

ISABELLA COUNTY
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

July 16, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Isabella County Zoning Board of Appeals was held on July 16, 2025 at the Commission on Aging Building, 2200 South Lincoln Street, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Wynes, Tom Riley, Brent Duffett, Phillip Vogel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Kromer

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Ray Johnson, Planner/GIS Analyst
Mackenzie Rahl, Administrative Assistant, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Wynes called for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Johnson noted that the date on the agenda should be July 16, 2025.

A motion was made for the approval of the amended agenda by Mr. Duffett supported by Mr. Vogel.

Yes: Jim Wynes, Tom Riley, Brent Duffett, Phillip Vogel

No: None

Motion carried.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes from the April 9, 2025 regular meeting were circulated to the Board prior to the meeting for their review.

Mr. Wynes called for a motion to approve the April 9, 2025 regular meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Mr. Vogel supported by Mr. Riley to approve the minutes.

Mr. Wynes called for a vote.

Yes: Jim Wynes, Tom Riley, Brent Duffett, Phillip Vogel

Non: None

Motion Carried

PUBLIC COMMENT – Opened at 9:02 a.m., Closed at 9:02 a.m.

Variance #25-03 – Cotter – Gilmore Township

Mr. Johnson reviewed his staff report regarding the variance request. He indicated the request was made by Larry Cotter for an 8 ft side yard setback where 20 ft is required and a 4 ft rear yard setback where 35 ft is required for the construction of a 36 x 50 -foot attached garage.

Mr. Johnson stated that letters were submitted by Mr. Cotter from adjacent property owners Mr. and Mrs. Schumacher, as well as from Mr. James Strauss and Ms. Alease Kailing from the residence across N, Meridian Road. Which are in support of the requested variance.

Mr. Johnsons stated that after review the application appears to be complete and meets all other dimensional requirements.

The Chair invited the applicant to speak.

Larry Cotter and Paula Curtis-Cotter came up to speak. Mr. Cotter stated that currently there is a 20x20 garage for storage and it was not enough room. Mr. Cotter also stated that the proposed 36 x 50 attached garage will be a structural build and not a pole style build.

The Chair opened public comment at 9:06 a.m.

Katelyn and Dal Schumacher stated that they are a neighboring property and turned in one of the letters of support.

Hearing no further public comment, the Chair closed public comment at 9:07 a.m.

Mr. Duffett stated that Ray went over the application well and stated that the land around it is in the agricultural district and has no impact on the surrounding area. He also stated it is the most logical placement because of the lot size and the location of the well and septic.

Mr. Vogel and Mr. Riley agree that the placement of the proposed structure is the best place on the property.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chair called for a motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Duffett to approve Variance Number 25-03 (Var#25-03) as submitted by Larry Cotter for an 8 ft side yard setback where 20 ft is required and a 4 ft rear yard setback where 35 ft is required for the construction of a 36 x 50-foot attached garage.

The motion was supported by Mr. Vogel.

Mr. Wynes called for a roll call vote.

Phillip Vogel: Yes

Brent Duffett: Yes

Tom Riley: Yes

Jim Wynes : Yes

Motion carries.

Variance #25-04 – Klassa – Vernon Township

Mr. Johnson reviewed his staff report regarding the variance request. He indicated the request was made by Trina Klassa for a 6.3-foot side yard setback and a 9.8-foot side yard setback where a 10-foot side yard setback is required.

Mr. Johnson went over the history of the property stating that the property currently includes multiple cabins. He stated that according to the application the cabins were built over 60 years ago. Mr. Johnson stated that the land owner intends to sell one of the two new parcels. He also states the Mrs. Klass indicated that none of the four cabins will continue as short-term rentals but instead, will be used for personal use. Mr. Johnson stated that the staff is uncertain whether the Township assessor will split the parcel into two parcels or require a third because of the small piece on the north side of Carroll Dr.

Mr. Johnson stated that there were no letters for or against this variance. He stated that there were a few phone calls asking about the variance but still no written comments. He indicated that if the variance is approved that two conditions are recommended.

- 1.) The appearance, use and character of all buildings shall not change without prior zoning approval.
- 2.) The property shall be split into two parcels as shown on the site plans.

Mr. Duffett stated that he lives in the area and got a public hearing notice because he owns property down the street. He stated that he sold the property to Ms. Klassa previously but is not involved with the current sale of either property.

Mr. Johnson stated that there likely is not a conflict of interest by virtue of receiving a notice as per the Zoning Board of Appeals by-laws.

The Chair invited the applicant to speak.

Trina Klassa reviewed her justification stated that she spoke with, the assessor for Vernon Township, and indicated he was going to split the property into two parcels not three. She also stated that the well and septic would be shared with an easement until a new well and septic is

in place. She indicated that once work is done the properties will each have their own well and septic.

The Chair opened public comment at 9:17 a.m.

Becky Kohl-Gomez stated she was a friend of the applicant and the future buyer of one of the parcels. She stated that she appreciates exactly how the property is and is in support of the variance.

Hearing no further public comment, the Chair closed public comment at 9:18 a.m.

Mr. Vogel stated that he supports the split of the property as that the only way to split the property would be with a variance.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chair called for a motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Vogel to approve Variance Number 25-04 (VAR#25-04) as submitted by Trina Klassa for a 6.3-foot side yard setback and a 9.8-foot side yard setback where a 10-foot side yard setback is required for the split of a single lot into two lots in the Lakes Area Residential (L-R) district. The approval shall be conditioned upon the following:

1. The appearance, use and character of all buildings shall not change without prior zoning approval.
2. The property shall be split into two parcels as shown on the site plans.

The motion was supported by Mr. Riley.

Mr. Wynes called for a roll call vote.

Phillip Vogel: Yes
Brent Duffett: Yes
Tom Riley: Yes
Jim Wynes : Yes

Motion carries.

STAFF COMMENTS – None

APPEALS BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – Mr. Wynes commented on the acoustics of the room and noted it was difficult to hear with the air handling system.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wynes adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

Brent Duffett, Secretary
Mackenzie Perkins, Recording Secretary

UNAPPROVED