

HOUMA BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Official Proceedings
of
December 18, 2017

Government Tower
2nd Floor, Terrebonne Parish Council Meeting Room

1. The Chairman, Trudy Hebert, called the December 18, 2017 meeting of the Houma Board of Adjustments to order at 3:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mr. Joe Harris.
2. Upon Roll Call, those members present were Mr. Joe Harris, Mr. Pete Konos, Mr. Willie Newton, Mr. David Tauzin and Mrs. Trudy Hebert. Also present was Mr. Christopher Pulaski, TPCG Planning Director. Absent was: Ms Katie Sims, due to illness.
3. Announcements: NONE
4. Approval of Minutes of November 20, 2017:
Motion was made by Mr. Joe Harris, seconded by Mr. Willie Newton that the minutes of November 20, 2017 be APPROVED. THERE BEING NO OPPOSITION, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
5. NEW BUSINESS:
 - a. Structure Variance: Side yard setback variance from required 15' to 0' for placement of a 6' wooden privacy fence.

Chair recognized Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, 703 Central Avenue, Houma, who stated that he purchased the adjacent property at 707 Central to improve the property and increase property value in this area. He was not aware that he needed a permit and has already begun constructing the fence. He is asking for approval in order to finish the project.

Chair recognized Mr. Pulaski who stated that the applicant is requesting a side yard setback variance from required 15' to 0' for placement of a 6' wooden privacy fence in an R-1 zoned district. Applicant is replacing existing cyclone fence. Applicant began construction without a permit. A Stop Work Order was issued and applicant applied for a permit and was informed of the need for a variance because of the change from cyclone fence (see through) to a solid wood fence. Staff feels that the variance will not alter the essential character of the district in which it is located. The variance will not substantially or permanently injure the appropriate use of adjacent conforming property in the same district. The location of the fence will not be a visual obstruction so the variance will not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare the district. A site visit was performed and all property owners adjacent to and within a 250' radius of the subject property have been notified. Staff received no calls regarding the request.

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request.

A **MOTION to APPROVE** was made by Mr. Pete Konos, seconded by Mr. Willie Newton.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Harris, Konos, Newton

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAINED: None

NOT VOTING: Hebert, Tauzin

ABSENT: Sims

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MOTION APPROVED.

- b. Structure Variance: Special Exception: 1) Temporary placement of travel trailer; and 2) Permanent placement of mobile home located at 209 Henderson Street.
Chair recognized Mr. Johnny Smith, 314 Patterson Street, who stated that he is developing the property and wishes to place a mobile home to live in as his residence since retirement.

Chair recognized Mr. Allen Bergeron, 200 Henderson Street, who voiced his concern about so many trailers moving into the neighborhood and the depreciation of property value. Mr. Bergeron did state that he has spoken with Mr. Smith and feels that he will place a nice trailer and keep up with the property.

Chair recognized Mr. Christopher Pulaski who stated that the applicant is requesting two special exceptions to allow for; 1) the temporary placement of a travel trailer; and 2) Permanent placement of a mobile home in an R-2 zoned district.

Applicant is requesting two special exceptions. The first would allow for applicant to live in a travel trailer for a period of no more than six months while he is preparing the property; and, secondly, he ultimately wishes to place a mobile home on the same property as his permanent residence. There are a number of mobile homes and mobile home parks along Henderson Street so the request would not seem to alter the character or substantially injure the use of adjacent conforming properties. The size of the property is suitable for placement of a mobile home.

The applicant is aware that the maximum time allowable for a travel trailer permit is 180 days since travel trailers are not suitable as a permanent residence. The applicant can store the travel trailer on the property once they have moved into the mobile home provided that they not use it as a second dwelling unit (storage only).

A site visit was performed and all property owners adjacent to and within a 250' radius of the subject property have been notified. Staff received one call of objection. Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request.

A MOTION to APPROVE was made by Mr. Willie Newton, seconded by Mr. Joe Harris.

A Substitute **MOTION** was made by Mr. Joe Harris that the trailer must be of the year model 2008 or newer. After discussion, the applicant did agree to adhere to the substitute motion that his mobile home be of the year 2008 or newer. The original **MOTION** was **RECEDED**. The **SUBSTITUTE MOTION with the CONDITION** requiring the year model of the trailer to be 2008 or newer, was seconded by Mr. Willie Newton.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Harris, Konos, Newton

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAINED: None

NOT VOTING: Hebert, Tauzin

ABSENT: Sims

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE SUBSTITUTE MOTION APPROVED.

- a. Special Exception: Placement of a mobile home on property at 221 Henderson Street.

Chair recognized Mr. Juan Gomez who stated that he wishes to place a mobile home on this property. There was a mobile home there before and he will place this one in the same spot.

Chair recognized Mr. Christopher Pulaski who stated that the applicant is requesting a Special Exception to allow for placement of a mobile home in an R-2 zoned district. Applicant has recently purchased the property and the previous owner did have a mobile home on this lot within the past six months, but the legal, non-conforming status does not transfer with ownership since the mobile home had been removed. Applicant will place the mobile home in the exact location of the previous one so no further variance requests should be needed as the size of the property is sufficient for placement of a mobile home. Staff feels that the exception will not alter the essential character of the district in which it is located since there are a number of mobile homes and mobile homes parks in the area. The exception will not substantially or permanently injure the appropriate use of adjacent conforming property in the same district. The exception will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare the district.

