

REGULAR MEETING - ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

CITY OF NOVI

May 9, 2017

Proceedings taken in the matter of the ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, at City of Novi, 45175 West Ten Mile Road, Novi, Michigan, on Tuesday, May 9, 2017

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindy Gronachan, Chairperson

Jonathan Montville, Secretary

David Byrwa

Brent Ferrell

Linda Krieger

Thomas Nafso

Joe Peddiboyina

ALSO PRESENT:

Beth Saarela, City Attorney

Lawrence Butler

Coordinator: Katherine Opperman, Recording Secretary

REPORTED BY: Jennifer L. Wall, Certified Shorthand Reporter

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Tuesday, May 9, 2017  
Novi, Michigan  
7:00 p.m.

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CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Good evening. I would like to call the May 2017 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting to order.

All rise for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Member Montville.

(Pledge recited.)

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:

Katherine, will you please the call roll.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Byrwa?

MR. BYRWA: Present.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Ferrell?

MR. FERRELL: Here.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Krieger?

MS. KRIEGER: Here.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Nafso?

MR. NAFSO: Here.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Montville?

MR. MONTVILLE: Here.

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MS. OPPERMAN: Member  
Peddiboyina?

MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Here.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Sanghvi?

MR. SANGHVI: Here.

MS. OPPERMAN: Chairperson  
Gronachan?

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Present.

Thank you. This evening there is only one case, so I am not going to necessarily go through all the pomp and circumstances about turning off your cellphones and looking at the rules of conduct.

Are there any changes to the agenda this evening?

MS. OPPERMAN: No.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you. I am sure everyone has had time to review the minutes that were in our packet from the March meeting.

Are there any changes or amendments? Nothing. All those in favor of the minutes as they stand say aye.

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THE BOARD: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: None

opposed.

Is there anyone in that audience that wishes to make comment in regards to any other matters regarding things that would come before the board other than the case that's in front of us tonight?

Seeing none, we will go right to our first and only case, PZ --

MR. SANGHVI: I would like to point out that the applicant for today's case has been known to me for sometime, he's a fellow attorney. I have known him very well. I know the property as well. And I just want to know if it is all right with you and the board and the city attorney for me to continue to participate in the deliberation of this case? I have no financial interest in this.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you.

MS. SAARELA: It's my

1 understanding you're not related to the  
2 applicant in any way, is that correct?

3 MR. SANGHVI: No.

4 MS. SAARELA: I don't see any  
5 conflict here.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank  
7 you, I don't either.

8 Good try to get out of the big  
9 case.

10 MR. SANGHVI: I just want to be  
11 clear.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: We  
13 appreciate that. So let's call PZ17-0010,  
14 Spencer and Sons Construction.

15 Would you like to come to the  
16 podium, please.

17 If you are both giving  
18 testimony, please both state your names,  
19 spell them for the secretary. I take it we  
20 have the contractor and the homeowner?

21 MR. SPENCER: That's correct. I  
22 am the contractor. John Spencer,  
23 S-p-e-n-c-e-r.

1 I'm Gary Sobotta, the  
2 homeowner.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:

4 Gentlemen, would you please  
5 raise your right hand to be sworn in by our  
6 secretary.

7 MR. MONTVILLE: Do you swear to  
8 tell the truth in the testimony you are about  
9 to provide?

10 MR. SPENCER: Yes.

11 MR. SOBOTTA: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You may  
13 proceed.

14 MR. SPENCER: Well, it's a pretty  
15 simple request for a variance to allow  
16 Mr. Sobotta to utilize his property to the  
17 fullest to obtain a close to 25 percent lot  
18 coverage.

19 We're requesting a 3.25-foot  
20 setback variance, so that would be 16.9 feet  
21 from the side setback and eight feet variance  
22 so that we can be at 42 feet setback in the  
23 rear of the property, not that it necessarily

1 has merit, but an existing deck structure is  
2 already there in that footprint, although  
3 it's different than, you know, an addition to  
4 a home, would be the footprint utilized for  
5 the addition.

6 We have received approval from  
7 the Pioneer Meadows Association as well as  
8 support from one of the neighbors in favor of  
9 allowing the variance to happen, so that we  
10 can put an addition for a family room, living  
11 space on the existing home.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Do you  
13 have your plans with you or a picture of the  
14 property. If you would like to share with  
15 us, please, on the overhead, that would be  
16 great.

17 MR. SPENCER: So this is the  
18 existing home right here, and part of this  
19 deck structure that's shown there is also  
20 where the proposed addition would be.

