



**CITY OF YPSILANTI**  
**Zoning Board of Appeals MEETING**  
**Monday, December 5, 2022 @ 7:00 PM**  
**Council Chambers**  
**One South Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

Page

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

Jake Albers, Chair

Georgina Hickey

Mike Auerbach

Jessica Dooley

Tom Roach

Jason Ringholz, Alternate

**III. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. [ZBA Minutes Regular Meeting October](#)

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**V. PURPOSE OF MEETING**

**VI. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. [206-210 N Washington Variance Staff Review](#)

7 - 20

**IX. FUTURE BUSINESS DISCUSSIONS/UPDATES**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Committee discussion

B. Non-Motorized Committee Report

C. Housing Affordability and Accessibility Committee Report





**MINUTES**  
**Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**Monday, October 3, 2022 - 7:00 P.M.**  
**City Hall-Council Chambers**  
**1 S Huron St. Ypsilanti, MI 48197**

**I. CALL TO ORDER (6:01pm)**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Jake Albers- Chair, Mike Auerbach, Jessica Donnelly, Georgina Hickey, Tom Roach

**Absent:** None

**III. AGENDA APPROVAL**

*Motion to approve the agenda.*

***Offered By: Donnelly; Seconded By: Hickey***

***Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;***

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Motion to approve the September 15, 2022 minutes.*

***Offered By: Roach; Seconded By: Hickey***

***Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;***

**V. PURPOSE OF MEETING**

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. 220 S. Huron St - Appeal of Administrative Decision.**

**• Public Hearing**

*Motion to open the public hearing.*

***Offered By: Roach; Seconded By: Donnelly***

***Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;***

Ty Nielsen - Resident at 215 S. Washington. Spoke In support of 220 S. Huron variance, as long as it is not transferred ownership.

Matt Kirkpatrick - Resident - adjacent neighbor - This business is good for the neighborhood.

110% in support of this variance.

Written public comments -

Josh - Resident - 221 S Washington - Does not see an issue with the business. They are in support of the variance.

Susan McCarty - 109 Catherine Street - supports the variance

The applicant made it known that another public comment was submitted to the building from 216 S. Washington St. in support of the variance. Staff did not have this comment in hand but confirmed it after the meeting.

*Motion to close the public hearing.*

***Offered By: Donnelly; Seconded By: Roach***

***Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;***

Staff Report: The 220 S Huron property is historically significant having been built in 1870 and most previously used as a bed and breakfast. The property was sold to the applicant in 2022 and they are now seeking relief from section 122- 547 ( c ) of the zoning ordinance which requires outdoor seating areas located in HC to be no less than 50 feet from properties zoned R1, MD, CN, CN-Mid, or CN-SF. The proposed outdoor seating area is to be used by guests of the Newton which functions as both a bed and breakfast and event space. The Newton proposes to serve guests meals that will include alcohol, pending City Council and MLCC approval. The courtyard to be used as an outdoor café is approximately 38 feet from the residentially zoned property directly west. It is approximately 48 x 43 feet dimensionally and the courtyard itself is historically significant as well estimated to be 75-100 years old. Both the applicant and the city staff would prefer to see the courtyard unaltered.

Applicant - Chuck Boltman - co-owner. Spoke about 220 S. Washington. We are not a cafe and the liquor license will not be transferable.

Boardmember Albers agreed it would be a shame to not best utilize this historic space but also worried about the issue of permanence.

Boardmember Hickey felt swayed by the historic courtyard already existing. She does not have concerns for noise as the noise ordinance can be used as a tool.

Boardmember Roach suggested cutting down the capacity and hours. Other board members did not feel that was necessary.

Motion that the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the variance request for 220 S. Huron from 122-547(c) to permit outdoor seating area located within 50 feet of any properties zoned R1, MD, CN, CN-Mid, or CN-SF, with the following findings and conditions:

Findings:

1. The request meets the variance standards 1, 2, and 6.
  2. The applicant has not created the circumstances with the existing structures, courtyard, or site arrangement. Granting the variance would allow the applicant to maintain a greater setback to the property to the north.
  3. The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.
  4. The allowance of the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.
- That the variance is the minimum

Conditions:

1. Existing wall in the courtyard must be maintained.
2. Maintain established screening and buffer between the wall and the patio.

