

**Vergennes Township
Zoning Board of Appeals Minutes**

September 15, 2011

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Zoning Board of Appeals was held on September 15, 2011 at the Township Offices. Chairman Gustafson called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. Also present were members Baird, Jernberg, Schreur and Wester.

Approval of last meeting minutes:

Jernberg motioned, Wester seconded, to approve the last meeting minutes of May 25, 2011 as presented. Motion carried 4-0. Schreur abstained as he was not present at this May 25th meeting.

14200 Thompson – river dock extension variance

Eric VanDePol was here to present his application. When he purchased the house a few years ago, there was a boardwalk through the marshy land near the river and two sections of removable dock from that point into the water. The water depth at that point is only a few inches deep with a lot of silt/mud and quite a large area of the river in this area has this deep silt. He has to get out of his boat and pull it in to the dock and same to push it out (or use a buoy and rope). He is asking to add three 12' sections (total 36 feet long) of removable dock to extend it out where it is deep enough to anchor and maneuver the boat. Longer docks are already allowed just farther west of him where the river is over 500 feet wide. He is just shy of that area at about 470' from shore to shore. The dock sections will be taken in and out seasonally. Schreur knows the area well and said it is shallow with lots of silt and mud. Baird asked if this was enough distance out so that he does not need to come back before them in the future – the applicant said yes, he has taken measurements and talked to neighbors on river height averages. He said that no boaters, even kayakers, do not go into this shallow/muddy part of the river so there should be no danger of a boat hitting the dock. The main deeper channel is on the far side of the river from him. The members noted the high quality of detail provided with the application.

The Chairman asked if there were any comments from the public? Dave and Jan Thompson live on the same road, one house between them, and are in favor of it, they know the condition of the river in this area. There were two written comments – one from G. VanTimmeren who lives across the river stating he has no problem with it. The other was from Matt Fry, the State Natural Rivers Director. Matt said that he does not object to the dock extension and noted that it is very close to the 500' area where it would be allowed by right.

Schreur motioned to approve the variance as presented. Jernberg seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

3524 Causeway – detached garage setback variances

David Dowson was there to present his request. This small home on Murray Lake has been in his wife's family since the 1960's. They have all passed away and him and his wife have decided to move here and stay for retirement. They have been there about 1 ½ years so far. They would like to put up a garage for their vehicles in the space where they now park on the driveway. That space is limited and the garage would be within the setbacks by 3' from the neighbor line and 7' from the house and too close to the road. The neighbor lady to the north is a long time friend and is fine with the plans and is glad it is not being sold to new people. He owns two lots but lot 6 has a steep slope to it with large trees he wants to save. To put a garage in that area would not be where the driveway is located. He was asked if he could attach it to the house and be farther from the lot line. He said that the house was built a couple feet below grade at that end of the house, so to attach a garage would cause it to need to be below grade as well and water would flow right into it. There is no door at that side of the house so it just would not work out. The garage will be 22' by 24' and match the house in vinyl siding and roof pitch, etc.

Gustafson asked if 7' was enough space between the two buildings and the applicant said it was enough to walk through and room for roof water runoff. The applicant used to be a builder so he will be doing it himself, wants to do the monolithic slab foundation and stick built above.

Chairman Gustafson asked if there was any public comment? Being none, he asked if there were any other questions or a motion. Wester motioned, Baird seconded, to approve the variance as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

The decision forms were filled out and signed and copies given to the two applicants.

No other business came before the Board.

Adjournment:

Jernberg motioned, Wester seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Vandersloot, Recorder