21 And so at the closest point to  
22 the side lot, would be 16.9, if the variance  
23 was granted, and at the furthest distance is



1 17.4, and then again in the rear, utilizing  
2 that same structure footprint of the deck we  
3 would be 42 feet from the rear setback, if  
4 the variance was granted and allowed for the  
5 addition to be put on.

6 So it's just open living  
7 space, living room, if you will. Gary is  
8 moving onto to his eighth grandchild, just to  
9 allow for some extra space utilizing the  
10 existing deck space, that's only been able to  
11 be utilized in good weather, turning it into  
12 a four season room to be utilized all year  
13 round.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay. Is  
15 there anything else you would like to add?

16 MR. SOBOTTA: No, not at this  
17 point. I mean, it's -- you know, like I  
18 said, we basically do have permission from  
19 the association. I mean, you know, meets  
20 their variance.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank  
22 you. There clearly is no one in the audience  
23 that wishes to make any comment.

1 Is there any correspondence?

2 MR. MONTVILLE: Yes, there was 34  
3 letters mailed, zero letters returned, two  
4 approvals, zero objections. And the only  
5 written approval is from Travis Millot, at  
6 25731 Glamorgan Morgan and he mentions he  
7 spoke to the neighbors, has no problem with  
8 what they are doing and mentioned that they  
9 are good neighbors.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: All  
11 right. Thank you. Building department, do  
12 you have anything to offer?

13 MR. BUTLER: No, nothing to offer  
14 from the building department.

15 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Board  
16 members? Member Sanghvi.

17 MR. SANGHVI: I know this  
18 property quite well. And what they are  
19 trying to do is just make more living space.  
20 I don't think it is a case, in spirit of the  
21 ordinance the kind of variance they are  
22 requesting, so I have no problem with it.  
23 Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank  
2 you. Anyone else? Member Montville.

3 MR. MONTVILLE: When looking at  
4 the case, with the new structure being within  
5 the footprint, and just trying to improve the  
6 house, improve the property value, if you're  
7 going to do anything you would have to  
8 request a variance.

9 So, you know, in my eyes,  
10 they're improving the property value, the  
11 esthetics of the home and surrounding areas,  
12 and I have no problem with supporting the  
13 variance requested as well.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
15 Thank you. Anyone else?

16 MR. BYRWA: I was wondering how  
17 did you come up with the size of the  
18 addition?

19 MR. SOBOTTA: I came up with it  
20 based on our current deck size.

21 MR. BYRWA: Yeah, because my  
22 experience is that it kind of can be less  
23 expensive to build in even numbers. Like it

1 costs you just as much to probably build an  
2 18 by 18, than it would be to have an odd  
3 size like a 17.

4 MR. SOBOTTA: I think what we  
5 tried to do, we are trying to meet the side  
6 of the house so it would be straight, it  
7 would be flat rather than kind of indented,  
8 or you know, pushed out.

9 And then also there was a --  
10 on the back of the house, it kind of meets  
11 the side that -- there is a bit of what they  
12 call a bump-out, that's on the house. The  
13 only question was how far do we want the  
14 depth of the house. It was basically to make  
15 it look esthetically pleasing.

16 MR. BYRWA: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
18 Peddiboyina?

19 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I don't see any  
20 problem. I approve. I have no issue.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank  
22 you. Anyone else?

23 Table would entertain a

1 motion, if there is -- Member Krieger.

2 MS. KRIEGER: In Case No.  
3 PZ17-0010, with Spencer and Sons Construction  
4 on 25678 Glamogran Drive, I move that we  
5 grant the variance in this case, sought by  
6 the petitioner for the reasons and practical  
7 difficulty, and as have shown the easements  
8 of the -- have been approved through their  
9 homeowners association, and the footprint of  
10 the addition will be the same size as the  
11 deck, and that this allows for a compatible  
12 adjustment on the house, that at night it's  
13 better for them.

14 Without the variance,  
15 petitioner will be unreasonably prevented or  
16 limited with respect to the use of the  
17 property because of the additional members  
18 that they were speaking about.

19 The property is unique because  
20 it's on the corner, so it has two fronts, but  
21 it is fenced in, and will be esthetically  
22 pleasing. The petitioner did not create the  
23 condition because of its location. The

1 relief granted will not unreasonably  
2 interfere with adjacent or surrounding  
3 properties, as evidenced by letters sent by  
4 neighbors saying that they're fine with that.

5 The relief is consistent with  
6 the spirit and intent of the ordinance  
7 because of the fellowship with neighbors.

8 MR. FERRELL: Second.

9 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's been  
10 moved and seconded. Is there any further  
11 discussion on the motion?

