

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE KENTWOOD ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
APRIL 17, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

1. Chair Derusha called the meeting to order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance (West)
3. Roll Call  
MEMBERS PRESENT: Les Derusha, Robert Houtman, Aaron Johnson, Alan Lipner, Robert Spalding, Mary VanNoord and Susan West  
MEMBERS ABSENT: None  
OTHERS PRESENT: Planner Joe Pung, Planning Assistant Monique Collier and the applicants.

4. Approval of the Minutes and Findings of Fact

**Motion by VanNoord, supported by Spalding, to approve the minutes of March 20, 2023.**

- Motion Carried (7-0) –

5. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.

There was no public comment.

6. Public Hearing

Appeal #V-23-05

Applicant: Peter Spoelhof  
Location: 1340 Camille Drive SE

Request: The applicant wishes to expand an existing attached garage to 854 square feet in area. Section 3.15.D.2.a limits the size of the attached garage to 768 square feet in area. The requested variance is for an increase in area of 86 square feet over the maximum permitted by ordinance.

Peter Spoelhof, 1340 Camille Drive was present representing the request. He stated they had an architect draw a plan then it was submitted to Kentwood and was approved and given a permit to build. He stated covid hit and everything came to a stop and lumber prices were high so he put the project aside for a while.

Spoelhof stated the original addition garage stayed within the 768 square foot allowed. He stated he still wants to build the garage and put a lift in it. He stated he can't work off

the floor anymore. He stated this is all for hobby use. He stated he has been a car enthusiast all of his life. He stated in order to put a lift in, he will need to move some walls. He stated some of the change is internal which wouldn't been seen from the outside of the house. The 1 ½ foot addition to the side would be seen but it is fairly minimal.

He displayed a two-post lift. He stated a typical lift is 12 feet tall and also 12 feet wide. He stated the dimension of the garage 13 feet so it gives him 6 inches on either side if there is a car on the lift he has 6 inches to get around and he can use more space.

He stated the depth has to be under the peak. It does not give him enough room for the car to be on the front end of the lift, the lift has to be positioned underneath the peak. He stated he is maintaining the same roof line as the existing house and using scissor trusses to get the ceiling height he needs.

Discussion ensued regarding the items he would like to store in his garage addition. He stated he researched other cities and townships and Kentwood has the smallest garage size of any of them. Kentwood is 768 square feet no matter what size property you have. Cascade and Walker base it on floor space how many finished square feet you have, Grand Rapids works off of property size. Discussion ensued regarding the different municipalities.

He stated he would love to see Kentwood change their ordinance to allow for an 862 or 864 square foot garage maximum

Houtman questioned if the door is going to be on the front and then just extending the ridge line for the addition off to the left if you are facing the house. Spoelhof stated that is correct. He stated the only difference that he submitted to the City that was approved is you would see an additional 18 inches on the side of the garage.

VanNoord stated she thinks with the lift it is considered a business. She stated when you do anything with the lift it can be really loud and noisy. Spoelhof stated he ran a shop for 40 years and he has no interest in doing anything for anyone else other than his neighbor. He doesn't want a company or liability insurance this is purely for hobby use.

Spalding questioned how close he is to the property line. Spoelhof stated he isn't encroaching on the setback he has plenty of room even with the additional 18 inches on the house. Spalding questioned if there was any conflict with his neighbor.

Spalding stated Spoelhof did a good job at presenting the case and having the information from the various municipalities.

Derusha opened the public hearing.

Don Marima at 1324 Camille was present. He stated he is the neighbor to the north which would put his home on the side of the garage and he is in favor of request.

**Motion by Spalding, supported by Lipner, to close the public hearing.**

- Motion Carried (7-0) -

Houtman stated point 1 is met the property is zoned R1C and it is similar to others he doesn't see any issues with 18 inches moving out from a pre-approved plan. Houtman stated point 2 is met this doesn't happen often. Houtman stated point 3 is met without the variance they could still have the 768 square foot garage but also he isn't sure if others applied for the same thing with the slight addition they wouldn't get it.

Lipner, Johnson, Spalding West Derusha, concurred that points 1, 2 and 3 have been met,

VanNoord stated points 1, and 2 have not been met and point 3 has been met.

Houtman stated point 4 is met the neighbor next door neighbor is present and in favor. Houtman stated point 5 is met. Houtman stated point 6 has been met.

Lipner, Johnson, Spalding West, Derusha concurred that points 4, 5 and 6 have been met

VanNoord stated point 4 has not been met the addition would have to meet the setback requirements of the zoning ordinance. VanNoord stated point 5 and 6 have also not been met.

Motion by Houtman, supported by Spalding, to approve V-23-05; based on prior discussion

1. **There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions applying to the property that do not apply generally to other properties in the same zoning district. Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions include by way of example:**
2. **The condition or situation on which the requested variance is based does not occur often enough to make more practical adoption of a new zoning provision.**
3. **The literal application of the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance would deprive the applicant of property rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zone district.**
4. **The variance will not be detrimental to adjacent property and the surrounding neighborhood.**
5. **Taken as a whole, the variance will not impair the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.**
6. **The exceptional conditions or circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant.**

- Motion Carried (6-1) –

- VanNoord dissenting -

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**Motion by Houtman, supported by VanNoord, to adjourn the meeting.**

- Motion Carried (7-0) –

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Houtman, Secretary