



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes Zoning Board of Appeals

Wednesday, August 28, 2013

6:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street, 2nd Flr.

A CALL TO ORDER

Chair Milshteyn called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

B ROLL CALL

Chair Milshteyn called the roll.

Present: 6 - Alex Milshteyn, Perry Zielak, Ben Carlisle, Sally Petersen, Nickolas Buonodono, and Evan Nichols

Absent: 3 - Candice Briere, Wendy Carman, and Heather Lewis

C APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was unanimously Approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

D APPROVAL OF MINUTES

13-1019 June 26, 2013 ZBA Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Zielak, seconded by Nichols, that the Minutes be Approved by the Board and forwarded to the City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

E APPEALS AND HEARINGS

[13-1017](#)

ZBA13-017; 3947 Research Park Drive
American Honda, Inc. is requesting one variance from Chapter 47 (Streets), Section 4:20, of 4.3 feet, in order to permit a driveway opening of 19.7 feet; 24 feet is the minimum required.

Chris Cheng presented the following staff report.

SUMMARY:

American Honda Motor Company Inc., is requesting one variance from Chapter 47 (Streets), Section 4:20, a variance of 4.3 feet in order to permit a driveway opening of 19.7 feet wide; 24 feet is the minimum required.

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION:

The site is located on the east side of Research Park Drive, east of South State

Street, south of Interstate 94. The site is currently occupied by a 19,357 square foot emission testing and research building. The petitioner currently has a site plan under review to construct a 24,116 square foot addition to the side of the existing building in order to provide expanded capability for the facility.

The site has one curb cut from Research Park Drive. The existing drive width is 19.7 feet wide; city code requires a minimum of 24 feet for driveway width. Although 72 parking spaces are required by code, the petitioner has deferred the maximum amount of 19 spaces, due to the low traffic and parking needs of the use. There are currently 6 employees in the building and that is projected to grow to 10 employees after the addition is complete. There are no large truck delivery needs and no customer traffic visiting the site. Enlarging the existing drive would result in the removal of one mature tree and encroach significantly in to the critical root zone of two additional trees.

The site plan was recommended for approval at the August 20, 2013 Planning Commission meeting. If the variance is granted, it will proceed to City Council for final site plan approval.

The variance as proposed has been reviewed and accepted by the City's traffic engineer as a safe and efficient design for the use on the site.

Standards for Approval - Chapter 47 (Streets) Variance

The Zoning Board of Appeals has all the power granted by State law and by Section 5:99, Application of the Variance Power, from the City of Ann Arbor Zoning Ordinance and Chapter 47(Streets), Section 4:20(9). The following criteria shall apply:

The Zoning Board of Appeals shall have the authority to interpret this Chapter and may, in specific cases involving practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship, grant variances or exceptions from the requirements of this Chapter providing such a variance or exception is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Chapter.

All of the variances requested will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Chapter 47 because they will allow for continued safe and efficient access to and from the site. Modifications required to increase drive width would result in impact and/or removal of three mature trees on the site and result in additional impervious surface.

The existing use has a low daily traffic count with 10 employees predicted after the proposed building expansion. The existing drive has been in use since the original building was constructed in 1974 and there have been no known issues or conflicts with the drive. There are no large truck deliveries on a regular basis and vehicles being tested are driven on site individually. Occasionally, test vehicles are received from Japan and delivered on a flat bed truck.

The City's Traffic Engineer has reviewed and supports the variance requests as proposed.

QUESTIONS BY BOARD TO STAFF:

Petersen asked about the square footage of the existing building.

Cheng and Applicant responded that it is approximately 19,000.

PRESENTATION BY PETITIONER:

David Saneholtz, P.E. Poggemeyer Design Group, 1168 North Main Street, Bowling Green, OH., was present on behalf of the property owner, and explained the application.

Tommy Chang, American Honda Motor Company, 3947 Research Park Drive, Ann Arbor, was also present and responded to enquiries regarding proposed expansion.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Noting no public speakers the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

LIST OF EXHIBITS PRESENTED:

Chair Milshteyn noted that no correspondence had been received in support or opposition of the application.

Motion made by Zielak, Seconded by Carlisle, in Petition ZBA13-017; 3947 Research Park Drive, the Zoning Board of Appeals hereby grants a variance from Chapter 47 (Streets) Section 4:20, of 4.3 feet, from the required 24 feet, per submitted plans, based on the following findings of facts and standards for approval:

a) The variance requested is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the requirements of this Chapter.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

The members of the Board took into consideration the presented petition and discussed the matter.

On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried. Approved: 6-0. Variance Granted.

Yeas: 6 - Chair Milshteyn, Zielak, Carlisle, Councilmember Petersen, Buonodono, and Nichols

Nays: 0

Absent: 3 - Briere, Carman, and Lewis

F UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G NEW BUSINESS

H REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

I PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)

J ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Zielak, seconded by Councilmember Petersen, that the Meeting be Adjourned. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

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