***Offered By: Auerbach; Seconded By: Hickey***

***Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;***

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion to adjourn at 8:43pm.*

*Offered By: Donnelly; Seconded By: Hickey*

*Approved: Yes – 5; No – 0;*





City of Ypsilanti

Planning and Development Department

November 1, 2022

Staff Review of Variance Application

206/210 N Washington Street

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Applicant:** Michael Appel | Avalon Housing INC  
1327 Jones Drive, Suite 102  
An Arbor, MI 48105

**Project:** 206 N Washington Street

**Application Date:** October 31, 2022

**Location:** N Washington Street between Emmet St and Washtenaw Ave

**Zoning:** CN, Core Neighborhood

**Action Requested:** Approval of 3 variances, as follows:

1. 122-556, Supportive Housing. The applicant is looking to override the limit of 8 occupants, and the requirement for an on-site resident manager, due to low-income development fiscal budget feasibility.
2. 122-685, Parking dimensions. For 90-degree parking, this would require a 22' drive aisle width. Applicant proposes a 12' drive aisle width.
3. 122-691, Minimum and maximum number of parking spaces. This would require 1.5 spaces for each dwelling unit, plus guest spaces (1 per 10 units) which would require (35) parking spaces. Applicant proposes 3 parking spaces including one van accessible space

**Staff Recommendation:** Approval

### PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

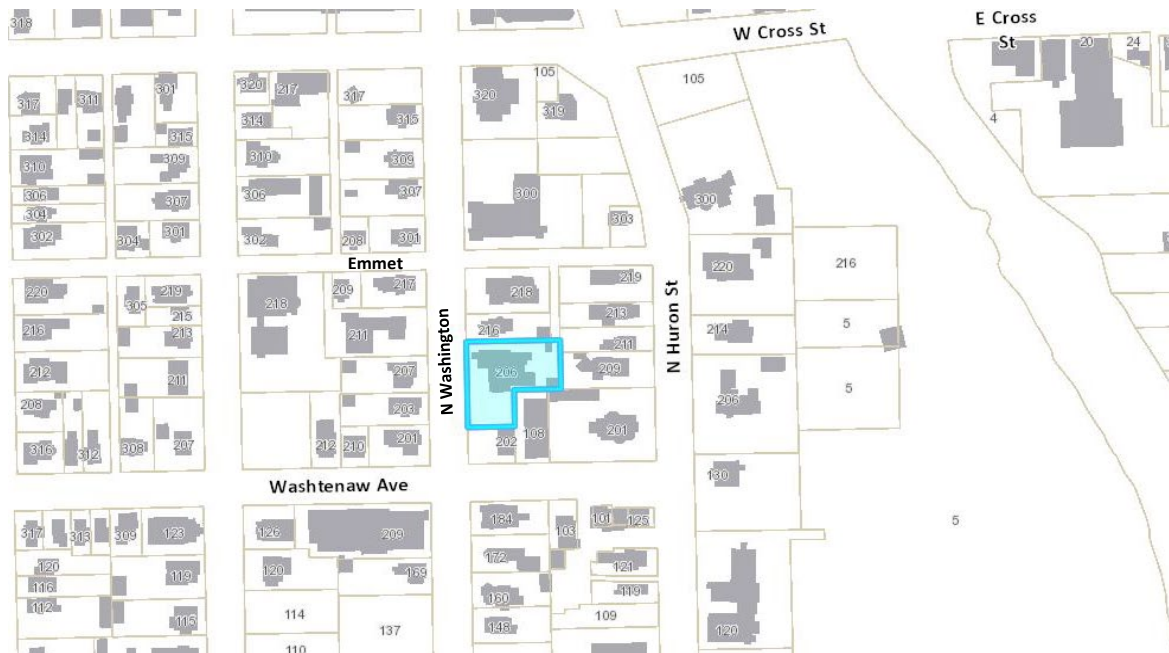
Parcel 11-11-40-411-003 is on the east side of N Washington Street between Emmet and Washtenaw. The parcel is 0.42 acres with frontage on N Washington in the Riverside neighborhood. There is an existing ~11,059 square foot structure, a former apartment building which was severely damaged by fire in 2017 and has been vacant since then.

