

REGULAR MEETING - ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

CITY OF NOVI

April 11, 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, April 11, 2017

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindy Gronachan, Chairperson

David Byrwa, Acting Secretary

David Byrwa

Linda Krieger

Joe Peddiboyina

ALSO PRESENT:

Beth Saarela, City Attorney

Lawrence Butler

Coordinator: Monica Dreslinski, Recording Secretary

REPORTED BY: Jennifer L. Wall, Certified Shorthand Reporter

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Tuesday, April 11, 2017  
Novi, Michigan  
7:00 p.m.

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

Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge recited.)

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

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Byrwa?

MR. BYRWA: Present.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Ferrell is absent, excused.

Member Krieger?

MS. KRIEGER: Present.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Nafso is absent, excused.

Member Montville is absent, excused.

Member Peddiboyina?

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MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Sanghvi?

MR. SANGHVI: Here.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Chairperson

Gronachan?

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Present.

Thank you. This evening I would like to remind everyone that there is a list of rules and regulations or rules of conduct, I should say at the back of room with our agenda.

I would like everyone to please turn off their cellphones at this time.

Also, if there is any changes to the agenda at this time, does anybody have any changes or amendments?

Okay.

All those in favor of the agenda say aye.

THE BOARD: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The agenda is approved.

We had the minutes in our meeting -- sorry. We had our minutes from our

1 last meeting February 2017 in our packet for  
2 review.

3 Are there any changes or  
4 alterations to the minutes?

5 No changes, okay.

6 All those in favor of the  
7 minutes as they were submitted to us for  
8 February 2017 say aye.

9 THE BOARD: Aye.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: None  
11 opposed.

12 At this time, if there is anyone  
13 in the audience that wishes to make comment,  
14 other than what's in front of the board this  
15 evening, please come forward now.

16 Seeing none, we will move right  
17 along to our first case, PZ16-0063, Allied  
18 Signs.

19 Is the petitioner here? 26150  
20 Town Center Drive, north of Eleven Mile and  
21 east of Town Center.

22 The applicant is requesting a  
23 variance to allow one 22 square foot ground

1 sign and code section to allow one additional  
2 wall sign. The property is zoned office  
3 service commercial.

4 Good evening. Would you please  
5 state your name and then spell your name and  
6 then raise your right hand to be sworn in.

7 MR. STIEBER: Patrick Stieber,  
8 S-t-i-e-b-e-r.

9 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Do you  
10 swear or affirm to tell the truth as the case  
11 is before you?

12 MR. STIEBER: I do.

13 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You may  
14 proceed.

15 MR. STIEBER: So the property in  
16 question, I am sure you guys have all had a  
17 chance to go by and take a look at it. It's a  
18 new hotel development on Town Center Drive.

19 We are requesting a variance for  
20 an additional ground sign and a small  
21 additional wall sign in the lower level of the  
22 hotel.

23 We feel that due to the size of

1 this property, the traffic flows that are on  
2 Town Center Drive off Crescent Drive, and that  
3 flows off of Eleven Mile, that there is a lack  
4 of identification, and that these signs are  
5 needed to properly identify the hotel.

6 The monument sign is rather  
7 small in size, one of the smallest size signs  
8 that they offer, for visibilty. It's in line  
9 with other ground signs in the area. We feel  
10 that these additional signs would not cause any  
11 detrimental effects to the area.

12 The hotel immediately to the  
13 southeast currently has two building signs and  
14 a monument sign, and the auto desk (ph) to the  
15 north has the same with two wall signs and a  
16 ground sign.

17 So due to those issues, and the  
18 fact the traffic flow that surrounds this site,  
19 the size of the property, the fact that, you  
20 know, these signs that are being proposed fit  
21 very well within the size of this building,  
22 it's not excessive for what's being asked for.  
23 But we do feel that due to these circumstances,

1           there is a lack of identification and these  
2           signs are needed to direct people to the  
3           property.

4                       CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Do you have  
5           samples of the signs? You could put them on  
6           the -- did you bring samples with you?

7                       MR. STIEBER: Samples for the  
8           signs?

9                       CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Your  
10          drawings. I'm sorry.

11                      MR. STIEBER: Sure.

12                      CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Could you  
13          put them on the board, please.

14                      MR. STIEBER: That's the monument  
15          sign, double sided.

16                      CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Board  
17          members, you're going to have to look on here.

18                      MR. STIEBER: Like I said, the size  
19          of this sign, under 22 square feet. For a  
20          monument sign, it's more like a directional  
21          type sign with how small this thing is. And  
22          then this will help alleviate the traffic flow  
23          issue off of Town Center for traffic flows



1 going south and north, because there is no  
2 identification, you know, when you're to the  
3 north there, pulling onto Town Center, you know  
4 you just see a big building there. You really  
5 can't tell what it is until you're past it,  
6 with the building sign that's up high.

