

The Franklin County Board of Adjustment met in regular session on Thursday, March 1, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. in the Franklin County Courthouse Annex. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vance Millender, who thereafter presided.

Attendance was as follows:

PRESENT

Vance Millender – Chairman
Richard Harper --- Member
Joe Hambrose ---- Member
Bryant Hand ----- Member
Gil Autrey ----- Member

ABSENT

Trina Johnson – Alternate

The first order of business was approval of the minutes of the February 5, 2007 meeting as mailed. On motion by Member Hambrose, seconded by Member Harper, and by unanimous vote of the members present, it was agreed to approve the February 5, 2007 as mailed.

The next item on the agenda was consideration of a request for a variance to construct a single family dwelling five feet into the front setback line off of West Gorrie Drive on property described as Lot 4, Block 18,, Unit One West, St. George Island, Franklin County, Florida as requested by Tony Fendrick, Fendrick Builders, Inc., agent for Larry and Gayle Kelly, owners.

Rachel Ward of the building department presented the item for discussion. She noted that DEP was requiring the house be built closer to the road which would encroach 5' into the setback. She stated that it was the position of the county to recommend approval of the request. She told the members that she had received several letters in opposition to the variance.

There were several island residents present who all objected to the variance. Mr. & Mrs. W.L. Maddox, adjoining property owners were among those in attendance. Mr. Maddox argued that the variance should not be granted because it would interfere with his line of vision from his back porch. Mrs. Ward explained that even if the variance were not granted into the front property line, it would not affect the placement of the house into the back setback line. She explained that the house as proposed would meet the county requirements, and could, if not for DEP, be built further into the back setback. She explained that the south setback was not the issue at hand.

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Ms. Susan Pruett, a neighbor from across the street argued that allowing the variance into the front setback would obstruct her view and affect the flow of traffic into the area. Others in attendance who objected to the variance were Ms. Day McGee and Ms. Jane Bledsoe-Young.

Ms. Ward reiterated that usually the Board of Adjustment follows DEP's recommendation. Mr. W.L. Maddox was adamant that the house should not be built larger than the space available.

Michael Shuler stated that it was obvious that the Board would not be able to make everyone happy in this situation. He even suggested that the house be allowed to move eleven feet into the front setback and resolve the neighbor's concerns. However, Ms. Susan Pruett exclaimed emphatically, "No Way!"

Again Ms. Ward explained that the back setback was not an issue in determining this variance. She explained that the back setback has been met and the only issue before the board is that of granting a variance to build the house into the front setback in order to accommodate the house on the lot.

Chairman Vance Millender explained that it was the Board's job to look at the variance request and determine if the development met the guidelines for a hardship.

After much discussion and many objections, Member Harper made a motion to recommend that the Board of County Commissioners deny the variance to build the dwelling five feet into the front setback line and further that the dwelling should be designed to fit into the available space without requiring a variance. The motion was seconded by Member Autrey and approved by the following vote:

YEA: Richard Harper
Joe Hambrose
Bryant Hand
Gil Autrey

NAY: Vance Millender

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Ms. Ward explained to Mr. Fendrick that even though the Board of Adjustment had recommended denial of the variance, it was his prerogative to seek approval from the Board of County Commissioners.

She explained that it would go before the County Commissioners on March 20th, 2007.

Ms. Ward informed the members that the third item on the agenda had been withdrawn.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Vance Millender, Chairman

ATTEST:

Rachel L. Ward, Zoning Administrator