

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
FORT THOMAS BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT  
HELD AT THE FORT THOMAS CITY BUILDING  
ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024  
AT 6:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Carol Dixon  
Tom Duckworth  
Susan Wingard  
Chris Buchert  
Randall Voet

**ABSENT:** James Beineke  
Steve Dauer

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Stewart, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator  
Cheri Scherpenberg, Administrative Assistant

Susan Wingard presided and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and roll was taken.

**MINUTES – December 19, 2023**

Members reviewed the minutes of the December 19, 2023 meeting. A motion was made by Tom Duckworth and seconded by Carol Dixon to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried 5-0.

**Meeting Dates & Times for 2024**

A motion was made by Tom Duckworth and seconded by Chris Buchert to approve the dates and time for the Board of Adjustment meetings to continue to be on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm in 2024. Motion carried 5-0.

**2024 Election of Officers**

James Beineke was nominated to continue to act as Chair. Susan Wingard was nominated to continue to serve as Vice Chair. Carol Dixon was nominated to proceed as Secretary. A motion was made by Randall Voet and seconded by Chris Buchert to approve the nominations of Board of Adjustment officers. Motion carried 5-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CASE NO. 24-1646**

**625 Mary Ingles Highway  
Mike & Ruth Crawford, Applicants  
Dimensional Variance for the Size &  
Location of a Detached Garage**

David Mette, 2130 N. Ft. Thomas Ave. was in attendance to address the Board. Mr. Mette informed the Board that the owners are asking for a variance due to the topography of the property creating a limited area for placement of the new detached garage. Mr. Mette said that the structure would not be visible from the road or neighboring properties. He said that the garage will be an extension off of the existing driveway and that there are no objections from the neighbors.

Mark Stewart reported that the applicant is requesting a variance from the provisions of Section 7.0 and Section 9.10, F. of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a detached garage in the side yard. The site is an internal lot and is currently zoned R-1AA, which allows single family residences, detached and customary accessory buildings and requires a minimum side yard setback of twelve (12) feet.

Mr. Stewart said the referenced property is over 6 acres in size with wide buffer areas of mature trees and bushes on all four sides of the house and proposed detached garage. The proposed detached garage will not be able to be seen by any neighbors or from the road during any time of the year. An accessory building is required by definition to be subordinate in size, extent or purpose to the principal building served. The house is approximately 2,800 square feet in size, so the proposed area of the garage meets this regulation. The applicant is proposing to construct a detached garage that is 1,083 square feet in area in the left side yard and is approximately 225 feet from the front property line and 285 feet from the left property line. Therefore, the two (2) requests are to allow the detached garage in the left side yard and to allow a 283 square feet increase in area.

Minimal discussion ensued.

Randall Voet made a motion and Chris Buchert seconded a motion to approve to allow the detached garage in the left side yard and to allow a 283 square feet increase in area, citing that the garage addition with 283 square ft. maintained on 6 acres is minimal, and will not be seen from the road or by neighbors. Motion carried 5-0.

**CASE NO. 24-1647**

**19 Sheridan Avenue  
Ben & Jen Bleser, Applicants/Owners  
Setback Dimensional Variance  
New Single Family Home**

Ben & Jen Bleser, 19 Sheridan Ave. were in attendance to address the Board. Mr. & Mrs. Bleser informed the Board that they are asking for a variance to construct a new single family home. Jen Bleser stated she would like to gain the 8 ft. for room to add a master suite on the first floor without elongating the home while staying in line with the other homes on the street.

Mark Stewart reported that the applicant is requesting a variance from the provisions of Section 10.5 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a detached single family residence. The site is an internal lot and is currently zoned R-1C, which allows single family residences, detached and requires a minimum side yard setback of eight (8) feet. The applicant is proposing to construct a detached single family residence that is four (4) feet from the left side property line and four (4) feet from the right side property line. Therefore, the two (2) requests are to reduce the minimum side yard setbacks by four (4) feet from the left property and four (4) feet from the right property line.

Mr. Stewart also said the current residence is twenty-four (24) feet wide on a fifty (50) feet wide lot. The proposed residence is forty-two (42) feet wide. With a majority of the residences in the area being smaller houses on small lots, the proposed residence would alter the essential character of the area. Reducing the setback to the proposed distances may cause a nuisance to the public by making it harder to drive power equipment into the rear yard without running through neighbors' yards. This situation happened just down the street after a previous approval by the Board for side yard setback variances and caused many headaches for the neighbors and city staff, including the police for multiple calls on trespassing.

