

ISABELLA COUNTY  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
July 21, 2010

Room 225  
Isabella County Building

A regular meeting of the Isabella County Zoning Board of Appeals was held on July 21, 2010 in room 225 of the Isabella County Building, 200 North Main Street, Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Wynes, Gordon Gilchrist, Marilyn Fosburg, Tom Courser, Kelly Bean.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Mike Zalewski, Planner/Zoning Administrator  
Brandy Harger, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 9:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the June 16, 2010 meeting were approved with changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None heard.

VARIANCE REQUEST #10-04

Mr. Zalewski explained that Alpena Marc, LLC is requesting a variance to construct a 26' x 40' office addition 40' from the front property line. The minimum front setback in the General Commercial (C-1) District is 50'. The property is located at 11775 N. Isabella Road in Section 2 of Vernon Township. The applicant is requesting a variance from the front setback requirement. The property is zoned General Commercial (C-1) and the front setback is 50' in that district. The applicant is proposing to construct the office addition at only 40' from the front property line. As noted in the application, the owners do not have another suitable location to construct the addition to the clinic. In 2008-2009, the existing office building was converted to the Clare VA clinic. The VA has recently contacted the owner of the property (Alpena Marc, LLC) about the possibility of constructing a physical therapy suite. Due to site characteristics, office layout and the type of equipment to be installed in the new suite, the only suitable location is off the front of the building in the southeast corner. Therefore the applicant is requesting the variance.

Mr. Konczak, Representative for Alpena Marc, LLC, stated that this building is the greenest in Isabella County. There are ground taps in the Southwest corner of the property for the geothermal system. On the northwest portion of the property is where the septic and drain field

are located. The topography of the property at the South wing slopes down to the west wing. There were talks about renovating the basement, but the ceilings are only 7' high in some areas because of the duct work. Also because the ceilings in the basement are 7' high, they do not want the patients to feel like they are closed in. There is an ambulance entrance at the remaining wing of the building and they would be opposed to closing this entrance off. The VA has requested that they add these types of services so veterans do not have to travel as far.

Mr. Courser asked if the Southwest portion of the property is lawn.

Mr. Konczak stated that this is where the earth loops for the geothermal are located, if more are needed for the addition they would have to be placed here as well.

Ms. Fosburg stated that if the basement was renovated would the ceilings be high enough to accommodate the physical therapy equipment.

Mr. Konczak stated that they would not be able to accommodate the equipment.

Mr. Gilchrist stated that the building code would not allow 7' ceilings to be used as space for patients.

Mr. Courser asked why the West portion of the property could not be used.

Mr. Konczak stated that there would not be room as this is where the 2<sup>nd</sup> exit is located, which would cause security issues. Also the basement would have to be extended and the addition built.

The meeting was opened to public comment at 9:13 a.m.

None heard.

The meeting was closed to public comment at 9:13 a.m.

Ms. Fosburg asked how patients would enter the new addition.

Mr. Konczak stated that patients would be entering through the main lobby, and the existing fire exit would have to be moved.

Mr. Gilchrist asked if a traffic count has been completed since the clinic has been in place.

Mr. Konczak stated that the traffic volume is low, and mainly for the clinic as there are not many houses around.

Mr. Courser asked if the size could be minimized so as to not encroach the set back as much.

Mr. Konczak stated that the current building already encroaches the set back. They have to be able to have a circuit type equipment setup, office, and waiting area. Requirements were given and the dimensions applied for are the minimum. It was asked if the addition could be any

smaller, but we were told that because of the circuit that is required for the machines it could not be any narrower than has been requested.

Mr. Bean stated that because of the topography of the property, the applicant is limited as to where on the property the addition can be built.

Ms. Fosburg stated that building the addition would not be detrimental to the adjacent properties. The addition requires high ceilings and an entrance.

A motion was made by Mr. Courser, supported by Ms. Fosburg, to approve Variance #10-04 because of lighting and heating issues the addition would have to be placed in the requested place. The problem was not created by the applicant. The dimensions are required for this type of Physical Therapy unit. Building the addition would not be detrimental to the adjacent properties and it does not impair the intent of the ordinance.

Roll Call Vote:

Fosburg: Yes

Courser: Yes

Wynes: Yes

Gilchrist: Yes

Bean: Yes

Motion carried.

Variance Approved.

#### STAFF COMMENTS

None heard.

#### BOARD COMMENTS

None heard.

#### ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Gilchrist, supported by Ms. Fosburg to adjourn at 9:27 a.m.

Yes: Wynes, Gilchrist, Fosburg, Courser, Bean.

No: None.

Motion Carried.

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Marilyn Fosburg, Secretary

Brandy Harger, Recording Secretary