda Finholt, Craig Chyle, Greg Swanson, Travis Goedken
Zoom: Leslie White

Call to Order by Sander at 5:15pm

Consider approval of minutes from the December 4, 2024 Meeting.

Motion by Onsager and second by Courtney to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2024 Meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Onsager, Courtney, Sander

Motion Passed

Steve and Brenda Finholt at 406 Hillcrest Drive is requesting permission to construct a 6' tall fence in the front yard, contrary to City Code Section 17.16.135 – Fences

Goedken presented the background notes.

Mr. Finholt explained to the Board members his variance request. He stated the front yard of the neighbors property is 4-5 feet higher than their yard. They would like to place a 6 foot tall fence for privacy.

Courtney expressed his concern about the proposed fence going the whole length of the property.

Onsager questioned the front yard setback.

Finholt stated the fence will be 30 feet from inside the curb and then run along the side of the house.

Motion by Onsager and second by Courtney to approve permission to construct a 6' tall fence in the front yard, contrary to City Code Section 17.16.135 – Fences

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Onsager, Sander

Nays: Courtney

Motion Failed: 2:1

After discussion, the Board opted to reconsider the previous motion.

Motion by Courtney and second by Sander to reconsider permission to construct a 6' tall fence in the front yard, contrary to City Code Section 17.16.135 – Fences

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Courtney, Sander, Onsager

Motion Passed

Motion by Sander and second by Onsager to table permission to construct a 6' tall fence in the front yard, contrary to City Code Section 17.16.135 – Fences

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Sander, Onsager, Courtney

Motion Passed

Craig Chyle of 406 E Main Street is requesting permission to construct a principal structure with a 5' side yard setback to the West and 6' to the East, and a front setback of 13', contrary to City Code Section 17.76.040 – Bulk Regulations

Goedken presented the background notes.

Goedken stated a neighbor, Mr. Timp, submitted a written objection for this variance request.

Mr. Chyle explained to the Board members his variance request. He explained he would like to construct a home that is easily accessible for his wife. He mentioned the reason he submitted a variance request was because his lot is only 51' as opposed to the normal 53' like the rest of the lots in the surrounding area. He stated he will be amending his original plan regarding the side yard setbacks. Stating he will be in compliance with the current side yard setback requirements.

Sander questioned if the existing house would be taken down.

Chyle confirmed.

Motion by Sander and second by Onsager to approve permission to construct a principal structure with a front setback of 13', contrary to City Code Section 17.76.040 – Bulk Regulations

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Sander, Onsager, Courtney

Motion Passed

Consider Policy Regarding Variance Notification Beyond Legal Requirements

Goedken presented the background notes.

Sander believed the agendas being sent out via mail to surrounding addresses was done out of courtesy. She mentioned having a QR Code on the sheet that is posted on the property would be a great idea for getting out information also.

Motion by Sander and second by Onsager to approve a Policy Regarding Variance Notification Beyond Legal Requirements – To Publish Notice in the local newspaper and physically post notice on-site in conformance with City Code Section 17.28.060 – Special Exceptions

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Sander, Onsager, Courtney

Motion Passed

Other Business: Next Meeting will be March 5th.

Adjourn: 5:56pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Leslie White

Administrative Assistant