

Zoning Board of Appeals
October 22, 2025, Regular Meeting

STAFF REPORT

Subject: ZBA 25-0023; 924 Woodlawn Avenue

Summary:

Darren Millman, property owner, is requesting a variance of 400 square feet from Table 5.17-2 Two-Family Residential Zoning District Dimensions. If granted, the variance will allow the construction of a duplex to an existing single-family residence. The subject property is 4,600 square feet in area. The property is zoned R2A, Two-Family Dwelling District and requires a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet.

Background:

The subject property is located on the south side of Woodlawn Avenue west of Packard Street in the Lower Burns Park neighborhood. The home was constructed in 1950 and is approximately 1,122 square feet in size. According to the survey that was submitted with the application the current lot size is 4,600 square feet in area.

Description:

The applicant is seeking to construct a 383 square foot dormer addition that will allow the conversion of the existing single-family home to a duplex. The structure is currently a four-bedroom residence. If the lot area variance is approved, the home will convert to a duplex with both units containing four bedrooms. The first-floor unit will expand into the basement with two bedrooms on each level. The second-floor unit will contain four bedrooms and the kitchen and living room will be on the first floor.

TABLE 5.17-2: TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS									
DISTRICT	MIN. LOT AREA PER D.U.	BUILDING SPACING	REQUIRED SETBACK				MAX. HEIGHT	LOT DIMENSIONS	
			MIN. FRONT	MAX. FRONT	MIN. SIDE	MIN. REAR		MIN. AREA	MIN. WIDTH
R2A	2,500 sq. ft.	[B]	25 ft. [A]	None	5 ft.	20 ft.	30 ft.	5,000 sq. ft.	40 ft.
R2B	4,250 sq. ft. [C]	[B]	25 ft. [A][B][D]	None	5 ft.	20 ft.	30 ft.	8,500 sq. ft.	60 ft.

Footnotes:

[A] Also see additional regulations in Section 5.18.5 (Averaging an Established Front Building Line).

[B] Where more than one residential structure is to be constructed on a lot in the R2 districts, or where dwelling units are served by a private street under the provisions of Section 5.21, the following placement regulations shall also be applied:

- (a) The minimum spacing between buildings shall be twice the minimum side required setback dimension of the zoning district in which the lot is located;
- (b) A minimum rear required setback of 30 feet must be provided between the rear of a residential structure and the adjacent (nearest) lot line;
- (c) A minimum front required setback of ten feet must be provided between all structures and the private street pavement.

[C] Except for fraternity houses, sorority houses, student cooperative housing, and group housing, for which minimum lot area shall be 350 sq. ft. per occupant.

[D] Or the established front building line existing on the date this ordinance is adopted, whichever is larger.

Standards for Approval- Alteration to a Nonconforming Structure

The Zoning Board of Appeals has all the power granted by State law and by Section 5.29.12, Application of the Variance Power from the Unified Development Code (UDC).

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The following criteria shall apply:

(a). *That the practical difficulties are exceptional and peculiar to the property of the person requesting the variance and result from conditions which do not exist generally throughout the City.*

Applicant response: "Existing lot dimensions are slightly less than the stated minimum for duplex houses."

(b). *That the practical difficulties will result from a failure to grant the variance, include substantially more than mere inconvenience, inability to attain a higher financial return, or both.*

Applicant response: "Without the variance it will not be feasible to create a layout comparable to other duplex houses on the street with the same lot dimensions."

(c). *That allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this Chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Board to grant a variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.*

Applicant response: "Allowing the variance will permit the existing home to be as a duplex, as are other houses on the street with the same lot dimensions."

(d). *That the conditions and circumstances on which the variance request is based shall not be a self-imposed hardship or practical difficulty.*

Applicant response: "The lot dimensions existed prior to the current R2A Zoning requirements."

(e). *A variance approved shall be the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land or structure.*

Applicant response: "The variance of 383 sf is the minimum required in order to proceed with the proposed construction project."

Respectfully submitted,



Jon Barrett- Zoning Coordinator
City of Ann Arbor