The property is currently owned by the City of Ypsilanti, and Avalon Housing is evaluating the site for redevelopment as affordable housing. After extensive review, the applicant has determined that the existing building is not suitable for renovation and proposes to construct a 3-story building with (22) one-bedroom apartments and related sitework. The two historically designated sheds at the east side of the site would remain.

The applicant is requesting a variance from the following 3 zoning ordinances as follows:

1. 122-556, Supportive Housing.
2. 122-685, Parking dimensions.
3. 122-691, Minimum and maximum number of parking spaces.

**Figure 1: Subject Site Location**



**Figure 2: Site Close-up (2020)**



**Figure 3: photograph of site (Google image)**



Image capture: Oct 2020 © 2022 Google

**Figure 4: Land Use and Zoning of Surrounding Area**

	LAND USE	ZONING
<b>NORTH</b>	Residential	CN, Core Neighborhood
<b>EAST</b>	Residential	HC, Historic Corridor
<b>SOUTH</b>	Coffee shop	CN, Core Neighborhood
<b>WEST</b>	Residential	CN, Core Neighborhood

**Zoning Map, City of Ypsilanti**  
Washtenaw County, Michigan  
**C2**

**Zoning Classifications**

- Limited Building Types

**Zoning Districts**

- R-1 - Single-Family Residential
- CN-SF - Core Neighborhood Single-Family
- CN-Mid - Core Neighborhood Mid
- CN - Core Neighborhood
- MD - Multi-Dwelling
- NC - Neighborhood Corridor
- HC - Historic Corridor
- GC - General Corridor
- C - Center
- PMD - Production, Manufacturing, Distribution
- HHS - Health and Human Services
- P - Park
- Eastern Michigan University



**ORDINANCE**

**§122-557**

**Sec. 122-557. Supportive housing.**

**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS HEREINAFTER TO BE IMPOSED**

- ✓ (a) The maximum number of persons served per the facility shall not exceed eight.
- (b) On-site services shall be for residents of the facility only.
- ✓ (c) If the owner of the property does not reside on the premises, the owner must appoint a resident manager, who resides on the premises. The property owner must provide the name and contact information of this person upon request by the city.
- (d) For each adult cared for, the square footage of outdoor recreation or relaxation area required by the building code must be provided in the rear, side, or street side yard. Such outdoor space must be fenced and screened from any adjacent lot.
- (e) All new construction or additions to existing buildings shall be compatible with the scale and character of the surroundings, and exterior building materials shall be harmonious with other buildings in the neighborhood.
- (f) Screening in accordance with §122-634 shall be provided along all rear and side yard boundaries between the proposed use and property either zoned or used for single-family and two-family purposes.

**ARTICLE II. - DEFINITIONS AND LANGUAGE**

**Sec. 122-200. - Interpretation of language.**

*"Supportive housing* means a facility that provides housing for 24 hours per day and supportive services designed to assist residents with improving daily living skills, securing employment, rehabilitation, or obtaining permanent, independent housing. Supportive housing is not intended for short-term, emergency housing and care, but rather longer periods ranging from a few months to a few years. Supportive housing is distinguished from a hospital or other health care environment, and facilities regulated by the State of Michigan as State licensed residential facilities. This definition shall not include fraternities, sororities, dormitories, adult foster care facilities, group homes, nursing homes, substance abuse treatment facilities, emergency shelters, individuals utilizing tenant-based or homeownership-based voucher funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, community correctional facilities, and housing for the rehabilitation of former occupants of correctional facilities.

