

SHALER TOWNSHIP ZONING HEARING BOARD

July 13, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Shaler Township Zoning Hearing Board was held on July 13, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. Mr. Young called the meeting to order. Ms. Re called the roll as follows:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: James W. Young, Jr., Esq., Charles J. Porter, Jr., Esq., William C. Woods and Alternate Jerry Schwedler

BUILDING CODE OFFICIAL/ZONING OFFICER: Robert Vita

RECORDING SECRETARY: Noreen A. Re

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Motion for the Zoning Hearing Board to remain as it is with Mr. Young as chair made by Mr. Porter and seconded by Mr. Woods.

Motion passes unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 8, 2022

Motion to approve the minutes of September 8, 2022, made by Mr. Woods and seconded by Mr. Porter.

Motion carries unanimously

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS:

CASE ONE: R3, F2 – Posted - Rebecca Dick and Lars Johnson requesting a variance of Section 225-26C - Front Yard Depth - to construct a garage and front porch built off of the front of the existing house but extending not more than 10'-0" past the permitted setback located at 39 Perry Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15209, in the Township R-3 Two-Family District, Allegheny County Lot & Block No. 119-K-226.

Ms. Rebecca Dick and Mr. Lars Johnson, 39 Perry Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15209, were present and duly sworn. Ms. Dick explained the request in detail. She stated they cannot fit a garage in front of the existing home without going over the setback. They do not have the option to locate the garage anywhere else on the property due to significant constraints that include limited access points, the lack of the paper alley maintenance that runs behind the property and the topography of the lot. The paper alley is not maintained up to their property.

They are planning to add a second story addition, in addition to the garage. Mr. Johnson added they have talked to all the neighbors, and everyone has been fine with the proposal. He also indicated it would not disrupt the curb appeal of the street.

Ms. Dick also commented that the current garage is not large enough to fit a modern car. She stated it is not really functioning as a garage. They do not store any car in the current garage.

Upon inquiry by Mr. Young, Ms. Dick stated the porch would remain where it is. It would be the roof of the new garage, and there would be stairs leading up to it to access the front door. The hillside that is the front yard would be excavated out and the hill eliminated. The current garage would be used for storage. The driveway will be regraded as a parking pad. They are requesting 10 feet past the permitted setback.

Mr. Johnson stated the primary hardship is the lack of access. Other homes on the street have access by the back alley. They do not have the same access. They are unable to get to the back yard to construct the garage there. They do not own enough property on the side to make a driveway. There is also a township sign that cuts off 15 feet of the frontage. There is both a caution sign and then behind that a guardrail and behind that a Duquesne Light telephone pole. A significant portion of the frontage cannot be accessed for vehicles to go around the back.

Mr. Woods concurred that a driveway could not be constructed in the back of the house.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken from 7:46 p.m. to 7:55 p.m.)

MOTION:

CASE ONE:

MR. PORTER: "Mr. Chairman, I would move that the requested variance be granted. It appears from the presentation here, both in writing and by testimony, that there are significant hardships with the property. There is a paper street that's essentially not usable in any way.

"There is a township sign and a guardrail that blocks a significant part of the frontage. The lot is such these folks can't in any other way construct what they want to do. What they have proposed appears to be consistent with other homes in the neighborhood. It will not be out of character for that particular neighborhood.

"It appears from the diagrams and pictures presented that the proposal will essentially greatly enhance the property. So for those reasons, I would move that their request be granted.

MR. WOODS: "I'll second the motion."

Motion carries unanimously

ADMINISTRATION - None

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Woods and seconded by Mr. Porter.

Motion carries unanimously

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:58 P.M.

**William C. Woods,
Secretary**

Minutes prepared by Noreen A. Re, Certified Realtime Reporter.