

CITY OF OLMOS PARK
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
HELD MAY 14, 2014

The Board of Adjustment for the City of Olmos Park, Texas held a public hearing at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday May 14, 2014, at City Hall. Members present were Melissa Phillips, Jay Buzzini, Richard Speica, Dorothy Jo Weiss and Sandra Hornberger. Administrative Staff present were Celia DeLeon, City Manager, Diane Gonzales, City Secretary and Jim Raby, Building Official. Also present were Eileen Gordon, 604 E. Olmos Drive and Jean Blount, Radiance Homes, Carl Raba, 400 E. Wildwood and Alexandra Travassos, AMBT Design.

Chairman Melissa Phillips called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and announced a quorum was present.

Receive and approve minutes for April 16, 2014

Richard Speica moved to approve the minutes as submitted.

Dorothy Jo Weiss seconded the motion.

The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous by all Board members present.

Eileen Gordon, 604 E. Olmos Drive, AKA CB 5680 BLK LOT 83 & 84

Is requesting a variance for additions/alterations that will connect existing buildings that are currently positioned in the rear yard area which are classified as accessory structures or buildings part of the main structure allowed through "grandfathering". City code section 40-42{1}.

Carl Raba stated he has been on the Committee of the Board of Adjustment for 4 years and I have not contacted any board member that is here today regarding this variance. I am here to explain the hardship that Mrs. Gordon is requesting.

Jim Raby stated as to why the permit was denied. This property as it exists now has a portion of the main house which is already in the rear yard setback area. There is another structure that is also in the rear yard area that is considered to be part of the main structure by approximately less than 10 feet to the main structure. The grey shaded area on the drawing is another addition to the detached building, which they want to attach another addition to that. That addition further makes the encroachment deeper into the rear yard setback which makes the total encroachment 26.6 feet, so there are two parts of the main structure which is just going to increase some square footage.

Eileen Gordon stated the house was built in 1929. I feel the need to have my master bedroom downstairs and to do that, the easiest way for me to accomplish this would be to connect the studio and the main house and add the other half of a bathroom.

Carl Raba stated the Raba family and the Gordon family have become close friends and we have business relationships together. Jerry and Eileen bought this house because of its character and did restoration work on it. Because of the design criteria and at that time there was no bathroom on the first floor just a powder room. Mr. Gordon tragically

passed away in 2006; the two years prior to him passing away they had the equipment of a hospital room in their sun room. Mrs. Gordon did not want to move because the house is furnished and she has become concerned about security and being able to go up and down the second floor. She did install an elevator but has become frightened of it with power outages. Her life now deals around the kitchen, washroom, garage and a bedroom that she is trying to develop. She has no other place downstairs to put a bedroom and bathroom because of the configuration of the house and location of the utilities and plumbing. These conditions were never anticipated and have developed since Mr. Gordon's passing.

Jean Blount presented pictures of the house and structures to the Committee.

Chairman Melissa Phillips stated how many square feet is on that first level of the house?

Alexandra Travassos stated the first floor level of the house is approximately 2,000 feet.

Sandra Hornberger stated do you know how old the back structures are?

Alexandra Travassos stated the studio was built in 1998 and the garage was built in 1929.

Chairman Melissa Phillips stated the studio had to have a variance back in 1998.

Sandra Hornberger stated honestly if it were my house I would want the structures connected.

Jay Buzzini stated we have to look at the hardship for this variance request.

Chairman Melissa Phillips stated a hardship must be unique to that property.

Sandra Hornberger stated the hardship is to maintain the integrity of the main house without tearing down walls and putting in a new floor.

Chairman Melissa Phillips stated was the configuration of the house when it was purchased, if that is how the house was when you purchased it, then it usually is not a hardship to come back later and say its hardship. We have denied variances on that basis before.

Jay Buzzini stated how many feet is the encroachment?

Jim Raby stated the total encroachment into the rear yard is between 3 and 4 feet.

Alexandra Travassos stated even though the first floor has a lot of square footage, the half bath sits over a lowered floor access that houses all of the HVAC so getting to the plumbing in that bathroom without tearing up all the HVAC and without tearing up the staircase to plug in for a shower is really not workable unless you regut the whole side of the house just to put in a shower. So this variance is just not for attaching a shower to it, is also for making that bathroom workable for a wheelchair accessible if needed at some point. There are drain lines that take the water out to the grass line.

Right now there are water issues and we are making sure that the water slops the correct way. There is a recessed value that sits and has a pit and a drain on top of it and underneath it has drain lines that take the water out to the grass area.

Jay Buzinni stated the way the house is built it would be hard to redesign it and there are some drainage issues that keep things from flowing certain directions. The hardship would be the drainage issues.

Richard Specia stated when you look at the house, you are not altering any of the look which is a plus. Also, I think this is a special situation.

Alexandra Travassos stated we did not want to add anymore hardscape because what is happening with the water and drainage issues so we were looking at areas that had existing foundations and existing rooflines so it was easily attachable without changing those existing drain lines. If we close in additional space in the back then we will have to divert the water away from that courtyard and it will end up in the neighbor's yard or travel down the street.

Chairman Melissa Phillips stated did you do some engineering studies?

Alexandra Travassos stated just visual studies and when it rains the problem with the flooding and that is why the trenches were done in that area to begin with.

Dorothy Jo Weiss stated this proposal is not disturbing the architectural design of Olmos Drive and Park Hill Drive so I don't see a problem.

Jay Buzzini stated this is a more of a need based proposal.

Sandra Hornberger moved to approve the variance request and allow Mrs. Gordon to build a connection so she can maintain her residence on the entire property and live in the back based on the hardship of the plumbing and drainage issues.

Dorothy Jo Weiss seconded the motion to grant the variance request.

The vote in favor of the motion was:

AYE: Hornberger, Specia, Weiss, Buzzini

NAY: Phillips

The motion passed.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Melissa Phillips
Chairman

ATTEST:

Diane Gonzales
City Secretary