7 Just so you guys all know, I  
8 think -- I don't know if you have had a chance  
9 to see, the building sign is currently already  
10 there and installed, the letters are up high,  
11 sign A. The sign does face to the south, so  
12 you can see the dilemma there.

13 This is the main entrance to the  
14 hotel, so there is no visibility at all for any  
15 signage off Town Center, which is what this  
16 small monument sign will help alleviate that.

17 Sign B, you can see it  
18 highlighted there, this is the small  
19 non-illuminated letter set that we are  
20 proposing there at ground level. Again, it's  
21 very small in size. It's not lit, it's a  
22 brushed aluminum letter set. And this sign  
23 will also help give them identification for the

1 traffic flows through the parking lot there as  
2 well.

3 But again, small in size,  
4 comparison to the building size itself.

5 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Do you have  
6 anything else to offer at this time?

7 MR. STIEBER: No. Any questions  
8 you have, I would be happy to answer.

9 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Great.  
10 Thank you. Building department? Do you have  
11 anything to offer?

12 MR. BUTLER: Yes, originally he  
13 only had one sign, and adding the two  
14 additional signs will probably help enhance the  
15 location of that building. It was well  
16 designed, both of them, so we had no issue with  
17 them.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:

19 Correspondence?

20 Our fill-in secretary this  
21 evening is Member Byrwa, who is going to  
22 assist.

23 MR. BYRWA: Yes, we sent out 13

1 letters were mailed out, four letters were  
2 returned, there were zero approvals, zero  
3 objections.

4 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you.  
5 Board members? Member Sanghvi.

6 MR. SANGHVI: Thank you. Would you  
7 kindly show us where the ground signs are going  
8 to go?

9 MR. STIEBER: Sure. So this is all  
10 three signs on the site plan. Sign A again is  
11 the one that's already installed up high on the  
12 building, the south elevation. Sign C is the  
13 small monument that's in question here.

14 Again, this is the main entrance  
15 road here, so this sign is going to help  
16 identify the building because there is no  
17 signage on what would be the west elevation  
18 there.

19 And then like I was saying, the  
20 traffic to the south off of Eleven Mile, there  
21 is going to be traffic flows coming in from,  
22 you know, a few different directions on this  
23 site.

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MR. SANGHVI: I am talking about the new signs you are talking about, the ground signs, what you call a monument sign, I am calling ground sign.

MR. STIEBER: Yes, ground sign.

MR. SANGHVI: Where is that going to be?

MR. STIEBER: Right here, sign C. So it's double sided, so that traffic flow can see that sign from Town Center.

MR. SANGHVI: I was there the other day I was saw two different signs on the ground. One is on the north side of the building with the drive that goes to the other part of the complex -- of your complex, and the main sign was on the south side of your driveway into it, am I right?

MR. STIEBER: That's the Courtyard Marriott sign to the south. That's the existing -- that would be right here you're talking about, the Courtyard Marriott right to the southeast, that's their ground sign right there.

1 MR. SANGHVI: You're not putting  
2 any sign on their site?

3 MR. STIEBER: No. That is not  
4 their property.

5 MR. SANGHVI: How big a sign on the  
6 north side?

7 MR. STIEBER: This right here, one  
8 right there, that is 22 square feet, which is,  
9 like I said, rather small for a monument  
10 identification sign. Four foot eight inches  
11 wide, by four foot, eight inches tall with a  
12 one foot, one shroud (ph) underneath the sign  
13 to get up off the ground. So the overall site  
14 is six foot tall.

15 MR. SANGHVI: What you have got  
16 there is the sign or is it a mockup?

17 MR. STIEBER: Mockup. The one  
18 that's on the north side, right here, it's not  
19 on there -- you know, their drive. You know,  
20 just right here within their property. Yep.

21 MR. SANGHVI: Really you are asking  
22 for two signs, one wall sign and one ground  
23 sign on the north side?

1 MR. STIEBER: Correct.

2 MR. SANGHVI: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you.

4 Anyone else? Member Krieger.

5 MS. KRIEGER: Can you clarify where  
6 the entrance will be for the -- for visitors to  
7 come in and drive in?

8 MR. STIEBER: Yep. Main entrance  
9 here, but again, there is going to be a lot of  
10 traffic flows coming in from this direction,  
11 too. You know, the ingress and egress to both  
12 the Marriott, to the east, and then I believe  
13 there is a Town Place Suites over there as  
14 well, so there will be traffic flows coming off  
15 of Eleven Mile right there as well.

