



WILDWOOD

Determination of Issues and Findings of Facts

Board of Adjustment Case B.A. #03-21

City of Wildwood's Board of Adjustment

Public Hearing of January 21, 2021

City Hall Council Chambers | 16860 Main Street

And Via Online Meeting Process [Zoom]

Nature of Request:

B.A. #03-21 Eric and Jamie Bradley, 18315 Ridgecrest Acres Drive, Wildwood, Missouri 63069 - request an exception to the Minimum Yard Requirements (General) for the purpose of constructing a new detached garage addition onto a single-family dwelling (circa 2018) upon the property located at 18315 Ridgecrest Acres Drive [St. Louis County Locator Number 27X510057], which would thereby authorize a front yard setback distance of twenty (20) feet in lieu of the fifty (50) foot standard, as measured from the edge of the private roadway easement of Ridgecrest Acres Drive. This request is contrary to the requirements of Chapter 415.090 NU Non-Urban Residence District Regulations of the City of Wildwood's Zoning Ordinance. **(Ward Six)**

Determination of Issues:

Principle to this request is the identification of its issues. This identification process is intended to determine whether the variance is reasonable and appropriate under the criteria that the property's site-specific characteristics create a unique hardship or practical difficulty with the application of individual ordinance requirements and, if granted, its impacts are contained to the tract of land under consideration or negligible enough upon adjoining properties to be considered acceptable. In the instance of **BA #03-21**, the issues relating to the variance's reasonableness and appropriateness are as follows:

General Site and Area Conditions

1. The subject site of this request is a four point five (4.5) acre parcel of ground and has approximately 365 feet of frontage along Ridgecrest Acres Drive, which is a privately-maintained roadway by the Homeowners Association of this residential subdivision.
2. The property is generally a parallelogram in shape, with a greater depth than width. The width of the lot, at the front building line, however, does easily exceed the minimum two hundred (200) foot distance that is required for large-lots of this nature platted in this type of subdivision.
3. The subject property is zoned NU Non-Urban Residence District and has a detached, single family dwelling located upon it. This zoning district designation establishes certain areas on the lot, where building and structures cannot be located (setbacks). The distances of the setback areas, as

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established for this particular zoning district designation, are fifty (50) feet for any front yard area and thirty (30) feet for all side and rear yard areas.

4. The single family dwelling is a ranch elevation and has approximately 2,300 square feet of total living space, according to St. Louis County Department of Revenue records. In support of this single family dwelling is a wastewater treatment facility and an in-ground swimming pool located along the eastern side of the residence, by the side-entry garage.
5. The physical characteristics of this lot are typical for this portion of Wildwood, in that, it has significant slope and remains almost entirely treed, except where the dwelling, wastewater treatment facility, accessory uses, and driveway have been located. *The treed area of this lot also includes a mix of cedars and other growths between the roadway and the proposed location of the detached garage, which appeared are planned to be removed with this construction.*
6. The original tree preservation calculations, which were provided at the time of the construction of the single family dwelling, indicate the current amount of coverage is approximately seventy (70) percent of its overall area.
7. The property has over forty-four (44) feet of relief across its depth, which is approximately 565 feet in distance, and almost two hundred (200) feet greater than its width. The site slopes from north to south and has two (2) high points, at the rear of the lot and where the residence is located.
8. The subject site was platted by St. Louis County, prior to the City of Wildwood's incorporation, as part of what appears to be a four (4) lot residential subdivision, but is now governed by the regulations and procedures of the City's Subdivision and Development Regulations.

Current Request

9. The intent of this request is to allow the petitioners to construct a detached, three (3) car garage that would place the structure at a twenty (20) foot front yard setback distance versus the required fifty (50) foot distance, as set forth for the NU Non-Urban Residence District.
10. The size of the detached garage, as planned, is 1,200 square feet in area (30' by 40').
11. The submitted plot plan appears to indicate the new garage will be accessed by a new driveway improvement that is planned onto the private street at the northwest corner of the subject lot.
12. The information provided by the applicant, in support of this request, notes the most logical location for this structure is to the west of the existing dwelling, but that area of the subject lot is where the drainfield for the wastewater treatment facility has been placed.
13. The petitioner has provided hand-drawn sketches of the proposed detached garage, which indicates it will include two (2) separate openings, the northernmost opening accommodating the width for two (2) vehicles, and the other for a single vehicle. The design also includes a man-door.
14. The architecture of the structure includes siding, brick, and stone on the front elevation of it, with exposed concrete and siding on at least two (2) of the remaining sides of it. The extent of foundation on the east and west sides of the structure reflects the grade change of the lot in the area of the private roadway.

Correspondences and Previous Actions

15. The site was duly posted in accordance with City code requirements, including the placement of a sign on the property, an advertisement in a newspaper, and a posting at City Hall. Along with these notifications, a direct mailing was sent to surrounding properties advertising the request.

16. The Department of Planning has received no comments in favor or opposition of said request, at the time of the writing of this report.
17. The Department's review of the Board of Adjustment's files indicates no variances have been requested for this particular lot.

Findings of Fact:

The Department of Planning has reviewed this request with regard to the criteria established for its approval or denial, i.e., site characteristics, which render a unique hardship or a practical difficulty and impacts on adjoining properties, and believes this request **does not meet** the requirements set forth to be considered reasonable and appropriate. This position is premised upon a number of site-specific findings. These findings are as follows:

1. The placement of this detached garage is proposed along the primary roadway serving homesites to the south and west of this subject lot and, given the distance of the requested variance of twenty (20) feet, will have a major impact on the character of this area.
2. The criteria for granting a variance, first and foremost, relates to a unique hardship or practical difficulty relating to the physical characteristics of the lot, if the regulations are applied, as adopted, with the assessable impacts of such a change to them having to be limited enough or non-existent for such support. This design for the detached garage does not meet either of these standards for favorable consideration, given its impact in this area of the residential subdivision.
3. The previous placement of the in-ground swimming pool appears to occupy the logical location for this detached garage, when access to it is considered. Past decisions relative to the placement of allowable accessory uses and structures should not be considered the same as the physical characteristics of the site for justification of a variance.
4. The slope of the lot, from north to south (behind the dwelling to the roadway), appears to dictate the need to place the structure into the front yard setback, to avoid having a steeply-sloped approach from the private roadway's elevation to the parking pads to be located inside the detached garage. If the structure is relocated to the north, the grade of the lot causes the grade of the driveway to increase and may require the use of engineered solutions to be considered. However, if engineered solutions, such as retaining walls, can be used to reduce or eliminate the need for the variance, then they should be considered and employed, and the request not granted.

Recommendation:

Considering the above-listed Findings of Fact, the Department recommends the Board of Adjustment not support the requested variance, as submitted by the petitioner.

Respectfully submitted,
CITY OF WILDWOOD
Department of Planning