Brian Vail, 17 Sheridan Ave. voiced his support of the applicants. Mr. Vail shared that he is the neighbor and a builder and does not feel that the side yard will need to be used and has no objections to the new build.

Patricia Dehner, 23 Sheridan Ave. expressed concerns about the height of the foundation of the new build compared to her home, the deck placement of the new home and the weight of equipment affecting her foundation and driveway.

A motion was made by Tom Duckworth to grant the variance request as submitted. No second was made. The motion failed

The Board continued discussion.

A generous amount of discussion ensued ultimately resulting in the applicants amending the variance requests to reduce the minimum side yard setbacks by five (5) feet from the left property and five (5) feet from the right property line.

A motion was made by Chris Buchert to grant an amended (3) feet left and right side yard variance request. No second was made. The motion failed

The Board continued discussion regarding conforming and non-conforming properties and comfortable setbacks and room for maintenance.

Chris Buchert made a motion and Randall Voet seconded a motion to grant the amended variance request of reduced side yard setbacks by three (3) feet from the left property and three (3) feet from the right property line giving a total of 5 feet on each side of the house for the construction of a new single family home.

Motion carried 4-1. (Carol Dixon voted Nay)

**CASE NO. 24-1648**

**61 W. Villa Place  
Evan Eagle, Applicant/Architect  
Michael & Lindsay Keogh, Owners  
Dimensional Variance from Height  
Requirements for Detached Garage**

Lindsay Keogh, 61 W. Villa Pl. was in attendance to address the Board. Mrs. Keogh informed the Board that she is asking for a variance to construct a detached garage that is 6 ft. taller than what is currently permitted in a highly wooded area that will not be seen. Lindsay Keogh said that a higher ceiling would create a more comfortable living space for a mother-in-law suite.

Mark Stewart reported that the applicant is requesting a variance from the provisions of Section 9.10, F., 1 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a detached garage in the rear yard. The site is an internal lot and is currently zoned R-1C, which allows single family residences, detached and customary accessory buildings and requires a minimum rear yard setback of thirty (30) feet. The applicant is proposing to construct a detached garage that is 576 square feet in area in the rear yard, five (5) feet from the right side property line, five (5) feet from the rear property line, and approximately twenty-one (21) feet in height. Therefore, the request is grant a dimensional variance of six (6) feet in height.

Mark Stewart said the location of the detached garage in the rear yard is approximately fifteen (15) feet lower than the street so it will not look abnormally large to any passerby. The properties to the rear are approximately ten (10) feet higher than the garage and have mature trees in their rear yards to help with screening.

Minimal discussion ensued.

Carol Dixon made a motion and Tom Duckworth seconded a motion to approve a dimensional variance of six (6) feet in height as requested, citing that the increased height of 21 feet total for the detached garage that is 576 square feet in area in the rear yard, five (5) feet from the right side property line, five (5) feet from the rear due to the topography of the site will be a non-issue, not impede on any of the neighbors and be an enhanced use. Also, the applicant, should they choose to make this a dwellable unit at any point look to the City for approval. Motion carried 5-0.

**CASE NO. 24-1649**

**26 E. Villa Place  
Father Ross Kelsch, Applicant  
Diocese of Covington, Owners  
Conditional Use Permit  
Parking Lot Expansion**

Father Ross Kelsch was in attendance to address the Board. Fr. Kelsch informed the Board that he is asking for a conditional use permit for the expansion of the parking lot providing additional parking for the church and school. Fr. Ross Kelsch said that in the past 5 years attendance has tripled and the additional parking would help with access and safety.

Mark Stewart reported that the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit from the provisions of Section 10.4.C.2 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the expansion of a parking lot for an existing place of worship. The site is currently zoned R-1B, which allows for a wide variety of conditionally permitted uses, of which the existing use (place of worship) is one and off-street parking, provided it is an accessory use, is another. The proposal is for paving over the existing gravel area and into the grass and creating thirty-five (35) additional parking spaces.

Minimal discussion ensued.

Tom Duckworth made a motion and Randall Voet seconded a motion to grant a Conditional Use Permit for the expansion of a parking lot for an existing place of worship citing that it will allow for more parking at the church and school. Motion carried 5-0.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** – Tom Duckworth made a motion to adjourn, Susan Wingard seconded. All Ayes Approved.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Date

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary Date