

MINUTES OF THE OTTAWA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

January 18, 2024



Roll Call

Present: Charlie Sheridan, Bill Stevenson, Celeste Nielsen, Melissa Hulse and Dan Bittner. Also present was city staff member Matt Stafford.

Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sheridan at 7:00 p.m. in the Ottawa City Council Chambers.

It was moved by Melissa Hulse and seconded by Celeste Nielsen that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sheridan then recounted the city ordinance provisions for granting zoning variances, per Section 118-19(g)(3) of the city zoning ordinance (see attached). He noted that there were three items for consideration by the board.

ITEM 1

Property: The West 43.47 feet of Lot 2 in Block 18 in State's Addition in the City of Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois, commonly known as 814 W. Superior Street, Ottawa, Illinois.

Applicants: Ronald and Lucinda Glade

Review: Ronald and Lucinda Glade requested variances from the side yard setback and the maximum area of accessory structures exceeding more than 50% of the primary structure to allow construction of a carport along the east side of their lot. They requested a side yard setback of 1 foot from the east property line so that the carport will line up with the existing garage. Celeste and Bill were concerned with the number of accessory structures on the property (1 garage & 4 sheds). After some discussion, Ronald and Lucinda agreed to remove 3 sheds to lower the total square footage for all accessory structures from 1,140 to 772. No opposition to their request was presented.

Action: Dan Bittner moved to allow construction of a carport 1 foot from the east property line and a variance to allow the total square footage of all accessory structures to exceed 50% of the primary structure. Construction of the 240 square foot carport and removal of the 3 smaller sheds will bring the total square footage of all accessory structures to approximately 772 square feet, which is approximately 87% of the primary structure. A condition was placed on the motion that the removal of the 3 sheds (2 plastic & 1 wood) from the property be completed by August 31, 2024. Bill Stevenson seconded the motion and it passed with a 4 to 1 vote (Melissa Hulse opposed the motion).

ITEM 2

Property: Lots 1-23 and the West 10 feet of Lot 24 & the West 150 feet x 18 feet of the vacated alley lying between Columbus & LaSalle Streets in Block 26 in State's Addition in the City of Ottawa, LaSalle County, Illinois, commonly known as 1212 LaSalle Stret.

Applicant: First State Bank, represented by Eddie Hartsell, Jr.

Review: Mr. Hartsell requested a variance from the sign ordinance to replace the existing nonfunctional and obsolete time & temperature electronic sign with an LED message board sign. The proposed message board will be housed in the existing First State Bank sign located on the north side of their property along LaSalle Street. No opposition to the request was presented.

Action: Melissa Hulse moved to approve a variance to the sign ordinance requirements to allow the existing time and temperature electronic sign to be replaced with an LED message board sign in the C-5 Secondary Central Business District at 1212 LaSalle Street. Bill Stevenson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ITEM 3

Applicant: City of Ottawa, represented by Dave Noble, Director of Economic Development

Review: Mr. Noble requested a variance to the City's floodplain compensatory storage requirements for the elevation of Green Street. He explained the purpose and need for the project as detailed in his letter (attached below) to Mat Stafford. No opposition to the request was presented.

Action: Celeste Nielsen moved to approve a variance to the City's floodplain compensatory storage requirements for the elevation of Green Street. The current City floodplain ordinance requires that any fill placed in the Special Flood Hazard Area is compensated at a ratio of 1 to 1.5. The variance requested will allow for the construction to not have to compensate for any fill that is placed in the Special Flood Hazard Area for the elevation of Green Street. Bill Stevenson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Having no further business in front of it, Dan Bittner moved to adjourn the meeting; Melissa Hulse seconded the motion, and the meeting ended at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

DAN BITTNER

City Commissioners

Wayne A. Eichelkraut, Jr.
Accounts & Finance

Brent Barron
Public Property

CITY OF OTTAWA

ROBERT HASTY

MAYOR

City Commissioners

Marla K. Pearson
Streets & Public Improvements

Thomas G. Ganiere
Public Health & Safety



November 28, 2023

Mat Stafford
Building Official and Flood Plain Manager
City of Ottawa
301 West Madison Street
Ottawa, IL 61350

Re: Request for Compensatory Storage Variance
Green Street elevation Project

The City of Ottawa will be utilizing a FEMA grant to elevate Green Street above the 100-year flood height. The purpose of this project is to provide for the health and safety of the people in the East Side of Ottawa. Currently during high floods, Green Street is under water and impassable. At the same time the Main Street bridge has to be closed due to the high water. This leaves the East Side isolated without proper police, fire and ambulance services. In addition, the residents on the East Side can be trapped for days.

This is a unique situation in the City of Ottawa. There are no other areas that become isolated like this during river flooding. Unfortunately, to elevate the street, fill must be placed in the flood plain and there is not adequate compensatory storage available.

The City has performed extensive drainage calculations for the project. These include box culvert sizing calculations that have been reviewed and approved by IDOT. In addition, in comparison to the size of the Illinois and Fox River floodplains, the fill material will not cause a change in the flood plain height. Structures will not flood worse, additional flood insurance will not be required, and the flood plain insurance of existing structures will not be effected because of the fill material.

As this is a necessary improvement for the health and safety of residents, the City requests a variance from its own compensatory storage ordinance for this project.

Sincerely,

David A. Noble
Director of Economic Development

ZBA Variance Considerations

Section 118-19(g)(3) Standards for Variances

The Zoning Board of Appeals shall not recommend a variance from the regulations of this ordinance unless it shall make written findings based on evidence presented to it in each specific case that all the standards for hardships set forth are met.

- a. The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in the district wherein the property is located.
- b. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances such that the enforcement of this Ordinance would result in practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardships due to special and unusual conditions which are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district.
- c. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood and will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.
- d. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, or substantially increase the congestion in public streets, or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety, or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.
- e. The granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property and improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located and will not overcrowd the land or create undue concentration of population.