



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes - Final

Board of Zoning Appeals

Monday, December 15, 2025

4:00 PM

Council Chambers
City Hall, First Floor

Call to Order

Chair Cherf called the meeting to order and explained the meeting procedures.

Roll Call

Present: 4 - Andrew Sherman, Ben Stepanek, Douglas Farmer, James Cherf

Variance Appeals:

[2699](#)

An appeal regarding the requirement to provide a rear yard setback of 15 feet at 946 Division Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Andy Berzinski, representing the Building and Inspections Department, was sworn in to speak. Berzinski reviewed the three requirements to grant a variance: unnecessary hardship, hardship due to unique property limitations, and no harm to public interest. He stated that the applicants applied for a permit to construct a new foundation to move an existing house to a property that does not meet the required minimum rear yard setback. The proposed dwelling is setback 10 feet 6 inches from the rear yard property line. Per Municipal Code Sec. 115-148(3) for the Washburn Neighborhood Residential District, on every lot in the residence district, there shall be a rear yard having a depth of not less than 20 percent of the depth of the lot, provided such rear yard need not exceed 30 feet in depth and shall not in any case be less than 15 feet in depth. A variance of 4 feet 6 inches would need to be granted for this project to proceed as proposed. Berzinski showed an aerial view of the property, a site plan, a foundation plan, and street view images of the house and property. Farmer asked for clarification on the site plans. Berzinski confirmed which lines on the site plan show the proposed house, setbacks, and property lines. Farmer asked if the house was placed on the property rotated 90 degrees to face 10th Street South, it would fit the setback requirements. Berzinski stated he thought that would be correct. Farmer asked where the house was moved from and Berzinski stated it was from the corner of Ferry Street and 10th Street South. Berzinski, considering the unnecessary hardship requirement, stated that this is a self-created hardship as the owner knew the size of the dwelling that would be moved and did not account for the size of the existing lot. He stated that the hardship due to unique property limitations is that this is a half lot and is smaller than most lots in the City. He stated that there is no harm to the public interest as this would be moving an existing dwelling to a new location.

Kahya Fox, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region, 3181 Berlin Drive, was sworn in to speak. Fox stated that the purpose of Habitat for Humanity is centered on the idea of affordable housing in the community, so resources often come from various places. This house was donated by 360 Real

Estate and the donation and moving of the house was an incredible cost savings and is part of a large-scale development in the Washburn Neighborhood that includes the development of town homes by 360 Real Estate and two corner lots by Habitat for Humanity. She stated that with the existing address on Division Street, the size of the house that was donated, and the size of the lots under 5,000 square feet, it is difficult to build any type of house on the properties. Fox stated that Habitat for Humanity owns the two contiguous lots which allowed them to place the other house on its lot so that this house could be placed with only one variance instead of two. She stated that this project is a wonderful opportunity for the City of La Crosse as part of a larger partnership with 360 Real Estate, the Washburn Neighborhood Association which is in full support, and the City of La Crosse which has provided Community Housing Development Organization Funding specifically for this project. Fox stated that they are hoping to have this variance approved to allow them to develop the two units of housing on this lot.

Cherf restated Farmer's question about clarification of the site map. Fox confirmed that the Board's assessment of the site map was correct. Stepanek asked for confirmation that Habitat for Humanity owns the neighboring lot. Fox confirmed that Habitat for Humanity owns and plans on developing both lots, but the neighboring lot does not require a variance. Sherman asked if the house was placed facing Division Street to avoid needing a second variance in relation to the neighboring lot. Fox stated that was a reason, it is an existing address, and the Washburn Neighborhood Association specifically requested that house be placed on the corner lot facing Division Street for aesthetics.

A motion was made by Farmer, seconded by Stepanek, to grant a variance of 4 feet 6 inches to the required rear yard setback. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Sherman, Stepanek, Farmer, Cherf

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.