

HIGHLAND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Minutes of the Meeting of
April 26, 2023

The Highland Board of Zoning Appeals met in the meeting room of the Highland Municipal Building, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, IN 46322 on April 26, 2023. Mrs. Murovic called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Helms.

ROLL CALL: Present were Board Members Mr. Helms, Mr. Thomas, Ms. Briseno, Mr. Turich and Mrs. Murovic. Also present were Building Commissioner/Zoning Administrator, Mr. Ken Mika, BZA Town Attorney, Mr. John Reed and Town Council Liaison, Ms. Toya Smith.

MINUTES: The minutes of the March 22nd, 2023 meeting were approved as posted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The date of the next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting will be May 24th, 2023.

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

Old Business: Tabled Public Hearing for Price Point Builders, PO Box 1343, Crown Point, IN 46308, represented by Camille Schoop and Bruce Young, requesting a Variance to place a garage as the primary façade of the house in front of the build line or porch at 8327 Grace St. {HMC 18.15.080} (K) (1) Design Standard: (K) Single Family Residence Garages shall be designed so as not to dominate the primary façade of the building. Garages may be located as follows: (1) Garages shall be set back six feet from the primary façade of the building.

Ms. Briseno motioned to take the Public Hearing for Price Point Builders off the table from the previous BZA meeting of March 22nd. Mr. Helms seconded, and the motion passed with a 5 – 0 roll call vote.

Mr. Bruce Young, 12816 Lee Court, Cedar Lake, IN, of Price Point Builders stepped forward and introduced himself and his associate, Ms. Camille Schoop, 7260 Madison Street, Merrillville, IN.

Ms. Schoop continued to say that they were back to request building a single-family home that complied with all the building standards with the exception of one, which was the garage setback requirement stating that the garage should be setback at least 6' from the primary façade of the home. Mr. Young handed out a packet of supporting material, including photographs, a floor plan of the home, and the site plan. She carried on saying that two of the photos were of the same style home they had built in Highland and that they had both been approved for garage setback variances. She pointed out that the packet with the proposed construction plans showed that the home went well with the other new construction homes they had built in the area. She also added that the lot

owners, James and Twila Dutcher, wanted to build this specific house on their lot. The house, she continued, utilized an attached garage, which maximizes the lot size and created more green space. She stated that neighbors were concerned previously with the pooling of water on the mid to the rear of the lot possibly affecting their property. She said there was now an appropriate drainage plan in place to ensure that the water flow would be directed to the storm sewers. She added that this house plan would be energy efficient, environmentally friendly, and with additional green space to help the water flow to those sewers. She then had the Board review the Site Plan presented to see how the drainage plan would work. Ms. Schoop then stated that this proposed home would conform to many of the other homes in this neighborhood. They then showed the Board the pictures of various homes next to the lot and across the street. She also mentioned that many of the new construction homes were being built with the newer design standards that had the garage attached and nearer the front of the home, which, she pointed out, was a much more desirable design. She concluded by saying that the proposed house would be a nice addition to the area on Grace Street and would not create any harm for anybody. Mr. Young added that he had tried to come up with an alternative design with a detached garage that was towards the rear of the property but had not been able to find a suitable design that would fulfill all the Dutcher's needs.

Mr. James Dutcher and Mrs. Twila Dutcher, of 3348 North Drive stepped forward and briefly stated that they had been going through the process of subdivision of the lot to make it buildable and issues with an easement for several months. They stated that they had been looking for a suitable lot in the entire area for years and that Highland was their first choice because they wanted to keep their son in the school system. They continued that they had already chosen this particular design with Price Point but were having trouble finding a lot to build it on. When this lot became available, they knew it was the one for them, as it was large enough and it was in Highland.

Mr. Mika stated that some of the photos that had been shown with garages as the primary façade were located in areas that conformed to PUD design standards, which were different than the standards followed at this particular location on Grace Street.

Mr. Helms motioned to grant the developmental variance requested by Price Point Builders at 8327 Grace Street. Mr. Thomas seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously with a 5 – 0 roll call vote.

New Business: None.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: Mr. Thomas Second: Mr. Helms Time: 6:48 p.m.