

West Bloomfield Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
(2nd Meeting in June to make up for July 4th Meeting)
June 21, 2007

PRESENT: Chrmn. Houck, Dean Huff, Cindy Kretchmer, & Bob Swain

ABSENT: Jim Foote

ALSO PRESENT: Dave Ferguson, Sandy Schlenker, Dustin Novitzki and
Scott Storke, Code Enforcement Officer

7:30pm - Chrmn. Houck called the meeting to order and read the Legal Notice for tonight's Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Dave Ferguson – Area Variance....Dave got up and explained to those present that his roof is collapsing on the existing barn and he would like to demolish that barn and build a new one. He noted that his (2) boys play a lot of sports and when the weather is bad he would like to have a place for them to be able to practice and train. His only option, up to this point, has been to drive to the boys to Henrietta or East Rochester if they want to use the batting cages. He added that he would like to put a pitching machine in the new barn. He also needs enough space to be able to store what is already in the old barn. He stated that his only concern was his kids and enabling them to get the practice they need for the sports they are playing. Gas prices are so high and it gets expensive driving all over. Dave also mentioned the new barn would match his house and would include a garage door on the end. Cindy K. asked if he planned on changing the location of the driveway? Dave replied "No". He wasn't going to have a driveway going out to the new barn. He would just drive on the grass. The question came up of whether or not he planned on turning this into a commercial (training) facility by allowing other kids to utilize the facilities? Dave again replied "No, he just wanted a place for his kids to train." He added that, although the size of the proposed barn is larger than what is permitted by code, he meets all the other specifications. Dean Huff asked if he planned on tearing down the old barn? Dave replied, Yes, Scott Storke advised him that he had until the end of summer. At that point he handed Chrmn. Houck a letter from Marge O'Brien stating that she had no problem with the size of the proposed barn. Sandy Schlenker was present and also noted that she didn't have a problem with Dave building a barn that size. There were no further questions or comments and Public Hearing phase of meeting closed at 7:45PM.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Dustin Novitzki - Existing Use Variance..... Dustin was present and explained his proposal (again) for the benefit of the Board members who were not present at the June 6th Meeting. He would like to open a taxidermy business in a building located at 8524 Route 5&20 that is owned by Patrick Amorese. Mr. Amorese was granted a Use Variance in May of 1996 to "allow the operation of an antique and/or craft retail operation."

Dustin asked if he would need to apply for a new Variance or would he be able to operate under the current one since Mr. Amorese still owns the property. (Mr. Novitzki is leasing the space from Mr. Amorese). Bob Swain stated he does see any correlation between a taxidermy business and an antique business. He added, the original Use Variance was granted for an antique business and he does not feel the Zoning Board should expand on that to include a taxidermy business. He feels Mr. Novitzki should apply for a new Use Variance. Cindy K. noted that antique shops are full of old (taxidermy) mounts and pointed out that the 1996 Resolution stated and/or retail craft operation. Bob asked if the taxidermy process would take place on the premises and Dustin answered yes. Chrmn. Houck stated that he feels there is a similarity between a craft shop and a taxidermy business. Bob noted that he still feels the proposal for the taxidermy business should be presented on it's own merit and not be "grandfathered" in under the antique Variance. He further stated that he would rather make a decision base on what the proposed operation really is versus having it allowed to operate through the "backdoor" of it being a craft. Since this was not a formal hearing, the board was not asked to vote on the matter but based on the majority opinion of the members, it was decided the taxidermy business would comply with the previous Use Variance granted. Mr. Novitzki asked what the procedure would be? He was advised to apply for a Permit and if he had any questions, he could speak to Scott Storke.

REGULAR MEETING:

Dave Ferguson – Vote...Chrmn. Houck asked if there were any questions or comments? There were not. He made a motion to approve Dave Ferguson's application for an Area Variance to build a 30' x 56' (1680 Sq. Ft.) Pole Barn in an area where Zoning permits a maximum of 1200 Sq. Ft. is allowed. He also stated that a condition of the approval is that the existing old barn be removed within 60 days of completion of the new barn. Dean Huff seconded the motion, with ayes by all, & motion carried. **Area Variance approved.**

NEW BUSINESS:

May Minutes – Bob Swain made a motion to approve the May minutes. Chrmn. Houck seconded the motion, with ayes by all, except for Cindy, who abstained from voting, as she was not present at the May meeting (and Jim Foote, who was absent for tonight's meeting). Minutes approved.

June Minutes – There were not enough members present (who attended the June meeting) to be able to vote on the minutes this month.

Wolk Observatory in Ionia (RAS)...Scott Storke advised the Board members they have been invited by Bob McGovern to attend a BBQ at the Wolk Observatory on August 1st, as he would like to familiarize everyone with their site. He noted the Planning Board is also going to be holding their Workshop Meeting there on the same night. The Town Board has also been invited. More info to follow.

9:00PM – Meeting adjourned.