

**ACME TOWNSHIP**  
**Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**September 22, 2011**

Thursday, 7:00 p.m.  
Acme Township Hall  
Acme, Michigan

**Meeting called to Order at 7:05 p.m.**

**Members present:** J. Kuncaitis (Chair), L. Belcher, B. Hopkins, L. LaSusa (7:07pm), V. Tegel

**Members excused:** None

**Staff present:** P. Kilkenny, Planner/ Deputy Zoning Administrator  
N. Edwardson, Recording Secretary

1. Review and approval of the agenda, inquiry as to conflicts of interest

**MOTION BY TEGEL. SECONDED BY HOPKINS TO ADD TO THE AGENDA ITEM #6  
A CHANGE IN THE REGULAR STARTING TIME OF THE ZBA MEETINGS FROM  
7:30 PM TO 7:00 PM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. **Correspondence:** None

3. **Reports:** [Staff Memo – VGT/Meijer Signage Request 2011-02Z](#)

4. **Hearings:**

- a) [2011-03Z](#) Hearing for Lorraine Belanger-Grof, 5260 Lautner Road, Williamsburg, 49690, variance requests to permit the construction of an accessory structure within the side yard setback and to permit an increase in the height standard for the same accessory structure on the located at 5260 Lautner Road, Williamsburg, Michigan 49690.

Belcher read the published public hearing notice into the record. Belanger is requesting a variance for the construction of a 36'x36' accessory structure and a height standard variance on the property at 5260 Lautner Road, Williamsburg. The applicant is proposing to build the accessory structure to house riding horses and the associated feed and other horse related items on the property. Kuncaitis read into the record a [letter](#) from Steve and Christine Hubert, 5248 Lautner Road, property owners adjoining her property to the south.

The Public Comment period closed with no further comment.

Kuncaitis asked staff for an overview of the variance request. Kilkenny provided an overview of the project and noted two typographical errors in the staff report. Kilkenny noted that on page 2 of the staff report, under "project description," paragraph 1 should read that the applicant is requesting the accessory structure to be built to 14' 7½" not 17' 6". Kilkenny also noted that the same page in the same paragraph should read that the applicant is requesting that a 65' side yard setback be used, not the 20' setback. Kilkenny provided an overview of materials which were given to the Board for review upon their arrival. The materials included the Acme Township Zoning Ordinance's formula used to

calculate the overall height (14' 7½") of Ms. Grof's proposed accessory structure.

Ms. Grof addressed the board and explained that her height variance request was a result of the barn's pre-fabricated design and was needed for storage. Ms. Grof went on to say that the side yard variance was being requested for both aesthetic and economic reasons. Ms. Grof explained that the water and electric on her property is currently installed in the vicinity of the requested location of the barn and that if she were to follow the 100' setback requirement, she would be forced to relocate the utilities in the area.

The Board stated that the side yard variance request could not be granted on aesthetics and economics alone, but that the applicant must present a practical difficulty which prevents them from carrying out the strict letter of the Acme Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Motion by Hopkins, support by Belcher to approve the height standard variance and deny the side yard setback variance for Application 2011-03Z based on the findings of fact in the staff report. Hopkins supported the motion to deny the requested setback variance because the applicant showed no practical difficulty and supported the approval of the height variance because of the need for storage and overall pre-fabricated design showing the applicant's practical difficulty. Motion carried by a vote of 4 in favor (Kuncaitis, Belcher, Hopkins, Tegel) and 1 opposed. (LaSusa).**

Member LaSusa stated that he opposed the motion because he felt that the variance requests should either both be granted or both be denied on the basis of practical difficulty and not voted on individually.

5. Approval of minutes from the [August 11, 2011](#), meeting:

**Motion by Hopkins support by Tegel to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2011 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

6. Change in starting time of ZBA meetings

**Motion by Belcher. Seconded by Hopkins to change the official ZBA meetings to a starting time of 7:00 pm. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.**