

MINUTES

CITY OF WOOSTER BOARD OF BUILDING & ZONING APPEALS

December 5, 2024

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Chairman of the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals, called the meeting to order. Board members Jason Anderson, Jeff Battig, Martha Bollinger, Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Mark Reynolds, and Jennifer Shatzer were present. Board member Ben Gunn was absent. Vincent Marion, Planning and Zoning Manager, and Andrea Uhler, Deputy Law Director, represented the City of Wooster.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jason Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2024, meeting of the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals. Jennifer Shatzer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 6-0.

III. APPLICATIONS

BZA-24-25.

Chuck Schwanger of Wayne Metropolitan Housing requested area variances from 1115.03(a) to allow a new single-family detached dwelling within the required front and rear setback, maximum lot coverage by buildings, and total maximum lot coverage at 138 North Columbus Avenue, permanent parcel number 64-01419.000, in an R-T (Traditional Residential) zoning district.

Chuck Schwanger, Director of Planning and Development for Wayne Metropolitan Housing Authority, 345 North Market Street, stated that the single-family home on the lot had a fire approximately one year ago. Mr. Schwanger explained that after extensive research to rehab the home, it was not cost-effective due to extensive fire and smoke damage. Mr. Schwanger continued that they wanted to move forward and replace the dwelling with a new structure, a three-bedroom single-family home with approximately 1500 square feet of living space on the existing lot. Mr. Schwanger stated that the footprint would be identical to what is currently there, so with the current zoning requirements, the lot the house was built on one hundred years ago does not meet the zoning requirements. Mr. Schwanger explained that the design requirements meet the R-T requirements for a single-family home. Mr. Schwanger noted that they had an identical situation in another home with a fire, and they constructed a new single-family home in the R-T zoning district. Mr. Schwanger continued that the one thing that changed with the R-T requirement was that the front porch would go the entire length of the house at 26 feet. Mr. Schwanger said they would demolish the old foundation and install a new one because the insurance would not allow it. Mr. Schwanger explained that the single-family home was consistent with the other homes on the street. Mr. Schwanger continued that once the house was demolished, we would start the new building in early 2025.

Mr. Fitz Gibbon asked if anyone from the public would like to address the Board regarding the application.

Mary Braden, 410 West North Street, stated that her property runs along the back side of the vacant lot, the burnt house, and the corner lot of the alley. Ms. Braden explained that she has a six-foot fence along the property line, which does not help because of the people renting those houses. Ms. Braden continued by saying that one tenant had destroyed her fence and the sheds behind the houses. Ms. Braden stated that she has many concerns about the new home and the other house, which is still empty. Ms. Braden noted that she has contacted Wayne Metropolitan Housing about her problems, and they won't do anything to stop them from blocking her drive and destroying her property.

Mr. Fitz Gibbon closed the public hearing.

Jason Anderson made a motion to approve applications BZ-24-25 as presented with the condition that the shed be removed upon demolition of the home. Jeff Battig seconded the motion.

Jason Anderson voted yes and stated that special conditions and circumstances exist that are peculiar to the land and structure. Also, the property will be beneficial with the new home.

Jeff Battig voted yes and stated that the City of Wooster needed more housing.

Martha Bollinger voted yes and stated that the variance is substantial and minimum necessary to allow reasonable use of the property and that the spirit and intent of the code would be observed.

Jennifer Shatzer voted yes for reasons cited by the Board.

Mark Reynolds voted yes for reasons cited by the Board.

Stewart Fitz Gibbon voted yes for the reasons cited by the Board and stated that this was a unique situation with new development under the R-T zoning district.

The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

IV. Meeting Schedule and Chair/Vice Chair Selections for 2025

Jason Anderson made a motion to approve the 2025 meeting schedule as presented.

Martha Bollinger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

Martha Bollinger motioned to elect Stewart Fitz Gibbon as Chairman and Mark Reynolds as Vice Chairman of the Board of Building and Zoning Appeals. Jason Anderson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 6-0.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Jason Anderson moved to adjourn. Jennifer Shatzer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Stewart Fitz Gibbon, Board of Building and Zoning Appeals Chairman

Carla Jessie, Administrative Assistant