

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
REGULAR MEETING ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS 2023
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room
Wednesday, November 15th, 2023, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Vice-Chair Koenig, Members Deschaine, Bennett, Trezise, Member Field-Foster

ABSENT: Chair Mansour

STAFF: Assistant Planner Chapman, Director Schmitt

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Vice Chair Koenig called the November 15th, 2023 regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 6:32pm. Vice Chair Koenig called the roll of the Board. All board members present except for Chair Mansour.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Member Deschaine moved to approve the agenda for the November 15th, 2023, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Seconded by Member Field-Foster.

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Deschaine, Bennett, Trezise, Field-Foster

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

3. CORRECTIONS, APPROVAL AND RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

Member Deschaine moved to approve the minutes from the September 20th, 2023, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Seconded by Member Trezise.

VOICE VOTE YEAS: Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Deschaine, Bennett, Trezise, Field-Foster

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

4. COMMUNICATIONS

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. **ZBA CASE NO. 23-08 (6329 Milenz), Craig Skcozylas, 6329 Milenz Street, Haslett, MI 48840**

DESCRIPTION: 6329 Milenz St. & vacant lot
TAX PARCEL: 02-177-001 & 02-152-004
ZONING DISTRICT: RB (Single Family, High Density), Lake Lansing Residential Overlay

The variance requested is to allow for a single-family home to be constructed within the wetland setback located at 6329 Milenz Street and a vacant lot (Tax ID #02-152-004).

Assistant Planner Chapman outlined the case to the Board.

Applicant Craig Skcozylas (6329 Milenz) appeared before the Board and spoke on the case. He spoke about the board members coming to see the site.

Karla Skcozylas (6329 Milenz) asked the board if they were able to see the site.

Chair Deschaine asked if the property has been cleaned up.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that he doesn't really know the gentleman that passed around the petition. He's working on cleaning up the logs on the site and clearing the lot.

Chair Deschaine asked if the junk and debris mentioned in the petition were cleaned up.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that they were cleaned up and he moved the vehicle that was on site because there were stones stolen from the site.

Member Trezise asked about the stones in the wetland buffer.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that he was unaware of them.

Member Deschaine asked about police showing up at the site.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that he had property stolen and violations for vehicles parked on the property.

Member Field-Foster asked the applicant if this design was the minimum action necessary in terms of the view for the site.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that he has it laid out so they he only needs to request one variance.

Member Field-Foster asked where the house is proposed on the site.

Applicant Skcozylas said it will be at the corner of Milenz and Lake.

Member Bennett asked if he had spoken to any of the people who signed the petition.

Applicant Skcozylas said that he does not know who signed it.

Member Field-Foster asked if it was possible to move house.

Applicant Skcozylas stated that he would lose his view.

Member Trezise stated that he has major issues with this request because of the significant incursion into the wetland buffer. He would be opposed to this as presented.

Applicant Skcozylas showed where the corners of the house and the highest water line is.

Member Field-Foster stated that she wasn't sure what the unique circumstances were from the previous visit.

Member Deschaine stated that they hadn't discussed, and he did visit the site and was unimpressed by the hill and that the request was too close.

Vice-Chair Koenig stated that at the site he said the view was not great. He asked staff if the lot on Reynolds was a buildable lot.

Director Schmitt stated that every lot of record is a buildable lot.

Vice-Chair Koenig stated that his view would be greatly diminished if the vacant lot is built on. He said that he would be more in favor of a variance from the road instead of a wetland.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria one from Section 86-221 of the Code of Ordinances which states unique circumstances exist that are peculiar to the land or structure, that are not applicable to other land or structures in the same zoning district and these unique circumstances are not self-created.

Member Trezise stated that the property is unique because of the size of wetlands.

Member Field-Foster stated that there were wetlands all over the area and that she didn't think it was unique.

Member Deschaine stated that the house could be moved.

Member Bennett stated that there are other options.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated Criteria one has not been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria two which states strict interpretation and enforcement of the literal terms and provisions of this chapter would result in practical difficulties that would prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated criteria two has not been met because there are other options to place the house.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria three which states granting the variance is the minimum action necessary which would carry out the spirit of this Zoning Ordinance, secure public safety, and provide substantial justice.

Member Trezise stated that it would not further the intent of the Ordinance meant to protect the wetlands.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board criteria three has not been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria four which states granting the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land or the essential character in the vicinity of the property.

Member Deschaine stated that other lots bordering the property would be negatively affected.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board Criteria four has not been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria five which states granting the variance will be generally consistent with public interest and the purposes and intent of this chapter.

Member Trezise stated that this had not been met.

Member Field-Foster stated that the applicant should go back to the Architect and move the house out of the buffer.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated criteria five has not been met.

**Member Deschaine moved to deny the ZBA Case No. 23-08 (6329 Milenz).
Seconded by Member Field-Foster.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE YEAS: Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Deschaine, Bennett,
Trezise, Field-Foster**

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

6. NEW BUSINESS

**ZBA CASE NO.: 23-10 (2470 Burcham Drive), East Lansing – Meridian
Water & Sewer Authority, 2470 Burcham Drive, East
Lansing, MI 48823**

LOCATION: 2470 Burcham Drive

PARCEL ID: 09-351-003

ZONING DISTRICT: RR (Rural Residential)

East Lansing – Meridian Water & Sewer Authority, the applicant, has requested a variance to construct a water storage reservoir that does not meet the required wetland setback located at 2470 Burcham Drive.

Assistant Planner Chapman outlined the case for discussion.

Nate Coffin (1431 Washington Blvd. Detroit, MI) provided a presentation of the project.

Member Deschaine asked if there was more construction that was taking place.

Applicant Coffin stated that because the tank must be in the ground, they have to build up the sides of the reservoir.

Member Deschaine asked about wetland mitigation.

Applicant Coffin stated that they will be mitigated off site.

Member Field-Foster asked about future expansion plans.

Applicant Coffin said that the plan in the 1970's was for the building to mirror itself. For drinking water hydraulics, you need gravity below ground so you can't go up.

Dan Opsommer, Deputy Director said that the building was not built on an ideal site because it's very low lying.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria one from Section 86-221 of the Code of Ordinances which states unique circumstances exist that are peculiar to the land or structure, that are not applicable to other land or structures in the same zoning district and these unique circumstances are not self-created.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated Criteria one has been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria two which states strict interpretation and enforcement of the literal terms and provisions of this chapter would result in practical difficulties that would prevent the owner from using the property for a permitted purpose.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated criteria two has been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria three which states granting the variance is the minimum action necessary which would carry out the spirit of this Zoning Ordinance, secure public safety, and provide substantial justice.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board criteria three has been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria four which states granting the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land or the essential character in the vicinity of the property.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board Criteria four has been met.

Vice-Chair Koenig read review criteria five which states granting the variance will be generally consistent with public interest and the purposes and intent of this chapter.

Vice-Chair Koenig and the Board stated criteria five has been met.

Member Trezise moved to approve the ZBA Case No. 23-10 (2470 Burcham Drive). Seconded by Member Bennett.

ROLL CALL VOTE YEAS: Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Deschaine, Bennett, Trezise, Field-Foster

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. 2024 Meeting Calendar

Assistant Planner Chapman reviewed the 2024 Zoning Board of Appeals Calendar.

ROLE CALL VOTE: YEAS: Vice-Chair Koenig, Members Field-Foster, Deschaine, Trezise, Bennett

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

8. PUBLIC REMARKS

NONE

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Field-Foster stated that after this year she will not be reappointed and had a great time.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Koenig adjourned the November 15th, 2023 regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.