

**November 8, 2016**  
**City of Erie, Pennsylvania**  
**ZONING HEARING BOARD**  
**1:00 P.M.**

The regular meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board was held Tuesday, November 8, 2016 at 1:00 P.M. in City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 626 State Street.

**-- MINUTES --**

**THE FOLLOWING APPEAL WAS HEARD:**

The Board did not convene a quorum; it was agreed by the Appellant that Board member Patty Szychowski would serve as hearing officer for the case.

**Appeal No. 12,142 by Alexander Kanonczyk (4028-221)** concerning property he own located at 963 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street in an R-2 district. The appellant is seeking two dimensional variances to construct a breezeway connecting a detached garage to the dwelling. Per Section 205 of the Erie City Zoning Ordinance, the least side yard setback is 3' with a combined side yard setback of 6'; 1' and 4' is proposed, respectively.

**Findings of Fact**

1. The appellant, Alexander Kanonczyk, appeared to represent himself and told the hearing officer that the house in question is a vacant property; blighted and likely to be demolished. However, the appellant said that while it looks dilapidated on the outside, he has had it examined, and the house is structurally sound. After having it inspected, the appellant purchased the house with the intention of renovating it.
2. What the appellant proposes is to construct a breezeway, connecting the back of the house to the garage. The proposed breezeway would be heated and insulated, creating a comfortable passage between the two structures. The new addition will include a peaked roof with gutters, and would be aesthetically pleasing from the sidewalk and road.
3. According to the appellant, the breezeway will include a door facing Cascade Street, and will maintain the traditional feel of the home. The idea behind the proposal is to allow the owner and/or tenant to pull their vehicle into the garage, and have access to the home without going outside; a feature that would be especially important during the harsh Erie winters.

4. The appellant is unsure what he intends to do with the property once the renovations have been completed, he said. He is undecided if he will live in the house or rent it out. Either way the house will remain a single-family dwelling.
5. The proposed renovation will be an improvement to the traditional Erie neighborhood, as the unsightly property is right on the corner of West 6<sup>th</sup> and Cascade Streets. The appellant has received the consent of all the neighbors who he has spoken to about the project.

### **Conclusions**

1. The appellant purchased the vacant property on the corner of West 6<sup>th</sup> and Cascade Streets, with a house likely slated for demolition. The appellant proposes to renovate the house to make it into a nice single-family dwelling.
2. Part of the proposal is to construct a breezeway – an enclosed structure that would connect the detached garage with the back of his home; thus converting two structures into a single principle one.
3. According to Section 205 of the Erie City Zoning Ordinance, the minimum side yard setback for a single structure in an R-2 district is 3’, with a minimum combined side yard setback of 6”. The appellant’s side yard setback would be 1’, with a combined setback of 4’.

### **Decision**

Hearing officer Patty Szychowski approved the dimensional variances. She indicated that the appellant has demonstrated a hardship in that the proposed extension would be necessary for elderly or handicapped people to get from the garage to the house, especially in winter weather. She added that the reconstruction of an abandoned house is good for the City, especially in the location where it sits; and she thanked the appellant on behalf of the City for taking the initiative to renovate the house and improve the neighborhood.

**It is So Ordered.**

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