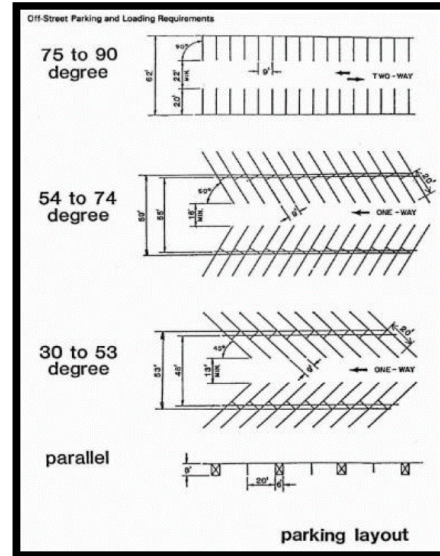
*Supportive services* are services provided to residents of supportive housing for the purpose of facilitating the independence of residents, and may be provided on the premises, or off-site. Some examples are case management, medical or psychological counseling and supervision, childcare, transportation, and job training."

**ORDINANCE**

**§122-685**

**Sec. 122-685. Parking dimensions.**

- ✓ (a) All off-street parking facilities required by this chapter shall be of adequate size and design to provide safe and reasonably direct ingress and egress from an alley or street. All parking spaces shall be adequate for parking a motor vehicle with room for opening doors on both sides.
- (b) Parking spaces required by this article shall be at least nine feet wide and 18 feet long (16 feet long if two feet of overhang is provided when parking against a curb). Spaces directly adjacent to a fence, wall or enclosure shall be increased by one foot in width. Barrier free parking spaces must be designed as required by and in conformity with state law.
- (c) Up to 20 percent of the parking spaces may be designated as small car spaces, which shall be at least eight feet wide and 16 feet long and clearly signed for "compact cars."
- (d) Up to ten percent of the parking spaces may be designated as motorcycle spaces, which shall be at least five feet wide and clearly signed for "motorcycles."
- (e) Minimum standards. The minimum standards for parking spaces and aisles are indicated in the tables below.



**Standard Vehicle Parking Dimensions**

Parking Patterns (Degrees)	Space Width (Feet)	Space Length (Feet)	Maneuvering Lane Width (Feet)	Total Width of One Tier of Spaces Plus Maneuvering Lane (Feet)	Total Width of Two Tiers of Spaces Plus Maneuvering Lane (Feet)
0 (parallel)	9	22	12 if one-way 10 if two-way	21 one-way 19 two-way	30 one-way 28 two-way
30 to 53	9	18	13	36	53
54 to 74	9	18	16	38	59
✓ 75 to 90	9	18	22	40	62

**Motorcycle Vehicle Parking Dimensions**

All motorcycle parking spaces shall be a minimum of five feet by eight feet.

**Compact Vehicle Parking Dimensions**

Parking Patterns (Degrees)	Space Width (Feet)	Space Length (Feet)	Maneuvering Lane Width (Feet)	Total Width of One Tier of Spaces Plus Maneuvering Lane (Feet)	Total Width of Two Tiers of Spaces Plus Maneuvering Lane (Feet)
0 (parallel)	8	18	12	20 one-way 32 two-way	28 one-way 40 two-way
30 to 53	8	17	13	36	53
54 to 74	8	17' 5"	16	38	59
75 to 90	8	16	22	42	62

**ORDINANCE §122-691**

**Sec. 122-691. Minimum and maximum number of parking spaces.**

The minimum number of off-street parking spaces by type of use in all zoning district shall be determined in accordance with the following schedule. The maximum number of off-street parking spaces must not exceed 120 percent of the required parking spaces, except for those uses in the "residential" category, which are not subject to a maximum. The planning commission may grant waivers as noted in §122-692.

USE	AUTOMOBILE SPACES PER UNIT OF MEASURE
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	
Single-family detached dwellings, townhouses, and two-family dwellings	No minimum.
Multiple-family dwellings	✓ 1.5 for each dwelling unit, plus 1 for each 10 dwelling units for guest parking.
Upper-story residential units in C, HC, NC, GC, and HHS districts	1 for each dwelling unit.

