

July 8, 2020

City of Plattsburgh, Zoning Board of Appeals
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

To Whom It May Concern:

This request concerns building variances—permission to build beginning from the current location of an existing structure (a garage), inward, where the existing structure, on our corner lot, is one foot from one neighbor's property line, and three feet from the other neighbor's property line. The total height of the proposed structure will exceed the current structure by approximately five feet.

The benefit to us (and future owners of our home) received from the variance does not detract from the health, safety, and welfare of the community. State law requires the Zoning Board of Appeals to take the following factors into consideration in making its determination, and I suggest the following, for your review:

- (1) whether an undesirable change will be produced in the character of the neighborhood, or a detriment to nearby properties will be created by the granting of the area variance;

The physical characteristics of the proposed structure will be in keeping with the design of the primary structure on the property. It will maintain visual cues that appear period: wide door /window casings/building corners, roof eave returns, clapboard siding, and same colors. Our intent is to functionally improve the utility of a secondary structure (a garage) on our property, while improving the appearance (to us and our community).

- (2) the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by some method which will be feasible for the applicant to pursue but would not require a variance;

Moving the starting point of the structure, farther into the property (and away from the existing structure's starting point) adds no benefit to bordering properties (which have no structures, nearby) and minimizes the utility of an already small driveway space for our property.

Lowering the roof peak of the proposed structure would decrease walkable space on the first floor, decrease storage space in the structure's loft area and detract from our intention to remain in keeping with the physical characteristics of the primary structure (windows, approximately a 12/12 roof pitch).

- (3) whether the requested area variance is substantial;

The proposed structure will be only seven feet wider than the existing structure and only five feet taller than the existing structure. The physical area increase is not substantial in relation to the dimension of the lot. The new structure will not appear to be of a scale inconsistent with other structures in and around our neighborhood, and elsewhere in the City of Plattsburgh. The cost of the structure will be minimal—the only extravagance will be electricity (for lights, outlets, and a garage door opener).

- (4) whether the proposed variance will have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district;

The existing structure does not have an adverse effect or negative impact on the physical or environmental conditions of our neighborhood—though it is one hundred years old. The proposed structure—only seven feet wider than the existing structure and only five feet taller than the existing structure will only enhance physical and environmental conditions in the neighborhood. If the physical and environmental impact of the proposed structure is not substantial in relation to the dimension of the lot, it has next to no physical impact on the neighborhood.

(5) whether or not an alleged difficulty is self-created.

This request is for permission to build a new secondary structure (a garage)—which is 18'(L)x18'(W)x18'8"(H), and to do so with variances that allow for (1) beginning in the location of the existing structure, which is less than five feet from two boundary lines, and (2) increasing height to facilitate standing in the first floor and allow for storage space in the loft area.

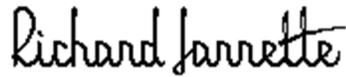
I'm not sure what the codes were during the building of the existing structure, but I believe it predates the current code's 5' from a boundary line requirement. As the code changed and the existing structure's distance from neighboring boundary lines has not, I believe this "difficulty" is not self-created. The existing structure was built one hundred years ago, and although I am not aware of conversations that took place, then, I know the current occupants of homes that share our property lines have been in their homes for more than fifty years, each, and have approved of our plans to replace the existing structure, maintaining its existing distance from our shared property lines.

The height of the existing structure is 12'6" and the height of the proposed structure is 18'8". I believe this "difficulty" is self-created. But, the increase in height allows for a walkable space on the first floor (the existing height is approximately 6') and storage in the loft area (where none currently exists). The increase in height also allows for windows and a roof pitch that is in keeping with the design of the primary structure on the lot.

The structure (a garage) we intend to build will be functional for our family and for future owners of our home. It will be aesthetically in keeping with the design of our home, and (we believe) a welcome addition to our community, now and in the future. The permissions we're requesting present no burden to the health, safety, and welfare of our immediate neighbors and other community members.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Jarrette". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard (and Christie) Jarrette