16 MS. KRIEGER: You have some  
17 directional signage there?

18 MR. STIEBER: Nope.

19 MS. KRIEGER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I can see  
21 why this particular layout would be so  
22 confusing. I spent close to 20 minutes driving  
23 around looking at it, quite frankly. At first

1 I actually made two trips over there.

2 My first trip was, they don't  
3 need a sign. They have got this big Courtyard  
4 sign. Courtyard is going to do all their  
5 advertising for them. Then I went back past  
6 the building, and I drove to the next driveway  
7 where this ground sign is proposed, and my  
8 first question, I don't know if anyone else  
9 here at the table thought about this when they  
10 drove by, is why a ground sign, why not a sign  
11 on the building up higher.

12 My thought process was, as I  
13 drove further away, then when you're coming  
14 back, you can't tell that that's really a  
15 hotel.

16 MR. STIEBER: From the north you  
17 can't you see anything, it's just a big  
18 building.

19 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I  
20 understand -- we as ZBA members are not in the  
21 position to tell the petitioners what to do.  
22 However, if the whole idea of coming for a  
23 variance is the least minimum amount of, you

1 know, variances that we grant, then I think you  
2 should get the most punch for your packet, so  
3 to speak.

4 And I don't honestly see the  
5 purpose of that ground sign where you're  
6 putting it.

7 I think that -- I understand  
8 about the identification, I think that you have  
9 a unique configuration of a lot, number one.

10 So I do agree that there is a  
11 need for something out there.

12 I think that in the back of your  
13 building, you're missing an opportunity to  
14 identify people coming from -- somebody help me  
15 out with this -- is that Crescent --

16 MR. SANGHVI: From the north side.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: From the  
18 north side, from Crescent down Town Center  
19 Drive. Because people that are coming from  
20 Crescent, they could pick your building first  
21 before they pick Courtyard, if that sign was  
22 identifying the building.

23 And if you don't know that it's



1 a hotel, you're going -- if you do a search or  
2 whatever, then I think you might get Courtyard  
3 before you get yours, that was my whole  
4 process. That's why I spent 20 minutes, I'm  
5 surprised somebody didn't call the police and  
6 have me followed.

7 I'm serious. I drove down all  
8 the driveways, I drove into Courtyard, I drove  
9 down Town Center, went down Crescent, I came  
10 back and I am looking at all the options  
11 because the first time I went it was snowing,  
12 you guys didn't come before us in February,  
13 when you were supposed to be here.

14 So then it was snowing. It was  
15 really difficult to figure anything out with  
16 all the snow on the ground.

17 So as a consumer, I am going to  
18 have that same difficulty when I am out there,  
19 trying to find your building.

20 As a ZBA member, I try to help  
21 in that if this is supposed to be for  
22 identification, what's going to be the best  
23 piece of identification.

1           So I am in support that you need  
2           identification. I am going to look this way to  
3           see if the city attorney is going to tell me  
4           how far I can go with this.

5           But can I recommend a building  
6           sign as opposed to a ground sign or do I leave  
7           it up to the petitioner? Can you help me?

8           MS. SAARELA: You can give your  
9           opinion on what they're asking, you know, just  
10          has an impact on the practical difficulty and,  
11          you know, what you observed.

12          CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I just  
13          don't see where that ground sign is helping  
14          you. But I do see that if you put  
15          identification on the back of that building,  
16          that there is plenty of -- in my opinion, there  
17          is plenty of reason to have identification on  
18          the back of the building. I just named about  
19          four reasons. Visibility from Crescent,  
20          visibility from Town Center, and I don't think  
21          that the ground sign is going to give you that  
22          visibility for the distance.

23          And as this area continues to

1 grow, that ground sign could get lost. I  
2 really think that something high up would be  
3 better.

4 And as far as the front part, I  
5 am in support of the B sign. And the biggest  
6 reason why I am supporting it, I could barely  
7 see the sign that we allowed on the building.  
8 It's very difficult to see. And so I think  
9 that this almost needs to get reworked because  
10 your first sign is not really serving a lot of  
11 purpose, and that back sign, I think that you  
12 could do something better so people could see  
13 it.

14 You know, the Town Center is  
15 growing, and it's going to continue to grow.  
16 And as one of the longest running members on  
17 the ZBA, Novi is not going to standstill. As  
18 things change, we want our businesses to  
19 succeed and to be seen. And not have to come  
20 back to us at any point in time. That's why I  
21 am making these suggestions.

22 MR. STIEBER: I understand that.

23 You know, I think part of the reason for coming

1 in with the monument sign was to try appease  
2 the board, you know, to put another building  
3 sign up there, you're talking about another  
4 sign that's going to be readable up there to be  
5 another 65 square feet, versus this 22 square  
6 feet sign that we are asking for now.

7 Now, I would agree that a sign  
8 there could definitely help give them the  
9 visibility that was talked about, and based on  
10 the sign code and research on past variances,  
11 they were timid to come ask for it even.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Let me just  
13 stop you right there. And please excuse me. I  
14 am not trying to -- but each case is viewed on  
15 its own merit.