A site visit was performed and all property owners adjacent to and within a 250' radius of the subject property have been notified. Staff received no calls of the request. Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request.

When the Board asked if applicant would adhere to the 2008 or newer request, the applicant stated that he would object to that request. He stated that his family is in the business of renovating older mobile homes.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Harris, Konos, Newton

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAINED: None

NOT VOTING: Hebert, Tauzin

ABSENT: Sims

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MOTION APPROVED.

c. Structure Variance: Rear yard setback from required 20' to 15' for new construction at 883, 887 and 891 Verret Street.

Chair recognized Mr. Travis Buquet, Travis Buquet Homebuilders, who stated that he is requesting this setback variance in order to build three townhouse units.

Chair recognized Mr. Christopher Pulaski who stated that the applicant is requesting a rear yard setback from required 20' to 15' for construction of 6 townhouses by way of three duplexes on the properties (one duplex on each lot). In order to meet the parking requirements and construction plans a variance would be required in order to provide a usable rear covered patio. The size of the proposed units is not excessive. Staff feels that the exception will not alter the essential character of the district in which it is located. The exception will not substantially or permanently injure the appropriate use of adjacent conforming property in the same district. The uses to the rear are a day care center and a residence. The exception will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare the district.

A site visit was performed and all property owners adjacent to and within a 250' radius of the subject property have been notified. Staff received two calls regarding the request. One call was no objection and the second call requested a stipulation pertaining to the maintenance and preservation of the 150 year old oak tree and that no further exceptions be made.

It is unclear from GIS mapping system if the oak tree is on the subject property, the property to the rear or perhaps both. The Board of Adjustment reviews matters pertaining to zoning and special exceptions. Matters concerning the existing tree are a private, civil matter with the property owner. The Board can request that the applicant make every effort to preserve the tree as trees add value to property thru beauty, habitat for birds and other animals, and aid in reducing storm water runoff.

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request.

After a brief discussion, a **MOTION to APPROVE** on the **CONDITION** that, should the old oak tree in the back be located on his property that he will not cut it down, was made by Willie Newton, **SECONDED** by Pete Konos.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Harris, Konos, Newton

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAINED: None

NOT VOTING: Hebert, Tauzin

ABSENT: Sims

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MOTION APPROVED.

d. Sign height variance from maximum 7' to 20' for monument sign at Grace Lutheran Church located at 422 Valhi Blvd., Houma.

Chair recognized Pastor. Richard Rudnick, 422 Valhi Blvd., who stated that applicant, Dale Boger, could not attend because he was at work. They are asking for this sign variance so that the sign will be able to be seen better.

Chair recognized Mr. Christopher Pulaski who recognized that Councilman Darin Guidry had was in attendance.

Chair recognized Mr. Christopher Pulaski who stated that Applicant was informed of the Overlay District requirements for signage at the time they applied for a building permit. The applicant's stated hardship is that the bell tower in front of the church is quite large and a smaller sign would not be noticeable given the size of the public right of way and possible future road expansion. The size of the sign area including the proposed electronic message board is below that the maximum allowed under the regulations. Staff feels that the exception will not alter the essential character of the district in which it is located since the property in question has been a church for many years and the overall size of the sign panels and LED screen are below the maximum allowed. The setback of the sign from the front property line and roadway would not seem to substantially or permanently injure the appropriate use of adjacent conforming property in the same district. The exception will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare the district.

A site visit was performed and all property owners adjacent to and within a 250' radius of the subject property have been notified. Staff received one call in opposition of the request stating that the sign would deter from the residential character of the district. Staff would suggest that the applicant consider placement of appropriate landscape material (low shrubs and ground covers) around the base of the sign to improve the property aesthetics and make it more appealing from the roadway.

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of the request.

A **MOTION** to approve on the **CONDITION** that applicant agree to add landscaping to the base of the sign, **SECONDED** by Mr. Pete Konos.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

YEAS: Harris, Konos, Newton

NAYS: NONE

ABSTAINED: None

NOT VOTING: Hebert, Tauzin

ABSENT: Sims

THE CHAIRMAN DECLARED THE MOTION APPROVED.

6. ELECTION of OFFICERS:

A **MOTION** to re-instate all officers was made by Mr. Willie Newton, **SECONDED** by Mr. Joe Harris. There being **NO OPPOSITION**, the **MOTION** passed unanimously.

7. Next Meeting Date: January 15, 2018

8. Board of Adjustment Member Comment: Happy New Year

9. Public Comment: NONE

10. There being no further business, Mr. Joe Harris made the **MOTION** to ADJOURN, seconded by Mr. Pete Konos

There being **NO OPPOSITION**, **MOTION CARRIED**; Chairman declared **MOTION ADOPTED** and the meeting **ADJOURNED**.



Mr. Willie Newton, Secretary