

**Zoning Board of Appeals
March 25, 2026, Regular Meeting**

STAFF REPORT

Subject: ZBA26-0004; 1056 Ferdon Road

Summary:

Michael McGlashen, property owner, is requesting lot area and lot width variances from Table 5.17-1, Single-Family Residential Districts. If approved, the variances will allow for a land division to be completed. The result will enable two lots of record to be 50 feet in width and the lot with an existing residential structure to be 5,726 square feet in size and the newly created lot to be 5,716 square feet in area. The property is zoned R1C, Single-Family Residential and requires a minimum lot width of 60 feet and 7,200 square feet in area.

Background:

Location: North Burns Park neighborhood
Building Footprint (approx.): 2,452 sf
Parcel Identification Number: 09-09-33-105-027
Property Owner/Applicant: Michael & Kelly McGlashen
Zoning District: R1C, Single-Family Residential

The subject property is on the west side of Ferdon Road at the intersection of Ferdon and Norway Roads. The existing home was constructed in 1910 and is 2,452 square feet in size. The lot area is 11,441 square feet. The R1C district requires a minimum of 7,200 square feet.

Description:

The owners are proposing a new lot line be created, dividing the two parcels nearly identical to one another. Each parcel will be 50 feet in width and 5,726 and 5,716 square feet respectively. The existing detached garage in the rear yard will be demolished. A 12-foot-wide shared driveway with easement down the middle will be created to allow access to both parcels. The variances being requested result in 10 feet of lot width for both parcels and a 1,474 square foot variance for Lot 6 (north parcel) and a 1,484 square foot variance for Lot 7 (south parcel). variance for Lot 7 (south parcel).

TABLE 5.17-1: SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS									
Other use and development standards also apply and may supersede or effect the requirements in this table, such as Sections 5.16 Use Specific Standards, 5.18 Special Dimensional and Site Layout Standards, 5.19 Parking Standards and 5.20 Landscaping, Screening, and Buffering.									
DISTRICT	MIN. LOT AREA PER DWELLING UNIT	MIN. BUILDING SPACING	REQUIRED SETBACK				MAX. HEIGHT	LOT DIMENSIONS	
			MIN. FRONT	MIN. ONE SIDE	MIN. TOTAL OF TWO SIDES	MIN. REAR		MIN. AREA	MIN. WIDTH
AG	100,000 sq. ft.		±0 ft. [A][B]	10% of lot width	20% of lot width	50 ft.	30 ft.	100,000 sq. ft.	200 ft.
R1A	20,000 sq. ft.	[C]	±0 ft. [A]	7 ft.	18 ft.	50 ft.	30 ft.	20,000 sq. ft.	90 ft.
R1B	10,000 sq. ft.	[C]	30 ft. [A]	5 ft.	14 ft.	±0 ft.	30 ft.	10,000 sq. ft.	70 ft.
R1C	7,200 sq. ft.	[C]	25 ft. [A]	5 ft.	10 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	7,200 sq. ft.	60 ft.
R1D	5,000 sq. ft.	[C]	25 ft. [A]	3 ft.	6 ft.	20 ft.	30 ft.	5,000 sq. ft.	40 ft.
R1E	4,000 sq. ft.	[C]	15 ft. [A]	3 ft.	6 ft.	20 ft.	30 ft.	4,000 sq. ft.	34 ft.

Standards for Approval- Variance

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).

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: *“Unique Physical Circumstances: The subject property is characterized by a legacy of historic platting (Assessor's Plat No. 1, c. 1920) that created Lot 6 and Lot 7 as 50-foot-wide parcels. Nearly every lot in the vicinity is also 50 feet wide or less. These dimensions predate the adoption of modern R1C zoning standards which now require a minimum width of 60 feet. The placement of the primary residence in 1910 resulted in a structural footprint situated just 6.4 feet from the historic lot line. Furthermore, the property contains significant topographic constraints, including a 4-foot depression south of the primary driveway, and a mature Northern White Cedar canopy. These physical barriers render the construction of a second, code-compliant independent driveway functionally and environmentally infeasible, necessitating the requested shared-use access easement.”*

- (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: *“The property is currently occupied by a 2,452 sq. ft. primary residence (c.1910) and a 280 sq. ft. detached garage (c. 1923) on Lot 6. The southern portion (Lot 7) is utilized as an open side yard. A recent survey identifies the historic lot line approximately 6.4 feet South of the existing residence, running longitudinally near the Southern edge of the current driveway.*

Primary Residence (1910): The home has undergone a comprehensive energy efficiency retrofit (heat-pumps, high-performance windows and appliances, insulation, envelope sealing), however, its 40+ foot vertical layout presents significant accessibility challenges making it unsuitable for senior living without structurally invasive and cost-prohibitive remodeling.

Accessory Structure (1923): Marked on the conceptual plan as "EXIST. GARAGE TO BE REMOVED", the garage is in a state of advanced structural failure; it is leaning, rests on a compromised foundation, is functionally obsolete and used for limited tool storage. Its proximity to the western lot line makes it infeasible to rehabilitate or rebuild on its current footprint.”

- (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***

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allowance of the variance.

Applicant response: *“Public Welfare & Neighborhood Character: Approval of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to neighborhood property. On the contrary, the project facilitates the removal of a structurally failing, non-conforming 1923 garage and provides a model for “Aging Next Door”—creating accessible, intergenerational housing that supports the City’s A2Zero goals and the “Ann Arbor for All” Comprehensive Plan. The preservation of the mature cedar line ensures that a significant natural privacy buffer is maintained between the new development and neighboring residents, while nature-based stormwater techniques will improve on-site drainage compared to existing conditions.”*

- (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: *“Not Self-Created: The need for these variances is entirely the result of the historical development of the neighborhood and the specific siting of the 1910 residence and 1923 accessory structure, both of which long predate current Unified Development Code standards. The hardship is inherent to the conflict between the original 50-foot lot widths and the contemporary 60-foot R1C width requirement. The applicant is seeking to resolve these conflicts to preserve the character of the historic 1910 home while restoring the utility of Lot 7.”*

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

Applicant response: *“The requested lot area and frontage reductions (from 60' to 50') represent the minimum relief required to re-establish the independent status of Lot 7 as originally platted. Any attempt to satisfy the 60-foot R1C width requirement would require a lot line adjustment that would either render the existing 1910 residence non-conforming or require its partial demolition. The requested relief allows for a viable building envelope while honoring the necessary 8.4-foot side-yard buffer for the historic structure and preserving the urban tree canopy through the use of a shared-use driveway easement.”*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Barrett". The signature is stylized and cursive.

**Jon Barrett- Zoning Coordinator
City of Ann Arbor**