16 MR. STIEBER: Absolutely. Based on  
17 the site conditions. I get it.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Exactly. I  
19 feel, and we can listen to other board members.  
20 I know Member Sanghvi has something in addition  
21 to add, but when you go out and drive that,  
22 this is not just looking at this map and  
23 saying, oh, yes, well, let's just stamp this

1 here and stamp this there.

2 When you go out to that site,  
3 there is a need, and I think you have  
4 established that. But I just don't know that  
5 you're utilizing the need to the fullest.

6 Member Sanghvi.

7 MR. SANGHVI: Thank you. I was  
8 about to say the same thing what you just said.  
9 Then I checked myself, I said (unintelligible)  
10 an expert how to do his own business. He's in  
11 the sign business.

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes, I  
13 know.

14 MR. SANGHVI: I think  
15 (unintelligible) he has got a major sign in  
16 front of his own entrance, and was there when  
17 you look at. That's why I ask you to point it  
18 out, and very clear to you and everybody else,  
19 there is a wrong hotel sign in front of your  
20 entrance.

21 And if you wanted better  
22 identification, you need to find something  
23 better than what you are already providing, in

1 my opinion.

2 But I didn't want to express my  
3 opinion because I think it's not my job to tell  
4 an expert how to do his work.

5 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I think I  
6 clarified as to why I am making these  
7 suggestions.

8 I think that you and I have been  
9 on the board a long time and that we see it  
10 that way, we feel it that way because we are in  
11 support of our businesses, and that's -- I  
12 wouldn't have spent 20 minutes driving around  
13 in circles. If I would have looked at it and  
14 said, this is fine, then I would have just gone  
15 on my way.

16 But it bothered me and I went  
17 back again. And then it wasn't snowing. I  
18 still couldn't see it.

19 So, you know, I wouldn't be --  
20 you know, we are volunteers. We are not  
21 experts. And we do this job based on the  
22 information as provided to us. And to help  
23 guide, we have the city to guide us, and we

1 give opinions and we look at what the  
2 petitioner has for material and for findings so  
3 we can help support or deny that request.

4 And my suggestion would be that  
5 you -- I hate to say it, take a look one more  
6 time and go back to the drawing board, to  
7 better help your client with better  
8 identification.

9 That's my suggestion. We don't  
10 do that very often. As said, read the minutes  
11 from other meetings, but the case stands on its  
12 own accord.

13 MR. STIEBER: And getting it up  
14 high would help, you know, they thought that  
15 having a ground sign at ground level for the  
16 traffic flow right there would help. I know  
17 it's a little busy around the site right now  
18 with everything that's going on, that doesn't  
19 help the cause, or for visibilty.

20 You know, but this is what they  
21 wanted, this is what they decided on.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
23 Sanghvi.

1 MR. SANGHVI: I agree with you  
2 100 percent. I think that ground sign you are  
3 putting in front of somebody else's traffic,  
4 rather than your own.

5 MR. STIEBER: It's past that drive.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Well, it  
7 goes into that office building. I agree.

8 MR. SANGHVI: As I said, it's up to  
9 you.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
11 Krieger.

12 MS. KRIEGER: Did you want to --

13 MS. DRESLINSKI: Just to let you  
14 know, if you do decide to table it because you,  
15 I am assuming, would be making the sign bigger.  
16 We are now into June ZBA and its --

17 MR. STIEBER: We would have to re  
18 everything --

19 MS. DRESLINSKI: Yes. It's another  
20 \$300. So something I just wanted to mention.

21 MR. STIEBER: I know that thought  
22 went into this. I hear what you guys are  
23 saying, but this is what they decided that they



1 wanted, and that's what we are here presenting.

2 MS. KRIEGER: You can always come  
3 back, if they change their mind.

4 MR. STIEBER: If we have to  
5 re-apply and all that stuff anyway, do mailings  
6 again, everything like that, maybe that is  
7 something later in the future --

8 MS. KRIEGER: Rather go with what  
9 you have got here?

10 MR. STIEBER: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I need to  
12 ask the city attorney something.

13 So if I -- I don't feel that the  
14 ground sign serves the purpose or meets the  
15 criteria, even though after I said that there  
16 is a need for a sign, I am confused as to --

17 MS. SAARELA: Make a motion to deny  
18 it because you don't feel that it improves the  
19 practical difficulty, just go with the  
20 standards. You have a motion to deny here.  
21 They might have a unique circumstance, but you  
22 would just have to explain why you don't  
23 believe what their proposal improves the

1                   circumstance.

2                                   CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:   Improves  
3                   the circumstance.

