

BZA MINUTES

FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Members present: Jason Hawley, Bill Davis, Don Calhoun, Jason Allen, Jim Hufford

Members absent: Jon Peacock, Drew Cleveland

Legal Representation: Jason Welch

Staff present: Debra Johnting, Area Planning Director/Recording Secretary

Others present: William Bunch

Chairman Hawley: It is 7:00, on February 20, 2024. I would like to call to order the Board of Zoning Appeals. First order on the agenda is approval of the minutes from October 17, 2023 and November 14, 2023 as presented.

B. Davis: I move that we accept the minutes as presented.

D. Calhoun: I second.

Chairman Hawley: All in favor, motion is carried. Next up I would like for the members to state their names for the record so it's easier for transcriptions. My name is Jason Hawley, Bill Davis, Jim Hufford, Jason Allen, Don Calhoun. Thank you very much gentlemen. Next order of business is election of officers for 2024. Your current Chairman is myself, Jason Hawley and Vice Chairman is currently is Bill Davis. Is there anybody who would like to be nominated for the Chairman?

B. Davis: If not, I would make a motion to leave as is.

D. Calhoun: Second.

Chairman Hawley: All in favor? All opposed? Motion is carried. Are there any nominations for Vice-Chairman?

B. Davis: I'll take it, like I said, leave it as is.

J. Hufford: So moved.

Chairman Hawley: All those in favor? All those opposed, so moved. So, before we get started I'd like to remind petitioners that they have 15 minutes to present their petition. During this time there will be no interruptions or questions. After the presentation the board may ask questions. Anyone wanting to speak for or against will have three minutes each. Then the petitioner will have an additional five minutes to respond to comments. Tonight, on the docket we have BZA2024-3-SP, for William Bunch. If you would come up and state your name and address for the record.

W. Bunch: Hello my name is William Bunch. 425 Greenlawn Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Chairman Hawley: Have you received Article V, Conduct of Hearings?

W. Bunch: Yes sir.

Chairman Hawley: It says here that you are requesting a Special Exception to remove an old mobile home and replace with a new one? Why don't you tell us what you've got?

W. Bunch: I bought this property off ZILLOW because I'm getting older and I'm trying to retire. So I am trying to look at investments. And it was a really good deal. And when I got down there, I think it would probably be cheaper to fix up the mobile home but the more I look at it it's got racoons living in it. I heard there were drug addicts that was living in it. I would like to either sell it for a profit or rent it to some decent people, you know like instead of fixing it up and making a quick buck, I would really like to do something with it to make it a decent property. That's pretty much it.

J. Welch: So, you're asking to replace the mobile home that's there?

W. Bunch: Yes, and also, I think it was only 800 square feet, so I was going to try to put a bigger one up to meet the codes and add an extra bedroom. It only has two.

D. Johnting: He actually has plenty of room, he has three platted lots put together. So, he has room for a 950 square foot home so he doesn't need variance on size of mobile home and he doesn't need front, side or rear setback variances, he has plenty of room. We haven't had any calls from any neighbors at all.

W. Bunch: There is a mobile home across the street. So, I didn't know if that would help or not. I didn't know if it was something grandfathered in.

D. Johnting: It's a really nice lot, it's really pretty. A new mobile home back in the trees would look nice. Do you know what year?

W. Bunch: I don't know what year, it might still be a little older but I do want to make sure it has vinyl siding and new windows and, right now it's got aluminum siding the regular trailer windows and to me, it would just be quicker to buy something that's already a better upgrade that. I do live in Fort Wayne and I do live on a limited budget. It's like a side project so I am taking a risk.

B. Davis: So, you are going to replace it, there's no if's, and's or but's about improving the property?

W. Bunch: If I get turned down I'm definitely going to improve it but if I don't, I'm definitely going to get rid of it because it smells so bad, like racoons.

Chairman Hawley: Do we any questions from the panel?

J. Allen: I'm kind of leaning with Bill, the only question I would have would be the fact that, I would be more in favor of the fact of just removing it completely instead of trying to improve it. I

mean just by looking at the pictures of it on google maps I mean it's pretty dilapidated. I don't know if it would even be inhabitable to allow someone to rent it anyway. That particular building.

W. Bunch: Yes, they said they were renting it a year and a half ago and I was like, wow.

J. Allen: So that's why I'm saying, I wouldn't be in favor if you're going to keep that one there. If you are going to take that one completely out and put another one in its place then yes.

W. Bunch: Yes, that's totally what I want to do because, if you've seen the pictures it's pretty beat down.

Chairman Hawley: Just from personal experience you can take this for what its worth, I grew up trying to rehab a lot of trailers. They are money pits fast. So, by the time you even get done talking about flooring, wiring, and if you have racoons in there I am sure the wiring is shot. You probably have busted water lines because no one was there to heat those, the insulation is probably gone. I'm just putting that out there because I think that what the rest of us are trying to say is it is going to be insanely expensive to try to fix that up. I don't know about cost of removing them, and I am sure that you have already priced other projects.

W. Bunch: Yes, actually I have someone who might move it for free because he wants to scrap all the stuff so it's worth it for him to move it. Because you know that's a lot of aluminum siding and then the whole metal frame.

D. Calhoun: That sounds like a win-win.

Chairman Hawley: I guess that's my own personal reservation. I can't speak for the board I can only speak for myself as, I'm concerned about, my biggest thing is about being good stewards for the neighborhood, being good neighbors. Just making sure we get rid of blight. I mean that's my big concern, and if we have reassurances that we are going to replace it with something far better. Even just getting rid of a racoon habitat, I think that would put my mind at ease. I can't speak for anyone else.

J. Hufford: Is that going to be a single wide that you're putting in there or a double wide?

W. Bunch: Probably just a single wide because I definitely couldn't afford a double wide. Because my step-dad is a contractor, he was trying to talk me into, because there is already a lot of concrete, to pour more footers underneath the garage and extending the garage out and making that the house because it would be worth more. But that seems more expensive to me too. And I'm trying to do it kind of cheap because I am on a budget. I'm trying to do it with no financing on my own. I own a flooring business right now, and I work 15-hour days and I'm trying to stop.

D. Johnting: So, if you rent this out who will look out for it while you're in Fort Wayne.

Chairman Hawley: Who would be the landlord if you're not around?

W. Bunch: I would probably hire a property management group to be honest, so they would take of everything and I would pay that monthly due. That's what I was looking at because that seems better since I am in Fort Wayne. They take care of the lawn, they take care of a lot of the other stuff. That's what I was thinking.

D. Johnting: And this vote would strictly for a single wide, if you decided you would want to do a double wide, that's a separate request and you would have to come back for that.

W. Bunch: It will definitely be a single wide, I can't afford a double wide. I'm not gonna lie it would be a single.

B. Davis: So, if there are no more questions, lets go ahead and take a roll call vote.

Chairman Hawley: I second that for roll call vote.

D. Johnting: Don Calhoun, yes, Jim Hufford, yes, Jason Hawley, yes, Bill Davis, yes, Jason Allen, yes. Jon Peacock and Drew Cleveland are absent. Motion approved.

W. Bunch: I have one question; how long do I have?

D. Johnting: It's good for a year. You'll need to get a permit for that.

W. Bunch: That works. Thank you everyone. I really appreciate you guys' time. Have a good night.

Chairman Hawley: Moving on, do we have any old business to be addressed? Any new business? Reports of officers, committee and staff? I motion to adjourn.

B. Davis: Motion seconded.

Chairman Hawley: Meeting adjourned.

Chairman, Jason Hawley

Debra Johnting, Recording Secretary

Vice Chairman, Bill Davis