

CITY OF DECORAH
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Minutes of March 3, 2021

This meeting was an electronic meeting pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of commission members and the public.

In support of Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds' proclamation declaring a State of Public Health Disaster Emergency in Iowa, the current COVID-19 situation makes it "impossible and impractical" to meet in one location. The Decorah City Hall was open. However, seating was limited to ensure proper social distancing. Seating was available on a first-come, first served basis for the March 3, 2021 Board of Adjustment meeting. However, the meeting was available telephonically. The public was able to hear and participate in the Board meeting.

Sue Sander called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and the following answered roll:
Janelle Pavlovec, Kraig Tweed, John Jenkins, and Carol Hagen.

Approval of Minutes of the February 3 and February 10, 2021 meetings

Tweed moved and Pavlovec seconded a motion to approve the minutes of February 3 and February 10, 2021.

In discussion, Hagen noted she had sent an email between the two Board meetings regarding the application in question. She acknowledged the email did not contain deliberative information, only a comment on site design. She wanted the email to be fully disclosed to the public.

Roll call vote: Ayes: Tweed, Pavlovec, Sander, and Hagen.

Jenkins abstained on the minutes from February and voted to approve the minutes from February 10.

Motion was approved.

Three Pals, LLC (Lois Humpal) for 206 Lloyd Street requesting permission to construct an accessory building with an attached breezeway contrary to the R-3 Zoning district regulations (17.16.030)

Ms. Humpal presented the application and noted she is planning to add a garage to this property. There is currently no garage. She said she plans to connect the garage via a breezeway attaching it to the primary residence.

She said it is an older home and constructing the garage in this style is the best way to build and maintain roof separations. She is asking for a two-foot setback from the East property line, side-yard.

She noted she had contemplated a complete demo and reconstruction of the home but felt the existing home is worth more than that. She said she is trying to be green and sustainable for the property and she noted similar projects elsewhere in the community.

In public comments, Tade Kerndt, owner of 315 Day Street, adjacent property to the applicant, said he was supportive of the project but urged the Board to consider a three-foot setback.

He is concerned about what projects he may propose and how this variance may impact any future projects he might construct on 315 Day Street.

There were no other public comments.

In Board discussion:

Jenkins noted he was concerned about storm water run-off and asked about the storm water plan.

Humpal said she was planning a gutter and downspout system to drain to the rear-yard.

Hagen expressed concern about the garage being too close to the property and how that might impact a possible and proposed project on adjoining property. Kerndt noted this was his general concern and suggested at least a three-foot setback as then allowing enough room for possible development on the adjoining lot.

Humpal again noted there are lots of building projects in the community that are too close together.

Sander asked if the breezeway could be 5.5 feet instead of 6.5 feet. Humpal noted there are some local utilities and an AC unit in the way and it would not be possible to shorten the distance.

There were no additional comments or questions from the Board.

Tweed moved and Jenkins seconded a motion to approve a variance request from Three Pals, LLC / Lois Humpal for a two-foot side-yard variance for the construction of a garage structure attached by a breezeway.

Roll call vote: Ayes, Tweed, Jenkins, Pavlovec, Hagen.

Nays, Sander.

Motion carried 4 – 1.

Other Business:

Sander announced Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 5:15pm as the next meeting and confirmed member in-person attendance.

Bird noted this was his last meeting and he thanked the Board for their work and in working with him over the past ten years.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