4                                   Board members?   Anybody else  
5                   have anything to offer?

6                                   Member Krieger.

7                                   MS. KRIEGER:   I could see what the  
8                   ground sign and -- regard of the speed limit is  
9                   only 25, that is difficult with visibility, all  
10                  these different buildings coming down that  
11                  back -- behind the Wal-mart to come to the Town  
12                  Center Drive, of course, it will building, but  
13                  considering the speed and the other ground  
14                  signs along that corridor, I am sure it would  
15                  be expected that this building would also, at  
16                  some point, need a ground sign.

17                                  So if that's what they want, I  
18                  wouldn't be opposed to that.   Although having a  
19                  building sign in the future, if they feel  
20                  that's a need, they could come back for it, I  
21                  guess, their third sign or exchange.

22                                  CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:   That would  
23                  be their fourth sign.

1 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I agree with what  
2 she said, they want the fourth sign, they can  
3 come back, they can get the third sign, three  
4 signs.

5 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I'm sorry.  
6 Clarify what you just said, please.

7 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: What Linda said,  
8 if they want like ground sign, the fourth one,  
9 we can go ahead and they can change.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I just want  
11 to remind board members. Our job is to go with  
12 the minimum amount of variances, and not  
13 encourage to increase them.

14 MS. KRIEGER: We can have an  
15 alternative, we don't want the ground sign  
16 anymore, we are going to go with the wall sign.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Is that  
18 going to be more expensive than posting it for  
19 \$300 and waiting 30 days?

20 MS. KRIEGER: I wouldn't want to  
21 hold them up if they had opportunity to have  
22 signage and attract paying customers.

23 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The

1 building is not done yet.

2 MS. KRIEGER: I know. Just to go  
3 with the thought process.

4 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
5 Sanghvi?

6 MR. SANGHVI: As far as I  
7 understand our terms of reference is to look at  
8 the request for a variance as he has requested.  
9 It's up to us to decide whether to grant it or  
10 deny it. And let's stick to our terms of  
11 reference, is that okay?

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.  
13 (unintelligible) instead of make that kind of  
14 other recommendations, we can't go down that  
15 road.

16 MS. SAARELA: You can make a  
17 suggestion on what you think would provide more  
18 relief, but at the same time that's not what  
19 he's requesting now. You just have to look at  
20 the request that's been made either grant it or  
21 deny it.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay. Are  
23 you going to make a motion?

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MR. BYRWA: I have a quick comment.  
I guess for our city attorney, tonight the vote  
would be a majority of the board -- the  
assigned board members, so he would need -- if  
I am right here, all five members to vote in  
the affirmative to pass his --

MS. SAARELA: No.

MR. BYRWA: He would need a simple  
majority of the members present?

MS. SAARELA: For a sign variance,  
yes.

MR. BYRWA: He would need three out  
of five then?

MS. SAARELA: Yes.

MS. KRIEGER: In Case No.  
PZ16-0063, for Allied Signs for 26150 Town  
Center Drive, I move to grant the request of  
the petitioner sought. Without the variance  
petitioner will be unreasonably prevented or  
limited with respect to the use of the property  
because of travel speeds from the north,  
visibility as the consumers come to look for  
the entrance or coming from the south, same

1 thing, to the building where do they go, which  
2 was discussed.

3 The property is unique because  
4 of its location, and its positioning on this  
5 property with its neighbors.

6 The petitioner did not create  
7 the condition because of its location, the  
8 relief granted will not unreasonably interfere  
9 with adjacent or surrounding properties because  
10 their request is minimal, they felt that at  
11 this time for their needs to go forward with  
12 this business.

13 The relief is consistent with  
14 the spirit and intent of the ordinance because  
15 of their minimum request.

16 MR. SANGHVI: Second.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's been  
18 moved and second. Is there any further  
19 discussion?

20 Monica, would you please call  
21 the roll.

22 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Byrwa?

23 MR. BYRWA: Yes.

1 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Krieger?

2 MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

3 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member

4 Peddiboyina?

5 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

6 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Sanghvi?

7 MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

8 MS. DRESLINSKI: Chairperson

9 Gronachan?

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: No.

11 MS. DRESLINSKI: Motion passes four  
12 to one.

13 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Your  
14 variance has been granted. Congratulations.  
15 Good luck.

16 MR. STIEBER: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Our next  
18 case is PZ17-0005, Gary Ehlers at 1705 East  
19 Lake Drive.

20 The petitioner is here. The  
21 applicant is requesting a variance to allow for  
22 installation of a sunroom and storage room in  
23 the side yard.

1                   You are Mr. Ehlers?

2                   MR. EHLERS:   Yes, Gary Ehlers,  
3                   E-h-l-e-r-s.

4                   CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:   Would you  
5                   please raise your right hand to be sworn in.

6                   Do you swear or affirm to tell  
7                   the truth in the matter before you?

8                   MR. EHLERS:   Yes.

9                   CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:   You may  
10                  proceed.

11                  MR. EHLERS:   I have a small cottage  
12                  on Walled Lake that I am trying to, we have in  
13                  the past three, four years, make into a small  
14                  house. This is my fourth year at a variance.