USE	AUTOMOBILE SPACES PER UNIT OF MEASURE
Group residence, rooming house, and supportive housing	✓ 1 for each 4 residents, plus 1 for each employee or the largest typical employment shift.
Accessory Dwelling Unit	No minimum.
<b>RECREATION, EDUCATION &amp; PUBLIC ASSEMBLY USES</b>	
Religious institutions; private assembly (such as catering or clubs); performance venues & theaters; libraries, museums, and cultural or community centers; or similar facilities	1 for each 500 square feet of usable floor area, excluding area devoted to storage.
Indoor recreation, including swimming pools	1 for each 4 persons who may be legally admitted at one time based on the occupancy load established by local, county, or state fire, building, or health codes, plus 1 for each employee on an average employment shift.
Primary and secondary schools, public and private	1 for each teacher, employee or administrator, plus 1 for each 10 students
Post-secondary educational institutions (public & private)	1 for each teacher, employee or administrator and 1 for each 5 students.
Municipal, county, regional & state service uses	1 for each 1,000 square feet of usable floor area.
Self-storage facilities	1 per 200 storage units, plus 1 per 300 square feet of usable floor area of office space, plus 1 for residence, if provided.

**STANDARDS**

**§122-370(b)**

**Standards for Variance #1 | Sec. 122-556 Supportive Housing.** The applicant is looking to override the limit of 8 occupants, and the requirement for an on-site resident manager, due to low-income development fiscal budget feasibility.

A variance from the literal enforcement of this Ordinance may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals only if all of the following standards are met –

- (1) *Literal enforcement of this chapter will pose practical difficulties to the applicant because of special conditions or circumstances which are unique to the specific property such as: exceptional shallowness or shape of the property, exceptional topographic conditions, extraordinary situation of a building or structure, use or development of an adjacent property, or difficulties relating to construction or structural changes on the site. Mere inconvenience or a desire to attain higher financial return shall not itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance.*

According to the application, Avalon Housing’s “approach to helping its residents maintain housing, which has been copied all over the country due to its success, seems to be exactly what this ordinance intends to prohibit.” In seeking a variance, the group cites that the limitations imposed by the City of Ypsilanti’s Supportive Housing ordinance would interfere with their programming and prevent them from meeting their project goals at 206-210 N Washington Street.

The applicant asserts that Avalon Housing’s approach has served as a model nationwide and helped pave the way for solving homelessness by providing “affordable, long-term housing with built-in care and support for our neighbors who need it.” As such, their application for variance in order to build and operate a supportive housing program may reasonably be deemed to originate from a place of expertise.

The applicant ascertains that the ordinance 122-556 is prohibitive to their model for supportive housing – “The limit of 8 occupants, and the requirement for an on-site resident manager would make any low-income development impossible to fund and to manage successfully.” In researching the organization’s website about their existing programs, success stories and planned projects – it may be concluded that the ordinance would not support Avalon Housing’s approach to supportive housing.

- (2) Such variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right enjoyed by other property owners in the same district under the terms of this chapter. Granting of the variance shall not confer upon the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this chapter to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.*

The applicant makes the case that no other properties in the city are prohibited from receiving social services needed to maintain housing.

- (3) The alleged practical difficulties on which the variance request is based have not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.*

The applicant ascertains that the practical difficulties are created by a discriminatory ordinance.

- (4) The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.*

The applicant maintains that the variance will allow the group to redevelop a blighted and dangerous site while preserving historic resources – thereby positively impacting the surrounding neighborhood’s public welfare and investment.

- (5) The allowance of the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.*

Avalon Housing’s organizational values address how a variance that removes limits on occupancy would thereby allow the site to become a robust location for engaging supportive housing experts in the city, increasing affordable housing in the city, fulfilling a need to progressively address homelessness, and creating sustainability for such housing and programming. Substantial justice and public benefits are at the core of the organization’s ethos –

