

**Zoning Board of Appeals
June 25, 2025, Regular Meeting**

STAFF REPORT

Subject: ZBA25-0015; 1780 Scio Church Road

Summary:

Sarah Lorenz, representing property owner, is requesting a 400 square foot variance from Table 5.16-2 Lot Area and Floor Area Requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Up to one 800 square feet ADU is permitted for a property greater than 7,200 square feet. The proposed ADU is 1,064 square foot in floor area. This property is zoned R1C, Single Family Dwelling District.

Background:

The subject property is located on the north side of Scio Church Road and west of Pioneer High School in the Dicken neighborhood. The subject property is 9,452 square feet in area. The parcel has a 30 foot wide access easement on the east side of the parcel that is used for egress for an existing single-family dwelling (1784 Scio Church Road). The lot is currently vacant.

Background:

The applicants are proposing to construct a new single-family residence with an attached accessory dwelling unit. The primary unit contains 2,070 square feet of floor area and an accessory dwelling unit with 1,200 square feet of floor area. The primary unit will consist of three bedrooms and two and half bathrooms. The accessory unit will have two bedrooms and one and a half bathrooms. Both dwelling units will have basements, exterior decks and an attached two-car garage.

The maximum size allowed for an accessory dwelling unit for a lot that is over 7,200 square feet in area is 800 square feet. The three floors of 400 square feet in area exceed the allowable 800 square foot total.

Section 5.16.6 D. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

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| 1. | An <i>ADU</i> is permitted on a <i>lot</i> that has one <i>single-family dwelling</i> as the <i>principal use</i> . |
| 2. | Minimum lot area and floor area requirements for accessory dwelling units: |

**TABLE 5.16-2: LOT AREA AND FLOOR AREA
REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS**

LOT AREA	ADU FLOOR AREA
Less than 7,200 sq. ft.	Up to 600 sq. ft. permitted [A]
7,200 sq. ft. or greater	Up to 800 sq. ft. permitted [A]

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| 3. | An <i>ADU</i> is permitted as or within any legally conforming <i>accessory building</i> . | | | | |
| 4. | The total number of Persons residing in the primary <i>dwelling unit</i> and the <i>ADU</i> combined shall not exceed the limits specified in Section 5.16.1 A, except: <table border="1"><tr><td>a.</td><td>That only two unrelated Persons plus their <i>offspring</i> living as a single <i>housekeeping unit</i> may occupy the <i>ADU</i>; or</td></tr><tr><td>b.</td><td>When a functional family is allowed by special exception use.</td></tr></table> | a. | That only two unrelated Persons plus their <i>offspring</i> living as a single <i>housekeeping unit</i> may occupy the <i>ADU</i> ; or | b. | When a functional family is allowed by special exception use. |
| a. | That only two unrelated Persons plus their <i>offspring</i> living as a single <i>housekeeping unit</i> may occupy the <i>ADU</i> ; or | | | | |
| b. | When a functional family is allowed by special exception use. | | | | |
| 5. | An <i>ADU</i> or <i>single-family dwelling</i> that is not owner-occupied shall be subject to periodic housing inspections as required by Section 8:511. | | | | |
| 6. | Leasing or rental of the <i>ADU</i> for less than 30 days is prohibited. | | | | |

Description:
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 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 variance and result from conditions which do not exist generally throughout the City.***

Applicant response: “The buyer for the new ADU to be constructed at 1780 Scio Church Road is a critical employee, an Ann Arbor Public Schools teacher with a child enrolled in AAPS, who has been searching for a home to buy for years. This teacher’s salary is not enough to purchase a home in Ann Arbor. This new ADU home is the only homeownership option available. The ADU is restricted to 800 sf. The buyer is requesting a 264 sf variance to the ADU floor area that will allow a full basement, which will allow for a laundry area and storage.”

- (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 a basement, this homeowner and her child will be needlessly cramped and confined, with no space for storage of a vacuum cleaner, cleaning supplies, pantry stock, seasonal clothes, holiday decorations, etc.”

- (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.***

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Applicant response: *"The future homeowner of this ADU home has dedicated her life to the students of Ann Arbor, and deserves a functional, if tiny, home. The public will benefit from this home by enabling this public servant to continue to live, teach, and retire comfortably and affordably in our community."*

No other property owners will be impacted negatively by the ADU at this address having a basement."

- (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: *"This request is not a self-imposed difficulty."*

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

Applicant response: *"This request is the minimum variance possible."*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Barrett". The signature is stylized with large, loops for the letters "J" and "B".

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