15                  Last month, our variance, I was  
16                  here, and what we are looking for is the  
17                  dimensional variance on the back of the house  
18                  because trying to put a garage on the back of  
19                  the house, will leave me absolutely no parking.

20                  So what we are asking for is a  
21                  dimensional variance for a small shed in the  
22                  back that blends into the house and a sunroom  
23                  or breezeway, whatever you want to call it,



1 because as it stands right now, you walk into  
2 the back of the house, there is no place to put  
3 coats, shoes or anything. And we are trying to  
4 make it look esthetically -- blend in with the  
5 house and it still leaves like 18 feet behind  
6 the house to park three cars. And I guess  
7 that's what I am asking.

8 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Did you  
9 bring any drawings with you this evening?

10 MR. EHLERS: I have my copy. I  
11 thought I left it, but, yes, I do have --

12 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: We do have  
13 people at home and other people watching. We  
14 have it in our packet, of course, we would like  
15 you to share the wealth of information, if you  
16 will.

17 MR. EHLERS: This is the rendering.  
18 If you look at the top, you can see the sign  
19 line items there. The new structure behind the  
20 house there was -- I'm sorry.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's an  
22 addition -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

23 MS. DRESLINSKI: It's the same

1 thing. You weren't here, but last month he was  
2 asking for 10 feet and his contractor wanted to  
3 keep it with the concrete line, so he's asking  
4 for three feet more, so it is the same thing  
5 from last month, just three more feet.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: This case  
7 was a part of last month, which we didn't have  
8 the minutes to, so that's why -- so this is in  
9 addition to what you already have given  
10 testimony except that the measurement is now  
11 three feet additional?

12 MR. EHLERS: Yes. It was something  
13 that in my error, we, I guess forgot, to have  
14 the engineer go back and redraw the drawings,  
15 so we weren't allowed to build any further than  
16 what the drawings were, so I had to go -- come  
17 back again one more time and have the new  
18 drawings submitted to the building department,  
19 so it's really the same as last month, only we  
20 now got the drawings correct on the same -- I  
21 guess the same story as last, just allows us to  
22 continue to have parking and it will be a nice  
23 little breezeway for coats and a nice looking

1 shed blending in. I think it's definitely  
2 going to enhance the neighborhood. I think it  
3 will end up looking really good.

4 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Again, I  
5 just want to verify. The testimony that you  
6 gave last month is the same, the difference in  
7 this case is that there is a three feet  
8 addition that you're asking for based on the  
9 back of the residence. That's the only  
10 additional information that you're requesting?

11 MR. EHLERS: The original last  
12 month drawing was 10 feet away from the house,  
13 this is 13. Everything else is the same.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you  
15 very much. Building department, do you have  
16 anything to offer?

17 MR. BUTLER: Nothing to offer.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
19 Correspondence?

20 MR. BYRWA: The city mailed out 74  
21 letters were mailed, we had 12 letters  
22 returned, three were approvals and zero  
23 objections.

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CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The three approvals were all from the same person?

MR. BYRWA: Right, from a Mark Adams at 1721 East Lake, and he thinks it looks great and he's in favor of it, and he says, it's a good -- great retro build of a 1930's house, and he says that you're a nice guy.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.

MR. EHLERS: I must owe him a lunch or something.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: At least a hot dog. Board members. Does anybody have anything to offer. Member Sanghvi?

MR. SANGHVI: I have nothing more to add than I said last time. I have no problems with your alterations because that's the only thing you can do in a small lot like yours and I wish you luck. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: All right.

MS. KRIEGER: Me too.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You're wearing on me tonight. Just kidding. Okay. So Member Sanghvi, is there any other --

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MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I wish you good luck.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member Sanghvi, would you like to do the motion?

MR. SANGHVI: Okay. I move that we grant the variance in Case No. PZ17-0005, address of 1705 East Lake Drive, north of Thirteen Mile Road, west of Novi Road, parcel No. 50-22-02-356-015.

We grant that the request -- as requested because the applicant has shown practical difficulty requiring the need for these variances. Without the variance, petitioner will be unreasonably prevented or limited with respect to the use of this property.

The property is relief because of its small size in that part of the City of Novi. This hardship is not self-created, and the contract will not unreasonably interfere with adjacent or surrounding property, but it will enhance the property value of the surrounding area. Thank you.

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MS. KRIEGER: Second.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's been moved and second. Any further discussion on the motion?

Seeing none, Monica, would you please call the roll.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Byrwa?

MR. BYRWA: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Krieger?

MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Peddiboyina?

MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Sanghvi?

MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Chairperson Gronachan?

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.

MS. DRESLINSKI: Motion passes five to zero.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Your variance has been granted, and as nice as you are, we don't want to see you back here again.

