

IN RE: PETITION FOR ADMIN. VARIANCE	*	BEFORE THE
(806 Seneca Park Road)		
15 th Election District	*	OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE
6 th Council District		
Jerry E. & Tina M. Lopez	*	HEARINGS FOR
Petitioners		
	*	BALTIMORE COUNTY
	*	CASE NO. 2017-0105-A

* * * * *

OPINION AND ORDER

This matter comes before the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for Baltimore County for consideration of a Petition for Administrative Variance filed by the legal owners of the property, Jerry E. & Tina M. Lopez (“Petitioners”). The Petitioners are requesting Variance relief pursuant to § 400.3 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, to permit an accessory building (garage) with a height of 24 ft. in lieu of the maximum permitted 15 ft. The subject property and requested relief is more fully depicted on the site plan that was marked and accepted into evidence as Petitioners’ Exhibit 1.

The Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) comments were received and are made part of the record of this case. The property is located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA) and is subject to Critical Area requirements as noted in the ZAC comment dated October 25, 2016 submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (DEPS). In addition, a ZAC comment was received from the Bureau of Development Plans Review (DPR) dated October 28, 2016, indicating that “Prior to building permit application, the petitioner must contact the office of the Director of Public Works to determine the flood protection elevation, so that the floor elevation can be set.”

The Petitioners having filed a Petition for Administrative Variance and the subject property having been posted on October 20, 2016, and there being no request for a public hearing, a decision shall be rendered based upon the documentation presented.

The Petitioners have filed the supporting affidavits as required by § 32-3-303 of the Baltimore County Code (B.C.C.). Based upon the information available, there is no evidence in the file to indicate that the requested variance would adversely affect the health, safety or general welfare of the public and should therefore be granted. In the opinion of the Administrative Law Judge, the information, photographs, and affidavits submitted provide sufficient facts that comply with the requirements of § 307.1 of the B.C.Z.R. Furthermore, strict compliance with the B.C.Z.R. would result in practical difficulty and/or unreasonable hardship upon the Petitioners.

Although the Department of Planning did not make any recommendations related to the proposed garage's height and usage, I will impose conditions that the garage shall not be converted into a dwelling unit or apartment, not contain any sleeping quarters, living area, and kitchen or bathroom facilities.

Pursuant to the posting of the property and the provisions of both the Baltimore County Code and the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, and for the reasons given above, the requested variance should be granted.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, this 14th day of **November, 2016**, by the Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County, that the Petition for Variance seeking relief from § 400.3 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, to permit an accessory building (garage) with a height of 24 ft. in lieu of the maximum permitted 15 ft., be and is hereby GRANTED.

The relief granted herein shall be subject to the following:

1. Petitioners may apply for necessary permits and/or licenses upon receipt of this Order. However, Petitioners are hereby made aware that proceeding at this time is at their own risk until 30 days from the date hereof, during which time an appeal can be filed by any party. If for whatever reason this Order is reversed, Petitioners would be required to return the subject property to its original condition.
2. Petitioners or subsequent owners shall not convert the garage into a dwelling unit or apartment. The garage shall not contain any sleeping quarters, living area, and kitchen or bathroom facilities.
3. The garage shall not be used for commercial purposes.
4. Petitioners must comply with the ZAC comments from DEPS and DPR, copies of which are attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Any appeal of this decision must be made within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order.

Signed _____
JOHN E. BEVERUNGEN
Administrative Law Judge for
Baltimore County

JEB:dlw