

IN RE: PETITION FOR VARIANCE	*	BEFORE THE OFFICE
(1702 Beechwood Avenue)		
15 th Election District	*	OF ADMINISTRATIVE
7th Council District		
John F., Sr. & Anita A. Totty, et al.	*	HEARINGS FOR
<i>Legal Owners</i>		
	*	BALTIMORE COUNTY
Petitioners		
	*	CASE NO. 2017-0247-A

* * * * *

OPINION AND ORDER

This matter comes before the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) for Baltimore County as a Petition for Variance filed by John F., Sr. & Anita A. Totty, et al., owners of the subject property (“Petitioners”). Petitioners are requesting variance relief from §1A04.3.B.2.b, of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (“B.C.Z.R”) to permit a proposed single-family dwelling with a front yard setback from the centerline of a street of 50 ft., a side yard setback of 40 ft., and a rear yard setback of 25 ft. in lieu of the minimum required 75 ft., 50 ft., and 50 ft., respectively. A site plan was marked as Petitioners’ Exhibit 1.

John F. Totty, Sr. and David Billingsley appeared in support of the petition. There were no protestants or interested citizens in attendance. The Petition was advertised and posted as required by the B.C.Z.R. Substantive Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) comments were received from the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (DEPS), the Bureau of Development Plans Review (DPR) and the Department of Planning (DOP). None of the reviewing agencies opposed the requests.

The site is 43,995 sq. ft. (approximately one acre) in size and zoned RC-5. The property was improved with a single-family dwelling constructed in 1934. That dwelling was razed several years ago, and Petitioners propose to construct a new single-family dwelling on the lot.

To do so variances are required.

A variance request involves a two-step process, summarized as follows:

- (1) It must be shown the property is unique in a manner which makes it unlike surrounding properties, and that uniqueness or peculiarity must necessitate variance relief; and
- (2) If variance relief is denied, Petitioner will experience a practical difficulty or hardship.

Cromwell v. Ward, 102 Md. App. 691 (1995).

Petitioners have met this test. The property has a triangular shape and is therefore unique. If the Regulations were strictly interpreted Petitioners would experience a practical difficulty because they would be unable to construct the proposed single-family dwelling. Finally, I find that the variances can be granted in harmony with the spirit and intent of the B.C.Z.R., and in such manner as to grant relief without injury to the public health, safety and general welfare. This is demonstrated by the lack of community and/or Baltimore County opposition.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, this **8th** day of **May, 2017**, by the Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County, that the Petition for Variance seeking relief pursuant to §1A04.3.B.2.b, of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (“B.C.Z.R) to permit a proposed single-family dwelling with a front yard setback from the centerline of a street of 50 ft., a side yard setback of 40 ft., and a rear yard setback of 25 ft. in lieu of the minimum required 75 ft., 50 ft., and 50 ft., respectively, 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. Prior to issuance of permits Petitioners must comply with critical area and flood protection regulations.
3. Prior to issuance of permits Petitioners must submit architectural elevations to the DOP to enable that agency to make the requisite finding under the RC-5 Performance Standards.

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:sln