

City of Dearborn
Zoning Board of Appeals
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
Minutes

Called to Order: 5:36 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Stephen Gedert (Chairman) Glen Green (Vice Chairman) Kenneth Gusfa (Secretary), and Gizela Weaver, Gerald Stockwell.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Technical Advisors: David Breneau, Zoning Administrator; William DeBiasi, Assistant City Attorney; Thomas Paison, Director of ECD

Approval of Minutes. Motion by Commissioner Gusfa, supported by Commissioner Weaver, that the minutes of the previous regular meeting of Thursday, October 22, 2015, are approved with one minor correction noted by City Attorney. Motion carried unanimously.

Appeal #15-142

From Ghassan Abdelnour, GAV Associates, 24001 Orchard Lake Rd, Farmington, MI, requesting to construct a multi-tenant, 10,662 sq.ft. one-story medical office building on property located at:

2454 Monroe

The applicant (architect) introduced himself.

Staff summarized the report (dated Nov. 2, 2015), noting this is new construction on otherwise vacant land. The Zoning is B-A, Local Business District. Staff discussed the property in relation to the surrounding neighborhood. Then Staff discussed the floor plan in relation to the required parking, and discussed the shortage of parking on the site plan. Staff described the presence of off-street parking adjacent to the applicant's property. Staff then discussed the landscaping and noted the conforming and nonconforming proposed greenbelts and an encroaching public sidewalk. Staff then said that the proposed landscaping materials exceed the requirements.

The applicant emphasized the amount of proposed landscaping along Nowlin and noted the applicant's current location across the street and their tenure there. He noted the lack of parking at the current location. He described the proposed elevations, noting the brick and limestone and the gable roof, emphasizing a more residential look, and said the extra space for is for their own expansion or another doctor (and said there would be no pharmacy).

Danny Kewson, one of owners of the practice, said only one practice would occupy the building, and unlikely to use 57 spaces as one practice.

The chair noted he did not like a variance request for an undeveloped site. He was okay with the landscaping, but did not like the parking variance and suggested making the building smaller, about 12 feet less wide to eliminate the need for a variance. Reduce the expansion space. He said it was a self-created hardship by overbuilding, and that there is nothing unique about property. He was not convinced a variance was warranted.

Applicant said there is on-street parking available. He said the proposed office space is the same size as their current space and has extra space to expand.

Staff noted a 900 sq.ft. reduction would be necessary to avoid a parking variance.

The Chair said the variance would run with the property, regardless of which medical practice occupies it.

The Board also said there is no practical difficulty, but the building looks nice. Monroe is a busy street. He expressed a concern about snow removal with the smaller parking lot. An orderly development means ensuring there is enough parking.

The applicant said they are not sharing the space with other doctors and wants the employees and patients to be comfortable. He did not anticipate people using the side street. The current building is 10 thousand sq. ft. with less than 50 parking spaces. They are doing fine, but they are growing. They want a building with more space and that is less cramped.

The Board opened public comment.

Liana McMiller, 22113 Olmstead (5th house from Monroe), complimented the look of the building, but strongly opposed the variance. She noted a lot of spillover from existing doctors' offices and the Board of Realtors. Residents cannot park in front of their own home. She expressed a concern with increased traffic, children's safety, and wanted a traffic study. She said a neighbor counted 9 cars from the offices in front of the homes. The street is already overparked. She also expressed a concern over the removal of existing trees from the site.

Correspondences: an email to Staff was read opposing the parking variance.

The Board expressed a concern over the permanence of a variance, wanting to look past

the next ten years the applicant said he'd be there. The Board did not want to exacerbate an existing parking problem.

The Board complimented the look of the building, but said it was a little too large.

RESOLUTION. Motion by Commissioner Gusfa, supported by Commissioner Weaver, for the reasons, facts, and the representations and stated on the record during the public hearing, to DENY the variances

4.01 Off-street parking.

Zoning requirement: Minimum 57 spaces. Plan provides: 52 feet is DENIED (DZO 32.05, F.1. a, j, k).

5.02 Landscaping.

Zoning requirement: Minimum 10ft-wide greenbelt. Plan provides: 8ft-wide is DENIED (DZO 32.05, F.1. a, j, k).

Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business: None

Meeting Adjourned 6:10 p.m.