

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, December 20th, 2023, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Chair Mansour, Vice-Chair Koenig, Members Bennett, Trezise

ABSENT: Member Field-Foster, Deschaine

STAFF: Assistant Planner Chapman

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Mansour called the December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 6:33pm. Chair Mansour called the roll of the Board. All board members present except for Member Field-Foster and Deschaine.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Member Trezise moved to approve the agenda for the December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Seconded by Member Bennett.**

**VOICE VOTE YEAS: Chair Mansour, Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Bennett, Trezise**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion carried: 4-0**

3. CORRECTIONS, APPROVAL AND RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

**Member Trezise moved to approve the minutes from the November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Seconded by Member Bennett.**

**VOICE VOTE YEAS: Chair Mansour, Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Bennett, Trezise**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion carried: 4-0**

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. David & Cynthia Langdon, 4200 Red Cedar Road. RE: ZBA #23-11
- B. Frederick Baker, Jr., (attorney for Schwendeners). RE: ZBA 23-11

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. NEW BUSINESS

**ZBA CASE NO.:** 23-11 (715 Red Cedar Road), Julia McKenzie, 715 Red Cedar Road, Okemos, MI 48864  
**LOCATION:** 715 Red Cedar Road  
**PARCEL ID:** 25-327-001  
**ZONING DISTRICT:** RR (Rural Residential)

Julia McKenzie, the applicant, has requested variances to create two new parcels that are under the minimum lot width of 200 feet at 715 Red Cedar Road.

Assistant Planner Chapman outlined the case for discussion.

Applicant McKenzie provided an explanation for the request.

Frederick Baker (200 Washington Sq. North Ste. 400 Lansing, MI), attorney for the Schwendener family (adjacent property owners), stated that applicant has no practical difficulty to use the lot. She is already using the lot for its permitted use under the Ordinance.

Chair Mansour asked about the neighboring lot sizes and is stuck on the practical difficulty and minimum action.

Member Trezise stated that there are a number of lots that don't meet the requirement because they are older.

Member Bennett said that the shapes and sizes are unique. Thinks that building a single-family lot is permitted to use.

Member Trezise stated that they can already build a single family house on the lot.

Chair Mansour stated that if there are unique circumstances then we can grant a variance. And we should focus on the practical difficulties and asked the applicant about the practical difficulties.

Applicant McKenzie stated that the shape of the lot is the unique circumstance and creating practical difficulties.

Member Trezise stated that the practical difficulty doesn't exist because the lot wouldn't have enough frontage.

Chair Mansour 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.

Chair Mansour and the Board stated Criteria one has been met.

Chair Mansour 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.

Chair Mansour said that the home is existing, and the permitted purpose is to have a single-family residence in this zoning district.

Vice Chair Koenig stated that he cannot meet this criteria.

Chair Mansour 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.

Chair Mansour stated that the parcels would be under the requirements of the Ordinance.

Vice Chair Koenig stated that regardless of the minimum reduction amount it's hard to come up with an exact minimum.

Member Trezise stated that this is a significant variance ask.

Chair Mansour 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 Bennett stated that the area is low density and rural and does not fit in with the character of the area.

Paul Schwendener, neighboring property owner, stated that 15 people signed the petition against this. He believes the entire neighborhood is alarmed about further subdivisions happening.

Vice-Chair Koenig stated that a single-family home is permitted but whether or not it adversely affects the neighbors is debatable. He doesn't think that it would adversely affect neighbors.

Chair Mansour stated that she could meet this criteria.

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

Chair Mansour stated that she could not meet this criteria.

**Chair Mansour moved to deny the ZBA Case No. 23-11 (715 Red Cedar Rd). Seconded by Member Trezise.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE      YEAS: Chair Mansour, Vice-Chair Koenig, Member Bennett, Trezise**

**NAYS: None**

**Motion carried: 4-0**

7. OTHER BUSINESS  
NONE

8. PUBLIC REMARKS  
NONE

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS  
NONE

10. ADJOURNMENT

**Chair Mansour adjourned the December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular meeting for the Meridian Township Zoning Board of Appeals. Approved unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.