12 Seeing none, Katherine, would  
13 you please call the roll.

14 I'm sorry, Member Byrwa.

15 MR. BYRWA: Thought one of the  
16 important considerations is also the  
17 placement of the house on the lot, in  
18 relation to the septic field, it limits the  
19 area where you can actually -- add onto your  
20 house, the way that septic field is and the  
21 way the house is placed on the lot.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Are you  
23 offering that as a friendly amendment to --

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MR. BYRWA: I would.

MS. KRIEGER: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
Krieger, you're accepting that?

MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank  
you, guys. Katherine, would you please call  
the roll.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Byrwa?

MR. BYRWA: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Ferrell?

MR. FERRELL: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Krieger?

MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Nafso?

MR. NAFSO: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Sanghvi?

MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member Montville?

MR. MONTVILLE: Yes.

MS. OPPERMAN: Member  
Peddiboyina?

MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

1 MS. OPPERMAN: Chairperson  
2 Gronachan?

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.

4 MS. OPPERMAN: Motion passes  
5 eight to none.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I am  
7 going to amend that. Member Nafso, because  
8 we have a full board tonight.

9 MS. SAARELA: His just doesn't  
10 count.

11 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: We are  
12 glad to have him, nonetheless. He's a valued  
13 member of our board. Nonetheless, his vote  
14 does not count as an alternate.

15 In the meantime your variance  
16 has been granted and congratulations and good  
17 luck.

18 MR. SPENCER: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
20 Under other matters this evening, we have  
21 elections finally. I will open the floor for  
22 nominations for chairman. Member Ferrell.

23 MR. FERRELL: Thank you, Madam



1 Chair. I nominate Mav Sanghvi for chair.

2 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I second.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Are you  
4 accepting the nomination?

5 MR. SAFIR: With the caveat that  
6 I am only here for about three months in a  
7 year.

8 MR. FERRELL: That's why we have  
9 a vice chair. The vice chair can pick up  
10 when you're not here.

11 MR. SANGHVI: I will be drafted.  
12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Are there  
14 any other nominations?

15 Seeing none, Katherine, call  
16 the roll.

17 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Byrwa?

18 MR. BYRWA: Yes.

19 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Ferrell?

20 MR. FERRELL: Yes.

21 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Krieger?

22 MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

23 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Nafso?

1 MR. NAFSO: Yes.

2 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Montville?

3 MR. MONTVILLE: Yes.

4 MS. OPPERMAN: Member

5 Peddiboyina?

6 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

7 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Sanghvi?

8 MR. SANGHVI: I am going to

9 abstain.

10 MS. OPPERMAN: Chairperson

11 Gronachan?

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.

13 Next I will open the floor  
14 for -- congratulations. I note you're a  
15 little flawed there. The party will be at  
16 9:00 tonight.

17 Nominations for vice chair?

18 Member Montville.

19 MR. MONTVILLE: I would like to  
20 nominate Cindy Gronachan as vice chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You're  
22 not going to let me go, are you.

23 MR. MONTVILLE: We are going to

1 need you for --

2 MR. BYRWA: I would second,  
3 support.

4 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
5 It's been moved and seconded. Are there any  
6 other further discussions? All these heads  
7 over here -- look over here. All right.

8 Katherine, please -- I accept  
9 the nomination, because Mav Sanghvi will be  
10 here most of the year, so I still get a  
11 break.

12 Katherine, please call the  
13 roll.

14 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Byrwa?

15 MR. BYRWA: Yes.

16 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Ferrell?

17 MR. FERRELL: Yes.

18 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Krieger?

19 MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

20 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Nafso?

21 MR. NAFSO: Yes.

22 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Montville?

23 MR. MONTVILLE: Yes.

1 MS. OPPERMAN: Member

2 Peddiboyina?

3 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

4 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Sanghvi?

5 MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: That's  
7 been moved and approved.

8 Now for secretary. Don't  
9 everybody jump at once. Can I make a  
10 nomination?

11 MS. SAARELA: Sure.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I would  
13 like to nominate Dave Byrwa as secretary. He  
14 knew that was coming. Anybody going to  
15 second?

16 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I would second.

17 MR. BYRWA: No. I would like to  
18 decline on that. My work schedule and  
19 everything.

20 MR. SANGHVI: I don't know if he  
21 is a regular member or not.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: He is a  
23 regular member.

1 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: How about Brent  
2 for secretary.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Would you  
4 accept as secretary?

