

MARIEMONT PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

The Mariemont Planning Commission met Wednesday September 23, 2020. Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Present were: Mrs. Rankin, Ms. Reed, Mr. Van Stone and Mr. Blum. The Building Administrator Don Keyes was also present.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to accept the minutes as written for June 17, 2020. On roll call; four ayes, no nays (Mr. Blum abstained due to his absence).

The first request was from Kathryn and Kristofer Johnson, 6990 Bramble Hill Drive, Mariemont, Ohio 45227 to receive a side yard setback variance in order to install a shed on the west side of the house.

Finding of the Building Administrator: The proposed shed location does not fit within the accessory structure setback requirements as defined by Mariemont code. By Mariemont code, the accessory structure setback requirements for all properties in the Village are at least 3 feet away from any property line. The proposed shed would be approximately 1 foot away from the property line.

Property owner, Katie Johnson submitted the following:

We are proposing to build a shed on the east side of our home to store outdoor equipment, making room in our garage. The proposed location is on the east side at the south side of the house, almost in line with the front of the home. The previous owner already sectioned off the area to put items with the fencing present on the property but it is uncovered. Due to the hill in their backyard and distance from the garage and front yard, a shed in the backyard is not desired and would be difficult to fabricate. The proposed location makes the most sense as it is already sectioned off and fits the shed dimensions of 4x8 as seen in the drawings. The reason they are asking for a variance is due to the proximity of the shed to the fence line. The shed will be closer than the 3-foot initially required for a building to allow the doors to open and fit with the already fabricated walkway. She has spoken with the two neighbors who will be able to see it and they signed a document stating they are satisfied with the plan. The height of the shed will be approximately 8.5 feet in the front facing the home and 6.5 feet tall in the back which is slightly higher than the fence present. Thank you for taking the time to consider our proposal.

Mrs. Johnson passed the plans around for the Planning Commission members to review.

Mayor Brown said he was of the understanding that it was going to be assembled and built. Mrs. Johnson said they will be buying the lumber and assembling it from scratch. She said there will be 33-38" from the doors to the house with a concrete path between. The color proposed is cedar.

Mr. Blum said the proposed shed will be taller than the fence in the front and slightly taller in the back. He has concerns with the shed being so visible from the front. He asked if there was a way to reduce the height. Mrs. Johnson said it could be a possibility but they wanted to hang racks and shovels.

Mayor Brown said he too is concerned about the shed looming larger over the front of the fence. He is inclined to ask that the height of the shed be held down.

Mr. Van Stone said he is concerned with precedent and the setback. We have 3' setback requirements for fire concerns and so the area behind the shed can be cleaned and cleared of overgrowth. If the reason for the variance is due to the fact the applicant does not wish to fabricate (as stated in their letter) that same statement could be used by someone else and precedent is set. Once it is done for accessory buildings, residents will want to do the same for garages.

Building Administrator Keyes said he has talked to the Fire Department in the past about this issue but has not talked with them regarding this particular application.

Mr. Blum suggested moving it up against the house such as a lean to. The applicants said that would involve major expense to move the walkway.

The Planning Commission members discussed ways to use landscape to cover the height of the shed to address concerns of visibility. Mr. & Mrs. Johnson were open to use landscaping to make a creative barrier but did not want to use lattice.

Discussion ensued regarding compromising the height of the fence at 6' or removing the front fence. Any shed height lower was a concern to the homeowners as Mrs. Johnson is 5'11" and it would become non-functional. Removing the front fence was not desired as it will make the shed more visible. It was also not desired to move the shed up against the existing fence for safety and upkeep concerns.

Mrs. Rankin moved, seconded by Mr. Van Stone to grant the variance based on Section 151.024(3)(b)(2)(c)(d)(e)(f). The shed will be held to 6' and the current fence will remain. A 1' setback will be granted and applicant must create a visual barrier on the front fence line. On roll call; five ayes, no nays.

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ms. Shelly Reed, Secretary