

The Board of Adjustments of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring Street, Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Member	-	Elizabeth Flint
Member	-	Patti Hill
Member	-	Modina Mangini (absent)
Member	-	Whitney Werland
Member	-	Mike Craddock
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse

1. Call to order.

Code Enforcement Officer Richard LaCourse called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Officer LaCourse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Consideration and action to elect a new chairperson.

Officer LaCourse opened the discussion for election of a new chairperson. Mrs. Hill made a motion to table this action until the new alternates were in place. Mrs. Flint second the motion. The vote was 4-0 in favor, motion passed. Officer LaCourse led the meeting, but was not allowed to vote.

4. Approval of minutes from January 31, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Officer LaCourse opened the discussion for review of the minutes. Mrs. Flint made comment that it was interesting the Durbin's haven't started construction as of yet. Officer LaCourse stated that the Durbin's were in contact with the City in regards to ironing out details with their fence on the side of the city's property line. Officer LaCourse also added that he will amend the signature line for the minutes to have the secretary sign for approval.

Mrs. Flint made a motion to accept the minutes, as amended.

Mrs. Werland second the motion.

The vote was 4 – 0 in favor, motion passed.

5. Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving comments concerning a request for a variance on the twenty (20) foot front yard setback at 204 May Street.

Officer LaCourse opened the public hearing at 6:05 PM for public comments. Officer LaCourse recognized Mr. Chris Christensen from the floor as the property owner and requestor. Mr. Christensen started by explaining the set back request being in two places, one the main building and the second the existing garage. He also stated that the lot is small, and it is hard to place a building on it. The first discussion was on the existing garage that would require a 14 foot variance for construction. He explained the original lot line ran through the existing house on the corner. He replated the property to correct this issue to put the house on its own lot and to have a second buildable lot. The new lot line now runs in between the existing garage/storage building and the original home. He explained that the garage would be built with a second floor. He continued with

the build of the new attached structure to the garage, and requested a 5 ft setback variance. He explained, the front of the structure was determined by taken a measurement from the housing adjacent to his property in order for it to match the depth of the current structures in the neighborhood. He also commented the size of the new building was determined by using the existing storage building that is built in the backyard. Mrs. Flint asked about the replat of the property in regards to building construction and existing buildings. Mr. Christensen answer that the home was built across the lot line, in the center of the house. Mrs. Flint said the house was built on a double lot or two lots. She also commented the owner wanted to give one of the lots to his children. The existing buildings were grandfathered in on the new replats. She then asked Officer LaCourse what the setback requirements were for the house. Officer LaCourse commented that the house faces May Street; this side would have a 20 ft setback with the side on the corner having a 15 ft setback requirement. He also stated the inside setback would be 5 ft. The house currently meets the setback requirements. Officer LaCourse confirmed with the property owner changes were made to the car port to make it conform to the code. Mrs. Werland asked if he currently owns the house on the corner which he had replated. Mr. Christensen confirmed that he does owner it. Mrs. Flint asked if the current lots meet the square footage requirements in which he responded they exceeded the minimum square footage requirements. Mrs. Flint asked how the new proposed home would fit on the lot. Mr. Christensen referenced to the drawings in the packet and explained how it will fit near the storage building and the current garage that will be modified with the construction of the new home. A review of the layout drawings was made with all members of the board to show construction and how it relates to the surrounding buildings. Mrs. Flint asked why the porch could not be moved back five feet to meet the requirements. Mr. Christensen explain if the building was moved back, the distance between the storage building and the new proposed construction would only be 6 ft and would cause the house to be small on the interior. Mrs. Hill asked about the setback requirements between buildings on the same lot. Officer LaCourse said the code requires 20 feet in between the main structure and an auxiliary building. Officer LaCourse explained the two buildings were grandfathered due to time they were built. Officer LaCourse also commented the storage building was built prior to the replat and it would have been in compliance at that time. Mr. Christensen said the storage building was existing when he purchased it and he replaced all the siding on the building. He also tore down some old chicken pens and other items that were built to the property line. Mrs. Flint asked if the current storage building and the current garage meet the set back requirements. Mr. Christensen replied that it did. Mrs. Flint then commented the new construction on the backside of the garage would violate the 20 ft setback between the buildings and would require a variance of that area. Mr. Christensen agreed with that comment and said it was built to the permit issued at that time. Mrs. Flint asked if his children were going to move home to the corner house, in which he commented he hopes that would be the future plan. Mrs. Flint then asked how this request relates to the requirements of granting a variance as specified in the code. He commented that he had not read that particular section, but building a house for the future would be valuable to the neighborhood and his family. Mrs. Flint asked about the specifications as it relates to hardship to the applicant. He commented the lot is such a small size, this was what they came up with that would fit the build area and be of a useable design. Mrs. Flint asked how this request is just a convenience. Mr. Christensen answered that building a house is not a convenience and providing a residence is not easy. Mrs. Hill comment that moving the new building toward the storage shop and closing the gap is not convenient and maintaining the front practical solution. Comments were made in reference to moving the house over toward the property line, but that measurement is only about 10 ft now and would not affect the issues between the storage building and the garage. Officer LaCourse then closed the public hearing at 6:33 PM.

