

MINUTES
MECOSTA COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Mecosta County Services Building
May 1, 2023

I. Roll Call

Ron Bongard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. In attendance for roll call were Roger Carroll, Ethan Ray, Mike Tillman, alternate Kurt Spaulding, stepped in for Randy Bleeker, Annette Coles, Zoning Administrator, & Kim Straley, Recording Secretary.

II. Public Hearings

Chair Bongard explained the format of the meeting.

1. Variance Request #PZV23-005 – Paul & Laura Wernette, 5356 9 Mile Rd, Remus, Wheatland Township; Parcel #12 018 008 000. Property is zoned AG. Request to allow a greenhouse to be closer to the front/road setback than permitted by right.

The chair read the application into the record. The applicants, Paul and Laura Wernette, were present to speak in favor of the petition.

- Is investing in the property for future use and for the stability of the family.
- Allowing a greenhouse will help with spring growing of seedlings,
- Greenhouse structure will be used for multiple uses; firewood storage for winter times, house the baby geese, ducks, and chicks in early spring, and allow for a covered stairway to keep snow and ice off steps.
- Will not be a detriment to traffic as the greenhouse will be screened by large trees and a large lilac bush.
- Dozens of houses all over Mecosta County are closer than 50' to the road.
- Does not agree with the zoning ordinance 50' front setback rule.

Chair Bongard asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak in favor. There was no response. However, the board noted that a letter/email was received by staff, in favor of the petition from neighbor, John Stadtfeld.

The Chair asked if there was anyone to speak against the petition, there was no response.

There was no one else to speak in opposition so the Chair closed the public portion of this hearing and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- R Carroll asked petitioners if trees would be removed from the area? Petitioners stated no trees are planned to be removed.
- This is not a typical request seen by the board. Most variances of this nature come from lake and river areas.
- There are many other places on the property for the greenhouse to be placed.
- This is merely a convenience for the petitioners.

- M. Tillman made a comment on road right-of-way being 66' to staff. Staff, A Coles answered that the Road Commission stated the road right-of-way is only a total of 66' in this area. M. Tillman stated this is not typical for state highways, rights-of-way are usually much larger.
- Granting of variance will allow property to be a non-conforming use.

Board allowed petitioner to speak.

- Petitioner made comment that staff told him the property was already non-conforming.
- Staff was given permission to speak on comment; staff explained that the correct measurement to the house is approximately 56' but the allowance of the greenhouse will make the structure non-conforming, not meet setback requirements.
- Discussion was had on other locations which the structure could be built.
- Petitioners were told to seek alternatives with the building department if the board does not pass or approve the variance.

Board closed the discussion and turned back to the board for additional comments.

- Other properties, as mentioned by the petitioner, may be non-conforming due to no zoning regulations in place at time of construction.

Based on the Findings of Fact, a motion was made by Ethan Ray and supported by Mike Tillman to approve petition #PZV23-005, Request to allow a greenhouse to be closer to the front/road setback than permitted by right. Property located at 5356 9 Mile Rd, Remus, Wheatland Township; Parcel #12 018 008 000.

Roll Call Vote – 0 Yeas, 5 Nay, motion denied. Variance not granted.

III. Matters Pertaining to the Public

Chair Bongard asked if there was anyone present who wanted to address the Board regarding anything other than what was on the agenda. There was no response.

The chair then asked if there was anyone who wished to be on the agenda for next month. There was no response.

IV. Public Comments

Chair Bongard asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak. There was no response.

Business Session

Staff informed the board of a summons which was received by mail for petition PZV23-001.

Minutes of April 3, 2023

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Roger Carroll and supported by Mike Tillman. Motion approved.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Straley/Recording Secretary

_____, Chair
Ron Bongard
Mecosta County Zoning Board of Appeals

Date Approved