- **Dignity**  
We recognize and honor the innate dignity that every human has. We embrace people as they are, with unconditional positive regard. **We bring kindness, respect and integrity to all of our interactions.**
- **Self-Determination**  
We recognize self-determination as a human right that plays a vital role in growth and recovery. Everyone is empowered to guide their own lives, **and everyone has the responsibility to respect the needs of the community, and their role within it.**
- **Equity**  
We know that **diverse perspectives and lived experiences are integral to the strongest, healthiest organizations and communities.** We strive to be an anti-racist organization. We will call out bias, demand change, and measure our impact, within and beyond our organization.
- **Best Self**  
We believe that each person brings unique strengths and abilities to the work we do. We create space for one another to show up authentically. We are committed to learning from experience and to empowering each other to become our best selves. We see the phenomenal circle of personal growth: health achieved in one person becomes, in turn, **the strength to “pay it forward” and encourage others towards health.**
- **Community**  
We build community grounded in acceptance and inclusion, while challenging every one of us to develop. Each of us is responsible for creating a culture of welcome, safety and belonging, as we work together to build a community that helps people thrive. **We know that any sustainable achievement is rooted in collaboration and meaningful partnership.**
- **Excellence**  
**We commit to excellence in our work, in our roles as community members, and in the operation and management of Avalon Housing. We go above and beyond to accomplish our goals, make hard decisions when needed, and hold ourselves and others accountable for results.** We are courageous advocates and leaders for intentional change, and we are willing to take thoughtful risks.
- **Well-being**  
We value the role that good self care plays in overall well-being. Self care, and the pursuit of well-being—satisfaction with life, feeling connected, having a sense of purpose and agency—is key to engendering strong and deep connections. We know there are abundant opportunities for us to cultivate joy. We make time for good fun together to fuel ourselves **and to build a warm, enjoyable community.**

*(6) A variance granted shall be the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land, buildings, or structure.*

The applicant maintains, "We believe this variance is the minimum that will accomplish the City's, and Avalon Housing's, goals of redeveloping the existing blighted site to provide affordable housing."

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**Standards for Variance #2 | Sec. 122-685. Parking dimensions.** For 90-degree parking, this would require a 22' drive aisle width. Applicant proposes a 12' drive aisle width.

A variance from the literal enforcement of this Ordinance may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals only if all of the following standards are met –

*(1) Literal enforcement of this chapter will pose practical difficulties to the applicant because of special conditions or circumstances which are unique to the specific property such as: exceptional shallowness or shape of the property, exceptional topographic conditions, extraordinary situation of a building or structure, use or development of an adjacent property, or difficulties relating to construction or structural changes on the site. Mere inconvenience or a desire to attain higher financial return shall not itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance.*

The applicant proposes that the parcel must be devoted to programming / project space, as well as preserving historic accessory buildings. As such, Avalon Housing has deemed that the requirements for this Supportive Housing project must only accommodate (3) parking spaces, including one accessible van parking space, accessed (like the existing east parking area) by a narrow drive (shown as 12' wide on the current plan).

According to the applicant, "The site is fairly small, and expected to be expensive to redevelop – including demolition of the existing building and providing the new utility connections for new development. The only way to qualify for affordable housing funding will be to amortize those costs over as many units as possible (and providing as many affordable units as possible is also Avalon's mission). The two historical sheds also limit opportunities for parking."

*(2) Such variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right enjoyed by other property owners in the same district under the terms of this chapter. Granting of the variance shall not confer upon the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this chapter to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.*

The applicant makes the case that the current ordinance for parking dimensions are prohibitive to Supportive Housing developments providing public benefits including affordable housing, preservation of historic buildings, and removal of blighted buildings. The applicant does well to show that the site's proximity to public transit, small business, services and walkability – as well as social well-being and connectivity – make this type of affordable housing and wellness programming more about the extent of supportive housing space than parking dimensions.

*(3) The alleged practical difficulties on which the variance request is based have not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.*

The applicant/proposed developer Avalon Housing and the current owner inherited the size of the lot, the presence and subsequent preservation of existing historic sheds, and the fire-damaged building. The necessity to address redevelopment of the site, preserve its historic character and filling a need in the community for affordable housing are the drivers on which the variance is based.

*(4) The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.*

The applicant maintains, "We do not believe the variances will be detrimental to public welfare or neighborhood properties. Avalon Housing's tenants typically have very limited parking needs, and The Ride bus terminal is only two blocks away. Permits for on-street parking are available through the city. The few on-site parking spaces will result in minimal traffic on the one-way access drive."

