

IN RE: PETITION FOR ADMIN. VARIANCE	*	BEFORE THE
N side of Oella Avenue, 770 feet W of		
the c/l of Westchester Avenue	*	OFFICE OF
1 st Election District		
1 st Councilmanic District	*	ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
(500 Oella Avenue)		
	*	FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY
Liza and David Hicks		
<i>Petitioners</i>	*	Case No. 2012-0090-A

* * * * *

OPINION AND ORDER

This matter comes before this Office of Administrative Hearings for Baltimore County as a Petition for Administrative Variance filed by the legal owners of the subject property, Liza and David Hicks for property located at 500 Oella Avenue. The variance request is from Sections 400.1 and 400.3 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (“B.C.Z.R.”) to permit a proposed detached accessory structure (garage) to be located on the side of the dwelling with a height of 20 feet in lieu of the required rear yard and maximum allowed 15 feet height. The subject property and requested relief are more particularly described on Petitioners’ Exhibit No. 1. Photographs submitted with the Petition show that the existing garage, located in the side yard, is in a state of disrepair. Petitioners desire to construct a new larger garage for the family. The existing dwelling was constructed in 1850 and placed very close to Oella Avenue. The rear property line is located approximately 187 feet from the existing dwelling. Petitioners’ rear yard is encumbered with a sewer utility easement and stream. The imposition of zoning on this property disproportionately impacts the subject property as compared to others in the zoning district.

The Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) comments were received and are made part of the record of this case. The comments indicate no opposition or other recommendations concerning the requested relief.

The Petitioners having filed a Petition for Administrative Variance and the subject property having been posted on October 8, 2011, and there being no request for a public hearing, a decision shall be rendered based upon the documentation presented.

The Petitioners have filed the supporting affidavits as required by Section 32-3-303 of the Baltimore County Code. Based upon the information available, there is no evidence in the file to indicate that the requested variance would adversely affect the health, safety or general welfare of the public and should therefore be granted. In the opinion of the Administrative Law Judge, the information, photographs, and affidavits submitted provide sufficient facts that comply with the requirements of Section 307.1 of the B.C.Z.R. Furthermore, strict compliance with the B.C.Z.R. would result in practical difficulty and/or unreasonable hardship upon the Petitioners.

Although the Office of Planning did not make any recommendations related to the shed height and usage, I will impose conditions that the accessory structure not be converted into a dwelling unit or apartment, not contain any sleeping quarters, living area, kitchen or bathroom facilities, and not be used for commercial purposes.

Pursuant to the posting of the property and the provisions of both the Baltimore County Code and the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, and for the reasons given above, the requested variance should be granted.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED, by the Administrative Law Judge for Baltimore County, this ___7___ day of November, 2011 that a variance from Sections 400.1 and 400.3 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (“B.C.Z.R.”) to permit a proposed detached accessory structure (garage) to be located on the side of the dwelling with a height of 20 feet in lieu of the required rear yard and maximum allowed 15 feet height, be and is hereby GRANTED, subject to the following:

1. The Petitioners may apply for their building permit and be granted same upon receipt of this Order; however, Petitioners are hereby made aware that proceeding at this time is at their own risk until such time as the 30 day appellate process from this Order has expired. If, for whatever reason, this Order is reversed, the Petitioners would be required to return, and be responsible for returning, said property to its original condition.
2. The Petitioners or subsequent owners shall not convert the subject accessory structure into a dwelling unit or apartment. The structure shall not contain any sleeping quarters, living area, kitchen or bathroom facilities.
3. The accessory structure shall not be used for commercial purposes.

Any appeal of this decision must be made within thirty (30) days of the date of this Order.

Signed _____
TIMOTHY M. KOTROCO
Administrative Law Judge
for Baltimore County

TMK:pz