5 MR. FERRELL: I would, yes,  
6 unless somebody else wants it.

7 MR. BYRWA: I would support that.

8 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's been  
9 moved and seconded. Katherine, please call  
10 the roll.

11 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Byrwa?

12 MR. BYRWA: Yes.

13 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Krieger?

14 MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

15 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Nafso?

16 MR. NAFSO: Yes.

17 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Montville?

18 MR. MONTVILLE: Yes.

19 MS. OPPERMAN: Member

20 Peddiboyina?

21 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

22 MS. OPPERMAN: Member Sanghvi?

23 MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

1 MS. OPPERMAN: Chairperson

2 Gronachan?

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.

4 That was worse than last

5 November, guys.

6 All right. Congratulations  
7 all the new officers, and I get to step down.

8 This is my last call the meeting to order.

9 Are there any other subjects or topics to  
10 discuss?

11 MR. FERRELL: Isn't your last  
12 meeting today? We are sad to see you leave.

13 MS. DRESLINSKI: Yes. It takes  
14 me two hours to get home. Thank you Novi  
15 traffic.

16 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You're  
17 not leaving Novi?

18 MS. DRESLINSKI: No, I am not  
19 leaving Novi. But the drive is killing me.

20 MR. FERRELL: You're still going  
21 to come to meetings on your own time?

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I have  
23 the extra room at my house.

1 MS. DRESLINSKI: The drive kills  
2 me.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I have a  
4 tent in the backyard.

5 MR. FERRELL: Thank you for  
6 everything.

7 MS. DRESLINSKI: You're welcome.

8 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Monica, I  
9 have thoroughly enjoyed working with you. I  
10 have worked with you on and off throughout  
11 the years. And you are going to be missed,  
12 but I know that Katherine has been grasping  
13 onto this job and is very excited. We look  
14 forward to working with her in the future.  
15 Thank you both.

16 Is there anything else?

17 MR. SANGHVI: I just want to  
18 thank the chair for working almost two and a  
19 half years and doing a wonderful job. Thank  
20 you.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
22 Anything else?

23 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Thank you so

1 much.

2 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I really  
3 have enjoyed it.

4 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Monica, thank  
5 you. Welcome to Katherine.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You know  
7 I have to say, that this board in particular  
8 now that we have gotten settled, and I feel  
9 like we have all improved and we are all  
10 growing, and I am excited to continue with  
11 our new chair and to see where the --

12 MR. SANGHVI: I won't be here  
13 next month anyway.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: So don't  
15 give too long of a goodbye speech.

16 MR. SANGHVI: My grandchildren  
17 are graduating from high school.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: So you  
19 won't be here next month, is that what you're  
20 telling me?

21 MR. SANGHVI: You're not gone  
22 yet.

23 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Well,



1 obviously I will not be forgotten either, and  
2 you won't be either.

3 Actually I do enjoy doing this  
4 and that's what makes being chair easy. I  
5 will say that a couple years ago when I came  
6 back here, I was a little overwhelmed with  
7 the way things were going. We have great  
8 members from the city that help us and I  
9 think they should be commended.

10 I think that the city attorney  
11 has made -- has helped turn us around. Beth  
12 is just one of my favs, whenever I call her,  
13 she's always there. Seriously, it's very  
14 encouraging.

15 So it's not that hard to take  
16 this position for those of who you want this  
17 position in the future. Seriously, it is a  
18 good position. You do learn a lot.

19 So don't be afraid to  
20 volunteer for something. That's fine, you  
21 have got great people to work with.

22 All right. I will be back  
23 here next month.

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So having said that, all those  
in favor -- wait a minute.

Is there a motion to adjourn  
the meeting?

MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I would like to  
get a picture of the board.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: We will  
do that after. Don't nobody run out of the  
room.

Is there a motion to adjourn  
the meeting?

MR. SANGHVI: So moved.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Meeting  
adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.)

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STATE OF MICHIGAN )  
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COUNTY OF OAKLAND )


ss.

I, Jennifer L. Wall, Notary Public within and for the County of Oakland, State of Michigan, do hereby certify that the meeting was taken before me in the above entitled matter at the aforementioned time and place; that the meeting was stenographically recorded and afterward transcribed, and that the said meeting is a full and correct transcript.

I further certify that I am not connected by blood or marriage with any of the parties or their attorneys, and that I am not an employee of either of them, nor financially interested in the action.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at the City of Walled Lake, County of Oakland, State of Michigan.

6-1-17



Date

Jennifer L. Wall CSR-4183  
Oakland County, Michigan  
My Commission Expires 11/12/22