- (5) *The allowance of the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.*

Avalon Housing's organizational mission address this standard – "Our mission is to build healthy, safe and inclusive supportive housing communities as a long-term solution to homelessness."

More development space on the site that may be dedicated to actual housing and supportive services – with less devoted to parking – will serve to help Avalon Housing achieve its mission for Ypsilanti's community members in need of a safe, community-supported dwelling.

- (6) *A variance granted shall be the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land, buildings, or structure.*

The applicant maintains, "We believe this variance is the minimum that will accomplish the City's, and Avalon Housing's, goals of redeveloping the existing blighted site to provide affordable housing."

**Standards for Variance #3 | Sec. 122-691. Minimum and maximum number of parking spaces.**

This would require 1.5 spaces for each dwelling unit, plus guest spaces (1 per 10 units) which would require (35) parking spaces. Applicant proposes 3 parking spaces including one van accessible space.

A variance from the literal enforcement of this Ordinance may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals only if all of the following standards are met –

- (1) *Literal enforcement of this chapter will pose practical difficulties to the applicant because of special conditions or circumstances which are unique to the specific property such as: exceptional shallowness or shape of the property, exceptional topographic conditions, extraordinary situation of a building or structure, use or development of an adjacent property, or difficulties relating to construction or structural changes on the site. Mere inconvenience or a desire to attain higher financial return shall not itself be deemed sufficient to warrant a variance.*

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According to the applicant, "The site is fairly small, and expected to be expensive to redevelop – including demolition of the existing building and providing the new utility connections for new development. The only way to qualify for affordable housing funding will be to amortize those costs over as many units as possible (and providing as many affordable units as possible is also Avalon's mission). The two historical sheds also limit opportunities for parking."

- (2) Such variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right enjoyed by other property owners in the same district under the terms of this chapter. Granting of the variance shall not confer upon the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this chapter to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.*

The applicant makes the case that the current ordinance for parking dimensions are prohibitive to Supportive Housing developments providing public benefits including affordable housing, preservation of historic buildings, and removal of blighted buildings. The applicant suggests that proximity to public transit, small business, services and walkability – as well as social well-being and connectivity make this type of affordable housing and wellness programming are more vital to the number of units than parking dimensions.

- (3) The alleged practical difficulties on which the variance request is based have not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.*

The applicant/proposed developer Avalon Housing and the current owner inherited the size of the lot, the presence and subsequent preservation of existing historic sheds, and the fire-damaged building. The necessity to address redevelopment of the site, preserve its historic character and filling a need in the community for affordable housing are the drivers on which the variance is based.

- (4) The granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property or improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located.*

The applicant maintains, “We do not believe the variances will be detrimental to public welfare or neighborhood properties. Avalon Housing’s tenants typically have very limited parking needs, and The Ride bus terminal is only two blocks away. Permits for on-street parking are available through the city. The few on-site parking spaces will result in minimal traffic on the one-way access drive.”

- (5) The allowance of the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.*

Avalon Housing’s organizational mission addresses this standard – “Our mission is to build healthy, safe and inclusive supportive housing communities as a long-term solution to homelessness.”

More development space on the site that may be dedicated to actual housing and supportive services – with less devoted to parking – will serve to help Avalon Housing achieve its mission for Ypsilanti’s community members in need of a safe, community-supported dwelling.

- (6) A variance granted shall be the minimum variance that will make possible a reasonable use of the land, buildings, or structure.*

The applicant maintains, “We believe this variance is the minimum that will accomplish the City’s, and Avalon Housing’s, goals of redeveloping the existing blighted site to provide affordable housing.”

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Zoning Board of Appeals **approve** the variance request to permit the with the following findings:

1. The applicant has shown sufficient practical difficulty under §122-370(b)(1).
2. It is clear that this variance is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right enjoyed by other property owners in the same district under the terms of the zoning ordinance §122-370(b)(2).
3. It is clear as to whether the allowance of the variance will result in substantial justice being done.

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Holli Andrews, MCPD  
City Planner

c.c. File  
Applicant