

Richfield Township Board of Zoning Appeals
November 16, 2020

To meet requirements of Ohio HB 197 to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the regular meeting was held remotely via the MS Teams meeting software and was opened at 6:42 p.m. on November 16, 2020 with the following in attendance:

Natalie Grubb
Geoffrey Graham
Robert Kapitan
Christi Gable

Zoning Inspector, Laurie Pinney

Jeff Smola had notified that he would not be available to attend the meeting.

Case 644-20 was opened and is a request for variance from minimum frontage requirements to create four new lots on property located on Southern Road. The property has area in both Richfield Township and the Village of Richfield, and the township area is zoned R-1 Rural Residential. Ms. Grubb provided the case background and noted there have been requests in the past for a reduction in minimum frontage requirements, with some being approved and some disapproved. Ms. Grubb also noted that both the township and village would be reviewing, and both must grant approval for the proposed lot split to occur. Ms. Grubb also stated she would expect the fire department to review any proposed shared driveway.

Applicant Randy Hooke presented his request and stated he lives in the Glencairn Forest subdivision and has been looking for property that would provide more privacy and is not in a development. He noted that he is not a developer and while the township requirement is for a minimum fifty feet of frontage, the county requirement is for a minimum thirty feet of frontage. He had a soils scientist evaluate the property and has provided the reports and will obtain a septic approval. His plan is to build a residence on a back lot, keep three of the other lots and sell proposed parcel A, which will contain the existing residence. He reported that he talked to area neighbors and shared his plan, and several have written in support of his proposal.

Ms. Grubb asked the applicant if he had submitted a written narrative addressing the seven standards of practical difficulty or if he was prepared to address directly at this meeting. Mr. Hooke replied that he may have been provided with the standards the board uses to evaluate area variance requests but had not submitted a response in advance of the meeting. The board then asked Mr. Hooke to address the standards as they applied to his request.

Ms. Grubb questioned what attempts had been made to propose a division of property that would not require variances. Mr. Hooke said he had not and does not believe his current residence on a cul de sac road in Glencairn Forest has fifty feet of frontage.

Mr. Graham noted that the board typically states a variance in terms of the percentage of variance from the requirement. The proposed 31.25 feet of frontage could be viewed as a 37.5%

variance or could be viewed as a 100% variance, as there will be zero frontage on the township area of the property. The board members concurred that input from legal counsel would be valuable to answer questions raised by the board.

Mr. Hooke stated that the property had been sold as two to three lots and Ms. Pinney contested that viewpoint, as she had spoken with Mr. Hooke and several other interested parties prior to the sale of the property and conveyed that the property was a single deeded property and also conveyed the minimum lot requirements to all callers.

Mr. Hooke agreed to an extension to pursue additional information. A motion was made by Ms. Grubb and seconded by Ms. Gable to continue the hearing to the December 21, 2020 meeting and request attendance of legal counsel. The motion passed with unanimous approval of those in attendance.

Turning to administrative business, a motion was made by Mr. Graham to approve the minutes of August 17, 2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kapitan and received unanimous approval of those in attendance.

Having no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Grubb at 7:56 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kapitan and received unanimous approval of those in attendance.

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____ Date _____