1 So good luck.

2 MR. EHLERS: I think I have run out  
3 of things I can think about. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Our last  
5 case is PZ16-0009, Kingsway Construction, 101  
6 Lashbrook north of Thirteen and west of Novi.  
7 Petitioner is here. Come on down. I know  
8 there is a big crowd, a lot of people out  
9 there.

10 I will read slow, give you some  
11 time. The applicant is requesting a variance  
12 to allow reduced setbacks for front and rear  
13 side yards and reduced lot coverage for  
14 additions to existing residence. Property is  
15 zoned single family R4.

16 Good evening, and you are?

17 MR. HENNINGER: I am owner of  
18 Kingsway. I don't normally come to these. Our  
19 architects couldn't make it, so I am filling  
20 in.

21 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Lucky you.  
22 I'm sure your name is not Kingsway  
23 Construction.

1 MR. HENNINGER: No, it isn't. It's  
2 Seth Henninger.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Spell the  
4 last name.

5 MR. HENNINGER: H-e-n-n-i-n-g-e-r.

6 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Raise your  
7 right hand to be sworn in. Do you swear or  
8 affirm to tell the truth in the matter before  
9 you?

10 MR. HENNINGER: I do.

11 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You may  
12 proceed.

13 MR. HENNINGER: I think we are just  
14 applying for something similar to what the last  
15 gentleman was, similar house on Walled Lake.  
16 It's a small ranch style home. Homeowner's has  
17 have a small one car garage on the side. I  
18 believe that's the only add-on from the  
19 existing footprint. She is wanting to add a  
20 second story not to extend the footprint. I  
21 believe what are applying for is a variance to  
22 add the garage to extend to that.

23 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You're



1 asking for four variances, is that correct?

2 MR. HENNINGER: The architect  
3 turned in the drawings. I believe -- I think  
4 what it is, I think the existing structure  
5 isn't compliant as it sits, I think is why we  
6 are needing additional variances. It doesn't  
7 meet the setbacks of the current variances now.

8 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Hold that  
9 thought. For the building department, in my  
10 packet I have no measurements that they're  
11 requesting.

12 MS. DRESLINSKI: It's on the  
13 drawing. If you go to the drawing page.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: You can  
15 hardly read it. That's why I was hoping  
16 somebody was going to clarify. It wasn't on  
17 the first page.

18 So, I want to get this right.  
19 So for the record, the front is required  
20 30 feet, he's requesting 19?

21 MS. DRESLINSKI: Correct.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The rear  
23 setback is the -- they're requiring 30 feet and

1 he's asking 24?

2 MS. DRESLINSKI: Correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: On the  
4 sides, we require 10 feet minimum on both  
5 sides, which is the total of 25?

6 MS. DRESLINSKI: Correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: He's  
8 requesting nine on one and 13 on the other?

9 MS. DRESLINSKI: Uh-huh.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The lot  
11 coverage would be increased from the 28 -- I am  
12 sorry, from 25 to 28 percent?

13 MS. DRESLINSKI: Correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: So now we  
15 have got that clarified, do you have anything  
16 else to offer, to add?

17 MR. HENNINGER: I know she is  
18 putting a lot of money into this home and  
19 changing it from a small '30s style ranch home,  
20 you know, second story, nice gables, nice  
21 windows. Other than that, you know, she is a  
22 really nice lady.

23 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.

1 MR. HENNINGER: She is looking to  
2 make this her permanent residence, moving from  
3 a larger home into this home. She has owned  
4 this home apparently for many years. It was a  
5 vacation home or lake home for them. She is  
6 wanting to make it her permanent residence now.

7 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Building  
8 department, do you have anything to offer?

9 MR. BUTLER: Due to the size of  
10 this lot and stuff, they really didn't have  
11 much area to go. As you can see in the  
12 measurements, the distance to the house next  
13 door, they still have about 35 feet, so they  
14 got four foot one on the side, but they still  
15 have plenty of room there. That's about all  
16 they really could do with that lot.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN:  
18 Correspondence?

19 MR. BYRWA: Yes. We mailed out 66  
20 letters mailed, three letters were returned.  
21 We had one approval and zero objections.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Can you  
23 tell us who is the approval from?

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MR. BYRWA: The approval from a Mark Brandewie of 105 Lashbrook.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: The last name is spelled?

MR. BYRWA: B-r-a-n-d-e-w-i-e.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: So the only thing is in the correspondence, in the letter that we received from Mr. Brandewie is that he put conditions on his letter of his approval, and I don't know if the city attorney had a chance --

MS. SAARELA: We are not making the letter a part of the approval, so anybody can put whatever they want in their letter. It's not something that we are wrapping into --

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: I want to clarify, it's not part of our decision making process. Thank you. Board members?

