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Office of the City Clerk

BOARD OF APPEALS
Thursday, August 7, 2025
6:00 PM
Tolzman Community Room
Frank L. Weyenberg Library
11345 N. Cedarburg Road

Minutes

1) Call to Order

Present:

Vice Chair James Wawrzyn
Board Member Steve Helfer
Board Member Ramona Larson
Board Member Scott Reigle
Board Member Allison Korger
Chair Kathleen Massey -- **Excused**

2) Approve meeting minutes of June 5, 2025

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 5, 2025

RESULT: **Approved [Unanimous]**
MOVED BY: Board Member Helfer
SECONDED BY: Vice Chair Wawrzyn

AYES: Wawrzyn, Helfer, Larson, Reigle, Korger
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Vice-Chair Wawrzyn explained the guidelines for the Board of Appeals as well as the process for the meeting. All parties planning to appear before the Board of Appeals were sworn.

Thomas Essman	11444 N. Buntrock Ave.
Karen Davis	11452 N. Buntrock Ave.
Daniela Solomon	11440 N. Buntrock Ave.
Julia Garcia	3887 E. High St. Oak Creek, WI
Chuck Gabert	10027 Camelot Dr., Mount Pleasant, WI
Greg Golden	11333 N. Cedarburg Rd.

3) Hear evidence concerning; debate, deliberate and decide the request of:

- a) **Applicant:** Thomas Essman
- b) **Owners:** Thomas & Kaitlyn Essman
- c) **Appeal:** Opportunity will be given to all interested in being heard concerning the request for variances to Mequon Code Sec 58-249 (side yard offset of 15 feet and 15% maximum lot coverage) to build an attached garage with second floor living space at 11444 N. Buntrock Ave.

Building Inspections Supervisor Greg Golden spoke on behalf of the City of Mequon. He explained that the applicant is requesting two separate variances: side yard offset of less than 15 feet and maximum coverage of 15%. The property owner is requesting an offset of 10 feet 4 inches and a maximum of 19.8% lot coverage.

The appellant cited three nearby properties he believes violate offset requirements. Supervisor Golden reviewed these properties and found that 11440 N Buntrock meets the offsets, 11430 N Buntrock was granted variance in 1947 when it was built, and 6408 N Division was granted a variance in 1985. Applicant believes the narrowness of the lot creates hardship; however, the City already allows for a reduced side yard offset to account for that lot size.

Staff recommends denial of the side yard variance due to lack of hardship. Another option would be for the applicant to reach an agreement with the homeowner of 11452 N Buntrock to reduce the offset of the adjoining property with a deed restriction.

In regards to the second variance related to the maximum lot size variance, Staff recommends granting the variance provided the applicant submits a revised application that complies with the offsets.

Mr. Essman began his testimony by stating that they have an older home and a growing family. The garage is in disrepair, and the proposed location would provide the best access into a new garage entrance due to the layout of the driveway.

Members of the public were invited to provide their comments. Karen Davis is a neighbor to the north of the Essmans, and she expressed her concerns that the addition would block natural sunlight. She has worked to improve the landscaping of her own yard and is opposed to the addition as she feels it will negatively affect her property.

Daniela Solomon said she is not opposed to a new structure, but she is concerned about the potential for added noise from the garage. She hopes the new space is just for parking their vehicles and not other loud activities.

Vice Chair Wawrzyn asked if there were any issues with the grading around the Essman property that would be a factor in their requested variance. Supervisor Golden said this property did not have any such issues. The City created offsets and setbacks long ago to provide boundaries and fire separation between buildings. They can also help prevent safety issues and promote green spaces. The maximum lot coverage was created to ensure houses have more of a suburban setting rather than an urban setting.

Board Member Helfer asked if the project was located to the south, could the Essmans make a turn into the garage from the driveway. Mr. Essman said they had to do a few drawings and tried to find the best option. It would have take a lot of maneuvering of a vehicle to get it into the garage from that angle. The Essmans also tried to decrease the side of the garage/addition but modern vehicles need more space to fit into a garage.

Vice Chair Wawrzyn asked if they did consider the options proposed by the City to reduce the overall size. The Essmans felt it was too challenging to go from a 26-foot-deep garage to a 19-foot. They had not discussed a deed restriction with their neighbor as they were pursuing this variance option first.

Chuck Gabert just wanted to note that the sun goes east to west; therefore, the proposed addition should not impact the lighting in the neighbor's yard.

Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Wawrzyn closed the public portion of the hearing. The Board discussed the need to vote on each requested variance separately. The first request is for a variance to the side yard offset of 15 feet.

Motion to deny the variance requested for a 10 foot 4 inch side yard offset.

RESULT: **Approved by Roll Call Vote [Unanimous]**
MOVED BY: Board Member Helfer
SECONDED BY: Vice Chair Wawrzyn

AYES: Wawrzyn, Helfer, Larson, Reigle, Korger

The second variance relates to the 20% maximum lot coverage percentage (or the percentage of a property covered by buildings and structures). City Staff would support granting the variance for maximum lot coverage provided the Essmans submit a revised application that complies with the required offsets.

Motion to grant the variance for maximum lot coverage.

RESULT: **Approved by Roll Call Vote [Unanimous]**
MOVED BY: Board Member Reigle
SECONDED BY: Board Member Korger

AYES: Wawrzyn, Helfer, Larson, Reigle, Korger

Hear evidence concerning; debate, deliberate and decide the request of:

- a) **Applicant:** Jim Schreiner
- b) **Owners:** Jim & Lauren Schreiner
- c) **Appeal:** Opportunity will be given to all interested in being heard concerning the petition by Jim and Lauren Schreiner for an administrative appeal of a building permit denial for a sunroom located at 2633 W. Lake Isle Dr.

The City of Mequon withdrew its objection of the Schreiner’s building permit. The next step will be for Schreiners to get scheduled and appear before the Architectural Review Board.

4) Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 6:45 PM.

RESULT: **Approved by Roll Call Vote [Unanimous]**
MOVED BY: Board Member Helfer
SECONDED BY: Board Member Reigle

AYES: Wawrzyn, Helfer, Larson, Reigle, Korger

Respectfully Submitted,
Beth Kong
Deputy Clerk