6. **Discussion and action regarding a request for variance on the required twenty (20) foot front yard setback at 204 May Street.**

Officer LaCourse asked for a motion.

Mrs. Hill made a motion to approve the variance request for the front yard setback. Mr. Craddock seconded the motion.

The vote was 3-1. The motion passed. Mrs. Flint voted against the variance because it did not meet the requirements for hardship as stated in the code. *She supported the action but could not vote in favor due to the hardship.*

7. **Public Hearing for the purpose of receiving comments concerning a request for a variance on the twenty (20) foot front yard setback at 1607 Rampart Street.**

Officer LaCourse opened the public hearing at 6:35 PM. Officer LaCourse recognized Delores and Louis Menis as the property owners. Mrs. Menis spoke about the addition of the front bedroom to the front side of the house, and how it would be used as a place for her grandchildren to stay when at her residence during the summer months. She advised, they currently sleep in the living room which cause an inconvenience in the residence. The board then reviewed the layout of the new addition and existing building to ensure everyone was on the same page as to location and prospective to the front porch and the current carport. Mrs. Flint asked about the large right-a-way located in front of the property and asked if the city would sell her part of that area. Officer LaCourse explained the right-a-way contains all utilities, including water, gas, sewer system, communications, and power lines within this area. Also, all properties along the road way have the same property lines. Officer LaCourse commented the new addition would not stick out any further than the house beside it. Officer LaCourse advised the board that all the letters were sent out and four residents responded in favor of granting the variance. Mr. Craddock commented that it looked, by the aerial view, like it would match the existing features of the house and surrounding properties. Mr. Menis commented the original design took it all the way out to the property line, which was not acceptable and they redesigned it to fit better in the area of the front yard. The board then discussed with the property owner on the design and look of the construction. Mr. Menis commented that it would match the current house. Officer LaCourse then closed the public hearing at 6:42 PM.

8. **Discussion and action regarding a request for variance on the required twenty (20) foot front yard setback at 1607 Rampart Street.**

Officer LaCourse asked for a motion.

Mrs. Hill made a motion to approve the variance request for the front yard setback. Mr. Craddock seconded the motion.

The vote was 3-1. The motion passed. Mrs. Flint voted against the variance because it did not meet the requirements for hardship as stated in the code. *She supported the action but could not vote in favor due to the hardship.*

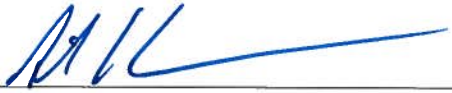
9. **Adjournment.**

Officer LaCourse adjourned the meeting at 6:44 PM.



~~Patti Hill, Secretary~~

ATTEST:



Richard LaCourse, Code Enforcement