MS. KRIEGER: Question for the city.

CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member Krieger?

MS. KRIEGER: The power lines to go

1 through on the west side where the -- towards  
2 the lake, is that an easement or do you know?

3 MR. HENNINGER: I don't know.

4 MR. BUTLER: I haven't been out to  
5 that lot, so I really haven't -- it usually is  
6 an easement, but not being there to look at it,  
7 I couldn't tell you.

8 MS. KRIEGER: So for construction  
9 is there anything the city has to --

10 MR. BUTLER: No.

11 MR. HENNINGER: Is it Consumers or  
12 DTE --

13 MR. BUTLER: Consumers or DTE,  
14 that's directly between the owner of the house,  
15 and if they need any hookups or disconnects.

16 MS. KRIEGER: It looks like a very  
17 nice setup. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Member  
19 Sanghvi.

20 MR. SANGHVI: I went and saw your  
21 place a couple of days ago. You have a very  
22 narrow lot wedged between two bigger houses.  
23 And you are quite a ways from the lake, then

1 your street comes off East Lake Drive. There  
2 is nothing you can do there without variances.

3 MR. HENNINGER: That's why we are  
4 here.

5 MR. SANGHVI: When I looked at your  
6 request, I thought they were quite reasonable.  
7 I have no problem.

8 MR. HENNINGER: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Okay.  
10 Thank you. Anyone else? Seeing none, is there  
11 a motion? Member Peddiboyina.

12 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: I move that we  
13 grant the variance in Case No. PZ17-0009,  
14 Kingsway Construction 101 Lashbrook north of  
15 Thirteen Mile Road and west of Novi.

16 The (unintelligible) petitioner  
17 has shown the practical difficulties requesting  
18 the existing additions of the lot. Without the  
19 variance difficulties. We approve it.

20 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: We have to  
21 add the uniqueness of the lot. I'm sorry.  
22 Would you -- can we help you with a friendly  
23 amendment.

1                   So need to add that the lot is  
2                   unique size and shape, is why --

3                   MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yeah. The lot is  
4                   unique size.

5                   CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Unique size  
6                   and shape.

7                   MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Unique size and  
8                   shape.

9                   CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: And that  
10                  the petitioner did not create the condition  
11                  because --

12                  MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Did not create  
13                  any practical difficulties.

14                  CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: And that  
15                  the relief is consistent with the spirit --

16                  MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Spirit and intent  
17                  of the ordinance.

18                  CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Because it  
19                  allows the petitioner to improve the value --

20                  MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Improve the value  
21                  of the property. The variance is granted  
22                  subject to (unintelligible) --

23                  CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: If you're

1 going to add that, then you need to add the  
2 subject, what those things are. So if there is  
3 anything else that you want to add, then strike  
4 that last sentence.

5 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: No, I don't want  
6 to add.

7 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Strike that  
8 last sentence.

9 MR. SANGHVI: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: It's been  
11 moved and second. Is there any further  
12 discussion?

13 MS. SAARELA: Does he accept the  
14 amendment that he proposed?

15 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Do you  
16 accept my friendly amendment?

17 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Friendly  
19 amendment has been accepted.

20 Any further discussion?

21 MR. SANGHVI: Your amendment is  
22 accepted and no further decision from this  
23 point of view. Thank you.



1 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you.

2 Monica, would you please call the roll.

3 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Byrwa?

4 MR. BYRWA: Yes.

5 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Krieger?

6 MS. KRIEGER: Yes.

7 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member

8 Peddiboyina?

9 MR. PEDDIBOYINA: Yes.

10 MS. DRESLINSKI: Member Sanghvi?

11 MR. SANGHVI: Yes.

12 MS. DRESLINSKI: Chairperson

13 Gronachan?

14 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Yes.

15 MS. DRESLINSKI: Motion passes five

16 to zero.

17 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Thank you

18 for your patience and congratulations. Good

19 luck.

20 MR. HENNINGER: Thanks a lot.

21 Appreciate it.

22 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: So that

23 concludes our heavy schedule for this evening.

1 And I will go back on the board saying that  
2 next month for sure we will have elections. We  
3 are short three people. I didn't think it was  
4 fair unless the board tonight wants to do  
5 elections anyways. I would it open it to the  
6 board.

7 MS. KRIEGER: I am fine with  
8 waiting.

9 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Everybody  
10 is fine with waiting.

11 So then we will put it on next  
12 month's agenda, Monica, and if that's all right  
13 with you.

14 MS. DRESLINSKI: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Is there  
16 any further items to be discussed?

17 Seeing none, I would entertain a  
18 motion to adjourn.

19 MR. SANGHVI: So moved.

20 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: All those  
21 in favor.

22 THE BOARD: Aye.

23 CHAIRPERSON GRONACHAN: Meeting

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adjourned.

(The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.)

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