

**CITY OF DECORAH  
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
Minutes of August 4, 2021**

Sue Sander called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Members Present: Sander, Hagen, Onsager, Pavlovec and Tweed.

Others Present: Lee Tangen, Isaac Packnett, Neighbors of Greenhouse project, Lloyd Bolz

Approval of Minutes of the July 7, 2021 meeting

***Motion by Tweed seconded by Onsager to approve the July 7, 2021 meeting minutes.***

***Roll call vote: Ayes***

***Motion approved. Unanimous.***

Lee Tangen is requesting permission to build a roof structure over the existing wood deck platform located on the front face of the residence. The roof extension is contrary to the R-3 Residential Zoning District regulations (17.76.040)

*Swanson stated Applicants are requesting 1 variance. Per bulk regulations of 17.76.040 zoning- the property is non-conforming with required front setback of 25'. All other structures per 17.16.050 along street within 200' each direction, average approx. a 19' setback. The applicant is requesting a 6' variance from the 19' setback average. Proposed setback would be 13'. All other setbacks are met.*

*Sander requested applicant come up and propose project.*

*Applicant Tangen explained the project to the board and stated it would be an improvement to his property and decrease the danger from extreme weather with the deck covered.*

*Onsager inquired if a ramp was in the works for future, applicant stated not at this time.*

*No further discussion was made.*

***Motion by Hagen and seconded by Tweed to approve Variance to build a roof structure over the existing wood deck platform located on the front face of the residence contrary to the R-3 Residential Zoning District regulations (17.76.040)***

***The variance granted of 6' leaving a 13' setback to the existing non-conforming front yard setback of 19'.***

***Roll call vote: Ayes***

***Motion approved. Unanimous.***

The Decorah greenhouse and Flower Shop is requesting permission to add a front entry structure, raise 3 hoop greenhouse structure with raised center architectural tower, raise existing rear metal structure with an addition of a 30ft diameter silo structure, all contrary to the R-3 Residential Zoning District regulations (17.76.040)

*Swanson stated the applicant is requesting multiple variances. 1. Front entry roof structure: current R-3 setback requirement is 25'. Applicant is requesting 13' variance for a 12' setback. 2. Raise 3 existing hoop structure with architectural center tower: current R-3 height max is 14'. Applicant is requesting variance to reach a 21' peak height from the current mound street elevation. Existing structure is non-conforming height*

and con-conforming at west property line: a 10' setback is required – 0 to 1' exists. 3. Raise of the existing metal building structure at the south-east corner of the facility to 30' peak height and add metal silo type structure with peak height of 43'.

Entire lot is non-conforming. 30% rear yard max coverage surpassed. West and south setbacks are not met. Existing structures already surpass max heights for accessory structures.

Sander invited applicant to present his project and applicant gave overview of the plans for the remodel.

Sander stated that the variances should be discussed and voted on separately, board agreed.

**Variance #1:**

Applicant provided letters and statements from surrounding neighbors in favor of the project.

Hagen inquired if new front pergola was to be built as part of the remodel, applicant stated not at this time.

Board asked how the new front awning affected front setbacks, after further discussion board was not in favor to approve and asked to table variance #1 and proceed to variance #2- the 21' high hoop structure with architectural center tower.

**Variance #2:**

Applicant provide new renderings and explained the center tower was no longer in the plan but to only raise the center hoop 1'-6" higher. Original submitted drawing indicated 21' above Mound Street. Clarification by the applicant was made. Existing hoop structure is sub-grade on existing slab 5-6' and the additional height added of 10' would keep overall height from Mound at 16' above grade.

Sander asked for public comments:

Jim O'Neal 806 Serenity Ct. wanted height clarity on structures.

Kent Nelson 801 Serenity introduced petition on height issues, roof was too high and stated applicant was not deprived of any rights if unable to build. Height would affect property values as a monster in the neighborhood.

Darrel Jensen 802 Serenity- asked to consider the R-3 regulations- Should it be allowed? Raised hoops to the west would affect their value.

Applicant defending the project with additional information.

Tweed asked if a lower height would be possible

Sander stated it was a positive for the City of Decorah.

**Motion by Onsager and seconded by Hagen to approve Variance #2 to raise roof hoop structure to 21' above existing slab which will be 16' above grade at Mound Street.**

**Roll call vote: Ayes**

**Motion approved. Unanimous.**

**Variance #3**

Applicant stated the lower level of the silo would be for storage and prep with a private residence for applicant on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor which would connect to the existing Metal structure, also to be raised 10' and a second floor added.

Hagen asked Swanson if the ordinance allowed heights that were requested, Swanson replied that the entire lot is out of conformance for R-3 but was grandfathered in for the last 145 years of existence. Accessory structures are 14' high to the midpoint of roof slope.

Applicant also stated the 30' diameter silo would be used for green house and applicant residence only- not retail.

*Neighbors stated the silo was not appropriate for residential areas, would block window views if 45 feet high and requested the variance be postponed.*

*A letter from Jeff and Lisa Grusy was submitted to the Board and read by Tweed. Letter was in protest and requested the variance be tabled.*

*No further comments were made.*

***Motion by Hagen and seconded by Tweed to Table Variance #3 and to discuss the silo structure at the next meeting (Sept 1, 2021) after the applicant has had time to make height adjustments and reconsider his options.***

***Roll call vote: Ayes  
Motion approved. Unanimous.***

***Variance #1: revisited:***

*After further discussion, board and applicant agreed to the front façade addition of only being 60" (5') and omitting the center extension.*

***Motion by Sander and seconded by Tweed to approve variance #1 front façade at 60" total. 25' setback required, 20' setback granted for 5' facade structure.***

***Roll call vote: Ayes  
Motion approved. Unanimous.***

Extended discussion on policies, rules and Regulations for Board of Adjustment.

*Swanson stated John Anderson provided draft documents for your review in drop box.*

*Additional info was sent by Hagen and Sander on applications and procedures.*

*Members will come up with modifications to questions and sent to Swanson compile info.*

*Further discussions will continue at September meeting.*

Other business:

*Lloyd Bolz inquired to the board whether or not he would need a variance to replace an existing garage.*

*Intent was to make the same size but replacing foundation through roof structure.*

*Swanson stated that per section 17.24(050 non-conforming structures- any alterations including re-constructing must be made compliant. The existing structure is approx. 5' from the property line.*

*Board members agreed. A variance application would need to be submitted.*

*Bolz thanked the Board for their time.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully submitted.  
Greg Swanson  
P&Z Administrator